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PROFESSIONALISATION OF SOCIAL WORK IN MALAYSIA: 1969-2010

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Abstrak

Kerja sosial telah diiktiraf di peringkat antarabangsa sebagai satu disiplin akademik dan satu profesion. Namun, kerja sosial masih kurang diiktiraf sebagai satu profesion di Malaysia. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis profesionalisasi kerja sosial di Malaysia dari 1969 hingga 2010, serta untuk mengenal pasti usaha-usaha daripada Persatuan Pekerja Sosial Malaysia (MASW), Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia (JKM) dan pendidikan kerja sosial di universiti dalam mengembangkan profesion ini. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah kualitatif melalui temu bual semi-berstruktur secara bersemuka dengan 12 orang responden yang merupakan bekas pemimpin di MASW, JKM dan program pendidikan kerja sosial di universiti sebagai sumber data utama. Manakala, laporan-laporan tahunan dan dokumen-dokumen sokongan dikumpul sebagai sumber data sekunder. Analisis tematik digunakan untuk menganalisis transkrip temu bual dan data sekunder. Kajian ini mengenal pasti kemunculan dua tahap profesionalisasi kerja sosial di Malaysia, iaitu tahap awal profesion (1969-1989) dan tahap pengembangan pendidikan kerja sosial serta pemacuan profesionalisme (1990-2010). Ciri-ciri utama kerja sosial sebagai sebuah profesion telah berkembang pada tahap awal profesion. Namun, profesionalisasi terbantut pada tahun 1980an. Idea berkenaan masyarakat penyayang dan Wawasan 2020 kemudiannya telah merangsang pengembangan pendidikan kerja sosial selepas 1990an, dan usaha meningkatkan profesionalisme telah mendapat perhatian lebih luas daripada kerajaan pasca millennium, lantas merumuskan tahap kedua profesionalisasi. Di sebalik kemajuan ini, kajian ini mendapati kerja sosial di Malaysia masih belum mencapai status pekerjaan yang profesional. Kajian ini mencadangkan sinergi yang lebih erat antara MASW, JKM dan pendidikan kerja sosial, serta menekankan kepentingan perundangan dan polisi dalam membentuk profesion dan praktis kerja sosial. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada bidang penyelidikan mengenai profesionalisasi serta menjadi satu rujukan kepada kajian perbandingan kerja sosial di peringkat global.

Kata-kata Kunci: Kerja Sosial, Profesionalisasi, Pendidikan Kerja Sosial, Persatuan Pekerja Sosial Malaysia, Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia

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Abstract

Social work has been recognized as both an academic discipline and a profession internationally. However, social work continues to struggle to attain its professional status in Malaysia. This study aims to analyse the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from 1969 to 2010, as well as to identify the efforts of the Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW), the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia (DSW) and tertiary social work education in advancing the profession. This research utilized qualitative method using semi-structured and face to face interviews with 12 past leaders of the MASW, DSW and tertiary social work education programmes as the primary source of data. In addition, annual reports and supporting documents were collected as secondary source of data. Thematic analysis was used to analyse both the interview transcripts and secondary data. The findings identified two stages emerged in the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia, namely the infancy stage (1969-1989) and the expansion of social work education and the drive for professionalism stage (1990-2010). Key features of social work as a profession have developed during the infancy stage. However, the professionalisation stalled in the 1980s. The idea of caring society and Vision 2020 stimulated the expansion of social work education after the 1990s, and the drive for professionalism received greater attention from the government post millennium, which encapsulated the second stage of professionalisation. Despite all these progresses, this study found that social work in Malaysia has yet to establish itself as a professional occupation. This study proposes for greater synergy between the MASW, DSW and social work education, and underlines the importance of legislation and policy in shaping the profession and its practices. This study contributes to the field of professionalisation research and serves as a reference for comparative study of social work in the global context.

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Keywords: Social Work, Professionalisation, Social Work Education, Malaysian Association of Social Workers, Department of Social Welfare Malaysia

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List of Abbreviations

AADK	*Agensi Antidadah Kebangsaan* (National Anti-Drugs Agency)
AASW	Australian Association of Social Workers
AGM	Annual General Meeting
APASWE	Asia Pacific Association of Social Work Educators
ASEAN	Association of South East Asia Nations
BASW	British Association of Social Workers
BIM	*Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia* (Malaysian Professional Centre)
BMA	British Military Administration
CBR	Community-Based Rehabilitation
COS	Charity Organization Society
COSW	Commonwealth Organization for Social Work
DG	Director General
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
EPU	Economy Planning Unit
IASSW	International Association of Schools of Social Work
ICSW	International Council of Social Welfare
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
ILK	*Institut Latihan Kebajikan* (Welfare Training Institute)
INTAN	*Institut Tadbiran Awam Negara*
ISIS Malaysia	Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia
ISM	*Institut Sosial Malaysia*
JKM	*Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia* (Department of Social Welfare Malaysia)
JPA	*Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam* (Public Service Department)
KKB	Kuala Kubu Baru
KL	Kuala Lumpur
KPNPM	*Kementerian Perpaduan dan Pembangunan Masyarakat* (Ministry of National Unity and Social Development)

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KPWKM	*Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat* (Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development)
LPPKN	*Lembaga Penduduk dan Perancangan Keluarga Negara* (National Population and Family Planning Board)
MAKPEM	*Majlis Kebangsaan Kebajikan dan Pembangunan Sosial Malaysia* (Malaysia National Council on Welfare and Social Development)
MAMSW	Malaysian Association of Medical Social Workers
MAPSW	Malaysian Association of Professional Social Workers
MASW	Malaysian Association of Social Workers
MCS	Malay Civil Service
MOH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non Government Organization
NPM	New Public Management
NJCCSWE	National Joint Consultative Committee on Social Work Education
NSWP	National Social Welfare Policy
P&P	*Pengurusan dan Professional* (Management and Professional)
PKMD	*Pegawai Kebajikan Masyarakat Daerah @ Pejabat Kebajikan Masyarakat Daerah* (District Social Welfare Officer @ District Social Welfare Office)
PSC	Public Service Commission
PTD	*Pegawai Tadbir dan Diplomatik* (Administrative and Diplomatic Officer)
ROS	Registrar of Society
SDA	Social Development of Administration
UK	United Kingdom
UKM	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
UM	Universiti Malaya
UMS	Universiti Malaysia Sabah
UNECAFE	United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
UNICEF	United Nation Children's Fund
UNIMAS	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

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UNISZA	Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
US	United States
USM	Universiti Sains Malaysia
UUM	Universiti Utara Malaysia

UUM
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

It began as a philanthropic and voluntary response to social issues. However, social work has gradually developed as a profession in the late 19th century in the United States (US), Britain, the Netherlands and Germany, and then introduced in the 20th century to other parts of Europe, Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania, and the Middle East (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). Today, the International Federation of Social Workers has 128 country members[1], while hundreds of schools of social work from over 70 countries are members of the International Association of School of Social Work (IASSW) (Healy, 2008a).

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Nevertheless, the professional status of social work has always been contested and debated starting with Flexner's famous speech that questioned its professional credentials back in 1915 (Dulmus & Sowers, 2012; Flexner, 1915; Kunneman, 2005). In the west, particularly in the US and the United Kingdom (UK), numerous efforts have been taken to demonstrate that social work has progressed as a profession (Dulmus & Sowers, 2012; Greenwood, 1957; Ginsberg, 2005; Hugman, 1991; Popple, 1985; Staub-Bernasconi, 2009; Stoesz, 2008; Welbourne, 2009; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). Social work scholars have positioned social work as a profession in different names and forms, for example, as a caring profession (Hugman, 1991), social welfare profession (Healy, 2009), authority-based profession (Gambrill, 2001), and human rights profession (Healy, 2008b). Despite these efforts, social work continued to receive

[1] www.ifsw.org (as at 15 August 2020).

strong criticisms in the US and UK on its direction (Jordan, 2004; Lymberry, 2001) and underachieved potential (Green, 2006), and, at one point, being perceived as only meeting the criteria as a semi-profession (Etzioni, 1969; Toren, 1972). For example, in the US, where social work has existed for more than a century and years of legal recognition, it still faces various challenges like having difficulty in claiming a monopoly of its practice, constantly competing with other professionals in different fields, and also lacking a coherent and accurate public image (Clark & Woods-Walker, 2006). In addition, the notion of its professional status is constantly being challenged and compared with other professions like medicine and law (Dulmus & Sowers, 2012; Ginsberg, 2001; Hugman, 1991; Pierson, 2011).

The professionalisation of social work is not without any challenge or obstacles, especially on the professionals and paraprofessionals tensions (Austin, 1978). Social work has been portrayed as a predominantly female profession and working with highly marginalized groups, thus of little glamour or status (Dominelli, 1996; Hugman, 1991). Social work as an emerging profession still faces challenges from its weak legal closure (Harrits, 2014) and the possible clashes of social work values with how the government wishes to manage its social welfare policies (Ackroyd, Kirkpatrick, & Walker, 2007; Dominelli, 1996; Farrel & Morris, 2003; Healy, 2009; McDonald, Harris & Wintersteen, 2003). Nevertheless, the role of the state in setting policy and granting legitimacy is critical in impelling the direction of the profession and its practices (Evetts, 2013). For example, Svensson and Astrom (2013) highlighted that the professionalisation of social workers in Sweden has been highly influenced and governed by the government. The state "assigns specific tasks to social workers in the

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field of social regulation through legislation; thus, the profession is recognized and formed by the state" (p. 12).

Tensions between social work and the government are not new in western countries due to the government's move to deprofessionalize social work by letting non-social work professionals define key roles and requirements for training and process (Dominelli, 1996) and shifting professional work to specific managerial tasks that do not require professional qualification (Healy, 2009). Furthermore, Hugman (1991) noted that the state has significantly more power than many professions, including social work and the clients, in the triangular and interdependent relationship between the state, the profession, and the clients.

The welfare policy change and service orientation have been seen as a threat to social work as a profession. Dominelli (1996), for example, criticized the competency-based approach adopted by the British government as a serious barrier to the human-centric nature of social work. The rise of neoliberalism in the last 30-40 years in the US (Abramovitz, 2014) also impacted the US welfare state, including the devolution, downsizing and privatization of its social programs (Clark & Woods-Walker, 2006). At the same time, the promotion of faith-based initiatives and volunteerism as the solutions to the country's social problems have also diluted the status of social science professions and degraded the need for competencies to respond to individual and social problems (Clark & Woods-Walker, 2006).

On a similar note, social welfare professionals like social workers and social welfare workers in Australia face the challenge of professional identity and influence (Healy,

2009) and the promotion of social work values and ethics at the workplace (McDonald & Chenoweth, 2009) from the new public management (NPM) and related welfare reform policy. The NPM, for example, has been under heavy criticism for reducing government responsibility in comprehensive service provision to reduce public expenditure (Healy, 2009). Consequently, the service provider roles have been shifted to the non-governmental organizations with limited industrial regulation, which allows a non-qualified workforce to be employed. The competency-based approach to workforce planning has also shifted professional work to specific managerial tasks that do not require professional qualification. The shift to a more "marketized" nature and "business-like" language in the social service also poses a significant value dilemma to social workers in promoting social justice and advocacy at macro levels (McDonald & Chenoweth, 2009).

Interestingly, despite continuing challenges on social work profession in the more developed countries where social work professionalisation has taken place for a long period, the attention has slowly moved towards the study of social work from an international profession perspective around and after the turn of the millennium (Gray, 2005; Hare, 2004; Hugman, 1996; Midgley, 2001). Social work professions outside the US and the UK have started to examine and document the development of social work in their respective countries in English, for example, in China (Gao & Yan, 2015; Gray, 2008; Leong, 2007; Li, Han, & Huang, 2012; Yip, 2007), Cuba (Strug, 2006), Czech Republic (Chytil, 2006), Estonia (Kiik & Sirotkina, 2005), Greece (Koukouli, Papadaki, & Philalithis, 2008), Hong Kong (Chui, Tsang, & Mok, 2010), India (Nadkarni & Joseph, 2014), Indonesia (Fentiny & Kanya, 2014), Israel (Doron et al., 2008; Weiss-Gal et al., 2004), Italy (Facchini & Lorenz, 2013; Fargion, 2008), New Zealand (Beddoe,

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2013), Japan (Ito, 2011), Russia (Iarskaia-Smirnova & Romanov, 2002), South Korea (Kim, 2013), South Africa (Sewpaul & Lombard, 2004; Gray & Lombard, 2008), Taiwan (Chang & Mo, 2007; Lin & Wang, 2010), Thailand (Mongkolnechaiarunya, 2009), and Vietnam (Hugman, Durst, Le, Nguyen, & Nguyen, 2009). Some have begun to address social work from a regional perspective like Africa (Mupedziswa & Sinkamba, 2014), the Caribbean (Rock & Buchanan, 2014), Europe (Matthies, 2011; Radulescu, 2006), the Nordic countries (Asjekabd & Strauss, 2014), Latin America (Munoz-Guzman, Mancinas & Nucci, 2014; Pereyra, 2008), and South Asia (Bala Raju, 2014).

The bourgeoning of literature on social work across the globe is seen as part of the development of international social work (Healy, 2014). Healy (2014, p. 370) saw three diverse definitions and directions for international social work: (1) international social work as a movement for universality in the profession and its standards; (2) international social work as a form of practice; and (3) international social work as the roles and impacts of the profession on the global stage and global issues. While agreeing that theory building for international social work is still at the infancy stage, Healy (2014) noted that most would agree that increasing the global knowledge of social workers will only strengthen the profession.

A few themes appear from the literature. First, although most countries modelled their social work education and practice after the west, in particular the US and the UK, its professionalisation is very much influenced by each country's historical, political, social, cultural, and economic context (Gao & Yan, 2015; Kim, 2013; Koukouli, Papadaki, & Philalithis, 2008; Lin & Wang, 2010). Second, despite the differences in

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social work development in each country, the professional identity of social work still circles around the international debate (Fargion, 2008; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008) and moves towards the standardization of education or qualification regionally or globally (Matthies, 2011; Sewpaul & Lombard, 2004; Rock & Buchanan, 2014).

Nevertheless, social workers in many developing countries, especially where social work is still an unfamiliar term in the local context, are struggling to establish social work as a profession (Hugman, Durst, Le, Nguyen & Nguyen, 2009; Radulsecu, 2006; Wang, 2011; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). For instance, in Thailand and Indonesia, the professional identity of social work is blurred by the indistinctness between social work and social welfare by the general public (Fentiny & Kanya, 2014; Mongkolnechaiarunya, 2009). In the Republic of Korea, paradoxically, the expression of 'social work', which has been used since the 1920s, was replaced by "social welfare" after the 1980s as the terminology of social welfare combines both the microscopic approach of social work and the macroscopic approach of social policy (Han & Lim, 2014; Kim, 2013).

One other common challenge for social work in developing countries in gaining professional recognition is the connotation of social work to charity or relief nature of work that everyone can carry out (Fentiny & Kanya, 2014; Mongkolnechaiarunya, 2009; Rock & Buchanan, 2014) and by faith-based welfare worker and do-gooders (Rock & Buchanan, 2014). On the contrary, the development of social work in China has been moving at an incredible speed with strong government support (Gao & Yan, 2015; Wang, 2011). Yet, the "making" of the social work profession in China is seen as a government social-engineering project serving the state's political interest, and there

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are doubts about its professional autonomy and boundary under a strong state's intervention (Gao & Yan, 2015).

However, having legal recognition does not mean that the profession is perfect and professionalisation is complete. Ito (2011) reported that in Japan, despite having an Act to certify social workers since 1987, there have been divisions of opinions among professional associations about the role of social workers as critics see 'certification' not for autonomous social work activities but for conformity to the minimum standard to perform the task as an obedient technocrat. The 'certified' social workers, who are mostly seen performing the role of gatekeepers of regulated services, are also being criticized by non-profit organizations (NPO) for non-response to critical issues like unemployment and homelessness. The neo-liberal welfare policies further threaten the professional identity of social work through the change in social work education, mirroring the expectation of the government on managing social services than the traditional social work ethos and principles on human rights and social justice.

To understand the professionalisation of social work and its surrounding issues, numerous studies have indicated the roles of important stakeholders, most notably professional body that represents the profession, social work education at tertiary level, and the organizations or agencies that employ social workers to provide social services (e.g., Dulmus & Sowers, 2012; McDonald, Harris, & Wintersteen, 2003; Pierson, 2011; Wang, 2011; Weiss-Gal et al., 2004; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). There are also studies focusing more on social work education and social work professionalisation (e.g., Fentiny & Kanya, 2014; Green, 2006; Hugman, Durst, Le, Nguyen, & Nguyen, 2009; Lin & Wang, 2010; Nadkarni & Joseph, 2014; Rock & Buchanan, 2014; Sewpaul

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& Lombard, 2004), and some have looked at the impact of government welfare policies on social services and social work (Chui, Tsang, & Mok, 2010; Healy, 2009; Ito, 2011; Kim, 2013; McDonald & Chenoweth, 2009; Munday, 1998). Therefore, Welbourne (2009) advocated that the idea of social work as a profession requires analysis and consideration partly because of its position concerning the state and the impact of globalization on the profession itself.

1.2 Problem Statement

So what can be said about social work in Malaysia? There has been a close link between social work and social welfare in Malaysia (Azlinda & Sharima Ruwaida, 2013; Fuziah, 2006; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Sinnasamy, 2006; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014). The beginning of the social welfare program in Malaysia can be traced back as far as 1912, with the establishment of a special department by the British colonial administration to improve the well-being of migrant laborers (Ismail, 1990). The creation of a separate Social Service Department within the Colonial Office in 1937 (Fuziah, 2006 & 2007; Mair, 1944;) had led to the beginning of a more systematic and formalized social services and the need for appropriately trained social welfare officers in the field of social work (Ismail, 2011). Although the social welfare officers were British then, it was noted as the beginning of the development of the social work profession in Malaysia (Ismail, 2011).

As the statutory social service agency and the largest agency that employs social workers, the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia (DSW) has provided social welfare and social work service since its inception in 1946 (Fuziah, 2003, 2006 & 2007; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Ismail, 1990). The link between social welfare and social work

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is so close that Sinnasamy (2006) concluded that social work in Malaysia is deeply embedded within a social welfare paradigm. Furthermore, the social workers at the DSW became the leaders or prime movers of the professional body, i.e., the Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW), which was established in 1974 (MASW, 2003).

These developments have led Abdullah (2003) to exert that social work is no longer a new profession in Malaysia. However, "there seems to be a sense of frustration among many social workers that it has not made much progress over the years*"* (p. 3), and it remains under-developed and misunderstood by the general public of being equated to voluntary and non-skilled work related to charity ("Social work is just more than charity," 1998, "Social work can't be for 'just anyone'," 2010). There have been shortages of trained social workers ("Social work," 1998; Azlinda, 2009) with a decline in professional social workers employed in the DSW (Jeshuran, 1995; Sinnasamy, 2006). Many 'social workers' employed to deliver social services or social work functions are not trained in social work (Azlinda, 2009; Azlinda & Sharima Ruwaida, 2013; "Better counsellors," 2010; "Boost for a noble profession," 2010; MASW, 2005; "Social work," 2010; Zulkarnain et al., 2014; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014). In one study, the credibility of "professional" (with relevant qualification) social workers employed by DSW was questioned as they did not perform as professionally as the "functional alternative" (without relevant qualification) social workers working in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Zulkarnain et al., 2014). More critically, the lack of legislation or regulatory body for social work and social work education is seen as the main challenge for the professionalisation of social work in the country (Faizah et

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al., 2000; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Ismail, 2011; Teoh, 2014; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014).

There have been some efforts in writing about the development of social work in Malaysia (e.g., Chong, 1998; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Ling, 2002; Ismail, 1998, 2000b, 2002 & 2011; Sinnasamy, 2006; Siti Hawa, 1991; Teoh, 2014; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014). However, all of them are in the form of book chapters, journal articles, or conference papers, which have limited space to give a complete picture of social work and its development in the country. Several articles (e.g. Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Ismail, 2011; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014) also referred to older publications by Mair (1944) and Yasas (1974) when tracing the earlier development of social welfare and social work in Malaysia but only up to 1970s. Some of the earlier development of social work in Malaysia (including Singapore) can also be found in Wee (2002) but mainly up to the 1970s after Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) took over the training of Malaysia's social welfare officers from the National University of Singapore with the introduction of the Social Development and Administration (SDA) degree program in 1975.

In a more recent article on the internationalization of social work education in Malaysia, Fuziah and Ismail (2013) managed to trace the development of social work from the colonial period to independence and subsequently until the first social work program being established at USM in 1975. They noted that the establishment of social work education in Malaya began at the University of Malaya in Singapore in 1952. However, they did not provide any lead on why social work education was left in a vacuum when the University of Malaya was established in Kuala Lumpur in 1962 while the campus in Singapore was renamed the National University of Singapore. They also covered the initiative of the social work educators in establishing the National Consultative Council

on Social Work Education (NJCCSWE) in 2000. Their subsequent discussions were on how the western welfare ideas and services introduced by the colonial administration were adapted and implemented locally to showcase the internationalization of social work education and training in the country.

Meanwhile, Fatthipour (1989, 1991) and Fattahipour and Hatta (1992) writings focused more on the debate of professional identity of social work caused by the name of the SDA program in USM than the development of social work as a whole. Since the SDA program was generic social work and did not clearly or strongly give them a sense of identity as professional social workers (Fattahipour & Hatta,1992), many social work students simply saw themselves as 'personnel officers', 'administrators', 'social developers', or just 'jack of all trades' (Fattahipour, 1988) and not social workers (Fattahipour & Hatta,1992). The name SDA was finally changed to social work in 1995, 20 years after the start of the program (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Ismail, 2011). While the rationale to use SDA at the beginning of the program was well noted (Fuziah and Ismail, 2013; Ismail, 2011; Yasas, 1974), the reasons why it took so long for the program to change its name to social work was not known. The debates and views during the twenty years could be valuable to comprehend the status of social work development in the late 70s to early 90s.

Zulkarnain and Zarina (2014) also detailed the history of social welfare in Malaysia from pre- to post-independence and highlighted major organizations and related policies for the delivery of social welfare. The lack of trained social workers employed was highlighted but was not discussed further or with supportive data. In addition, the issue of weak professional identity was linked to social work education only. Like

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Ismail and Fuziah (2013), their subsequent discussion was then turned to social work education and curriculum design. There were also more write-ups about USM than any other university that offers social work education.

Two and a half decades ago, several social work practitioners and academia contributed articles to the First National Conference on the Caring Society: Emerging Issues and Future Directions held on 5 - 6 December 1990 at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies in Kuala Lumpur. The proceedings were subsequently published in 1992 (Ismail, 1992; Sushama, 1992a & 1992b; Zaharah, 1992). The writers raised the importance of professional social work in advancing social welfare delivery and social development in achieving a caring society. It would be valuable to discover if their ideas might have spurred the creation of new social work programs in the 1990s and also the insertion of caring society as one of the nine challenges of Vision 2020 (Ahamd Sarji, 1993) launched by the then Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamed in 1991.

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Thus far, most writings about social work and social work education highlighted earlier were mainly written by social work academia except practitioners like Jeshuran (1996) and Sinnasamy (2006). In addition, Ling (2007) published a book on indigenizing of social work but mainly on indigenous practice within the social-cultural context of Sarawak. Two master's theses by Siti Hawa (1983) and Lee (2011) highlighted some professionalisation issues, but their main topic was on social work education and medical social work practice, respectively. A PhD thesis by Amna (2013) only discussed professionalisation issues in the literature review as her main study was on ethics and values of social work among social welfare officers.

MASW published a small book about the history of social work in Malaysia, which includes the names of pioneer social workers and some contributions of the association to social work and national development (MASW, 2003). However, it was a self-publication (with no ISBN number nor publisher name) that was meant for the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the association. It was not for sale and, therefore, not available for public consumption. Therefore, until today there is no book which any reader can make reference to the development of social work in Malaysia. Many Malaysian social workers and social work students may know more about the history of social work in the US and the UK through social work books from abroad than knowing the history and development of social work in their own country.

Ismail (2011) pointed out that the inability of MASW to attract more participation of social workers could be one reason why social work is underdeveloped in the country. However, there seems to be a lack of in-depth research investigating the link between the efforts of the professional body and the state, in this regard, between MASW and DSW in the advancement of social work in Malaysia given the intimacy between both organizations when most of the early leaders of MASW were senior social welfare officers at DSW. Hence, the efforts undertaken by key stakeholders like MASW, DSW, and social work academia for social work development from the late 1960s until recent years are still not well established. Some important people and their contributions to social work were identified until 1975 in Ismail and Fuziah (2013), but no names were mentioned after that. This could be one key gap that needs to be addressed. Pierson (2011) argued that the historical development of social work is always neglected when it is important to understand the profession. The understanding of social work in

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Malaysia would not be complete if key social workers and important incidents or measures that impacted social work from the 1970s until recently over 40 years are left undocumented and being studied.

Approximately five years ago, efforts to improve the professionalism of social work in Malaysia were given a boost when the government approved six measures to streamline social worker's profession, ensure quality of service by social workers, and enhance their professionalism (Lee, 2011; Teoh, 2014). The six measures include establishing National Social Work Competency Standards, enacting a Social Workers Act, establishing a National Regulatory Body for social work, recruiting qualified social workers, standardizing social work education programs, and developing social work courses at a certificate and diploma level ("Six steps to high social work," 2010; "Proposed social workers act," 2010). Obviously, many things have taken place before the announcement, yet no studies have been conducted on how these measures came about and what led to the decision.

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With these developments in the pipeline, it seems there are many positives for the development of social work in Malaysia. Nonetheless, it is not without resistance and rejection as some quarters perceived that the proposed Social Workers Act is damaging to voluntary work ("Sarawak rejects social workers act," 2014; "State to shun Social Workers Act," 2014; "That downright stupid Act," 2014) and challenging to expand into other settings like the school (Zulkarnain, 2009). Hence, it is a critical point for social work in Malaysia to decide and shape its professional future. However, how much that we know and are able to describe social work in Malaysia, in particular its professional development involving key stakeholders like DSW, MASW, and social

work education from 1975 until recent years, still needs to be clearly understood to address issues like the declining of professional social workers being employed (Sannisamy, 2006) and public image on social work ("Social work can't be," 2010) adequately.

Hence, the scarcity of indept reporting of the development of the social work profession in Malaysia has led the researcher to identify the research gaps as follows:

(1) The documentation of its professionalisation has been disjointed. Much has been written about the early development and until 1975 where the first social work program was established at USM, but the development after 1975 until now, except on social work education, is still fragmented and vague from the professional body and government policy perspective. What has been done, by whom and what has been achieved after 1975 until recent years are still not known even by many of its practitoners and educators. In another words, the history of social work and its professionalisation in Malaysia remains incomplete.

(2) There is also a lack of study on social work as a profession and its professionalisation based on theory of profession like what has been done in many countries. Many issues faced by the profession will not be understood in an accurate context, and will not be properly discussed without an appropriate theoretical framework.

(3) Moreover, without having a comprehensive understanding of social work professionalisation in Malaysia, particularly the efforts and relations between the professional body, the educators, and the state, for the last forty years, and what has worked and what has not worked from the theory of profession perspective, it would

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not be easy for DSW, MASW and social work education to identify the actual problem and to come up with right strategies in advancing the profession.

Subsequently, it is also vital to study the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia in an appropriate theoretical framework that allows for international comparative analysis (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). For instance, the trait model (Greenwood, 1957; Wilensky, 1964; Toren, 1972; Popple, 1985), the power model (Johnson, 1972; Freidson, 1970) or the combination of both (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2007, 2008) as the main theoretical framework to analyze would be valuable to establish the key characteristics of social work in Malaysia and the extent the profession has established dominance in areas of practice or a monopoly over the delivery of services over the last 40 years, primarily through the efforts of MASW, DSW, and the academia. In addition, it is worth investigating how the appeal of the idea of profession and understanding of professionalism from the organizational and occupational perspective (Evetts, 2003, 2013, 2014) can motivate the social work community to strive hard to enhance it professional standings in Malaysia.

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1.3 Research Questions

In searching for answers to fill the research gaps identified, the general research question that this study wishes to address is how to describe social work and its development as a profession in Malaysia. Does social work in Malaysia exhibit similar professional characteristics or traits like its counterparts in other countries or different? What has social work in Malaysia achieved and not achieved that makes it stalled at this stage? What has been done in this regard, and who has done what among the social workers, the government agencies that employ social workers or provide social services,

the professional association, and the academia? What else can be done more by these stakeholders in making social work a recognized profession?

Specifically, in exploring the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia, the present study attempts to answer the following related research questions:

(i) How has social work developed as a profession in Malaysia since independence, particularly after the forming of Malaysia until 2010?

(ii) How have the relevant stakeholders contributed to the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia during that period spanning 40 years?

(iii) How to further enhance the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Consistent with the research questions outlined above, the broad objective of this study is to put into context the development of social work as profession in Malaysia in order to understand how it has evolved from 1969 until 2010. More specifically, this study aims to accomplish the following objectives:

(i) Analyze the professionalisation of social work of Malaysia from 1969 to 2010.

(ii) Identify the efforts of stakeholders in advancing the professionalisation of social work.

(iii) Recommend strategies to enhance the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia.

1.5 Similar Past Research

This study adopts the idea of a PhD research by Wang (2011), who studied the professionalisation process of social work in the Chinese Mainland from 1978 to 2006.

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In his study, Wang focused on the interaction of the State, the Society, and the Academic Community, and utilized the 'historical sociology' and 'process-event' method of analysis to analyze the data collected from historical literature, government documents, conference and seminar proceedings, papers written by key stakeholders, research reports and memoirs, and oral history testimonies of 34 significant persons who have participated in the historical development process.

To a certain extent, this study is similar to Wang's study in terms of the 'process-event' method of analysis and data collection. The differences, besides the country context, are in the stakeholders involved and the method of analysis. While the government and academic community are selected in these two studies, this study focuses on the national professional social work body instead of 'the Society', which was the mechanism at the local level hiring social workers and providing social services in Wang's study. In addition, this study makes references to the social work timeline by Pierson (2011), theories of the profession, and professional features used by Weiss-Gal & Welbourne (2007, 2008) in data analysis which was not in Wang's study.

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1.6 Study Interest and Personal Concern

The researcher developed a keen interest in the social work profession and issues of professionalisation back in 1997 when studying social work in the UK. While fascinated with the reading abundance of references on social work and its development in the UK and the US, the researcher's mind went blank when his lecturer, Dr. Brian Munday, asked him to share about social work in Malaysia to other classmates as he has never read anything about that subject matter before. Dr. Munday then directed the researcher to read a master's thesis written by another Malaysian who did her

postgraduate study there more than a decade ago. The thesis by Siti Hawa Ali (1983) first introduced the author to the development of social work in Malaysia. The thesis highlights the beginning of social welfare services, the social work program at USM, and the Malaysian Association of Social Workers. That also prompted the researcher to write 'What is social work' as his first written assignment to familiarize himself with the history and the evolution of social work from a philanthropic movement into a profession.

After completing his postgraduate study, the researcher returned to Malaysia and was appointed as a social work lecturer at the School of Social Development at Universiti Utara Malaysia in 1999. In preparing lecture notes for various social work subjects that he was assigned to teach, the researcher was again thrown into deep thoughts as he could not find any social work textbooks written by Malaysians or refer to the local context. As a novice social work lecturer without much field experience, the researcher could only talk about the development of social work in the US and the UK when teaching Introduction to Social Work, and very briefly on social work in Malaysia, mainly from what he has read from the thesis of Siti Hawa (1983).

The turning point that spurs his further interest in the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia was when he met Ms Elsie Lee and Mrs Amy Bala in 2000 when both of them came to Sintok for a social work conference organized by UUM and supported by the MASW. Ms Elsie Lee was the President of the MASW, while Mrs Amy Bala was the Vice President then. They encouraged social work educators, including the researcher, to join the MASW. Hence, the researcher became a member in 2000, and in 2007, became a life member. Through MASW's events like talks and annual general

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meetings, the researcher knew many other social work practitioners from various organizations, as well as the three founding members of the MASW, namely Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda, Ms PC Sushama, and Mrs Grace Ng.

During the first meeting between the researcher with Ms PC Sushama in 2003, the latter looked at the researcher seriously after introducing himself. Two questions she asked still sound like thunder in the researcher's head until today: "What is your qualification?" and "What is your practice?". These two questions by Ms Sushama were essentially keys to what constitutes a profession and the study of a profession.

Although the researcher left the academia temporarily for almost ten years from 2004 to 2013, his exposure working as a Press Secretary to the Prime Minister of Malaysia has broadened his views on the federal government policy planning and media reporting. He also began to see the gaps between planning and implementation. The researcher had never left the social work field entirely as it was more convenient for him to attend events organized by MASW in the Klang Valley than when he was teaching at UUM in Sintok, Kedah. It was during this period when the MASW started the competency standards for social work practice project, followed by the Professionally Accountable Practice with the guidance of Dr Pauline Memeeduma, a social work consultant from Australia. It was also due to the researcher's continuous concern shown towards the profession that Ms Elsie Lee had asked the researcher to step in as the Honorary Treasurer of MASW in 2008 when the post was left vacant. Hence, the researcher, for the first time, served in the Executive Committee of MASW as Honorary Treasurer, although the appointment was through co-option, not elected.

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Ms Elsie then asked the researcher to be ready to take over as the President of MASW in 2009 as she had served three terms for that position and thought it would be good for the MASW to have a younger person to lead. The researcher agreed because he knew that he would be based in the Klang Valley for a few years more as he was now serving the former Prime Minister in a new office with a reduced workload. Eventually, the researcher was elected by members to become the new President in the 2009 Annual General Meeting (AGM), a post which he did not expect to serve for continuous four terms over the span of eight years from 2009 until 2017.

It was during the researcher's tenure as President of MASW that he experienced first-hand the ups and downs in advancing the profession, including establishing a strategic working relationship with the leadership and senior officers of the DSW and the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, and various non-governmental organizations in the social welfare sector, as well as the NJCCSWE. In 2010, as President of MASW, the researcher was appointed to the Technical Committee in Enhancing the Professionalism of Social Work after the Cabinet had endorsed the Six-Point Memorandum in Enhancing Social Work. More crucially, the researcher is among the few who are the original members of the working committee in drafting the Social Work Profession Bill, called the Social Workers Bill, when the drafting first started in 2010. The experiences in the meeting, advocating and fighting for the Bill to be supported by different stakeholders from the MWFCD, DSW, state governments, and various non-government welfare organizations over these years have reinforced the determination of the researcher to tell the story of the professionalisation of social work to policymakers and young social work practitioners who have no recollection of how

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social work has taken root and the importance of professional education and training in producing competent social workers.

Through MASW, the researcher also managed to attend regional and international social work conferences, meetings, and workshops organized by the IFSW or IASSW. The researcher had learned more about the development and professionalisation of social work in other countries when he attended international functions or when he received social workers or social work students from abroad who visited Malaysia. In 2014, when attending the Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development in Melbourne, Australia, the researcher was elected as the Commonwealth Organization for Social Work (COSW) Chairperson, which he served until 2020. Through his position in MASW, he was also chosen to represent Malaysia in the ASEAN Social Work Consortium (ASWC) Conference in Phuket, Thailand, in 2015, and he continued to play a key resource person for the Ministry on ASWC until today. In 2018, the researcher was asked to take over as the Honorary Secretary for the IFSW-Asia Pacific and was endorsed officially in the 2019 Regional Meeting in Bangalore, India.

The position as President of MASW opens the door for the researcher to many platforms to address issues of professionalisation. For example, MASW is a member of Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia (BIM) or the Malaysian Profession Board, which is made up of more than 20 professionals. As President of MASW, the researcher represented MASW in the Board Meeting regularly and the yearly AGM. It was in 2012 when the researcher was elected as one of the Vice Presidents of BIM. The researcher learned more about profession and efforts in professionalizing as BIM consists of many

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member organizations regulated under the Parliament Act, such as the medical profession, the legal profession, engineers, architects, etc. and smaller member organizations, like MASW, which are still struggling to obtain professional recognition through legislation.

MASW also joined as a member organization with the Malaysian National Council on Welfare and Social Development (MAKPEM) when the researcher was the President. Although MAKPEM is an umbrella body for national welfare organizations in Malaysia, it is also a member of the International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW). The researcher first came to know about MAKPEM when Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda served as its President. Later, when the researcher was the President of MASW, he attended and supported more training activities of MAKPEM as there were two retired social welfare officers serving in MAKPEM then. The late Tuan Haji Hitam Chik was the Chief Executive Officer while Mr Vengadasan was heading the training committee. Both were active members of MASW. The late Tuan Haji Hitam Chik once served as President of MASW from 1991-1993 and retired as Deputy Director General of DSW before working with MAKPEM. The researcher still remembers vividly during the National Social Work Competency Standard Symposium in 2009. After the Minister who officiated the Symposium announced that the Ministry was looking into drafting a Social Workers Bill, Mr Vengadasan stood up in one session and said that he was overjoyed as he would never have imagined that he would see such law in his lifetime.

Sadly, both Tuan Haji Hitam Chik and Mr Vengadasan passed away a few years later. However, because of their passion in promoting the profession and the efforts and

devotion of many other social workers to the profession, the researcher is stimulated to record and share their stories and the story of the development of the social work profession in Malaysia. This is because the younger generation of social workers and social work educators are not active in MASW, and they would not know about these as they have not been written, published, or taught in social work education at universities.

When the researcher decided to return to academia in September 2013, many friends and colleagues suggested that he write about the 5th Prime Minister as his PhD topic. However, the researcher has set his mind on recording and writing about the story of the social work profession in Malaysia, not on his involvement and his work as the President of MASW, but the efforts of social workers before him which should be known by every Malaysian social worker and social work student before entering the profession. These stories must be told as they are also part of the history of the MASW, DSW, and social work education which have not been known or acknowledged. They are also linked to the researcher's first journey into social work in England over twenty years ago when he prepared his first written assignment on what social work is and a presentation on social work in Malaysia.

It took a lengthy consideration on the period of study, i.e., what year to begin and what year to end for this study. Considering the research gaps presented earlier in the problem statement, the researcher first thought of starting from 1973 as it was the year the MASW was formed. However, he later decided to start from 1969 as that was the year when Mr S. Sockanathan, the first qualified local social worker, became the Director-General (DG) of Social Welfare of Malaysia, and he played some part in the formation

of the MASW as informed by one of the respondents of the study during this study. It is also a critical event for the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia. The next question was when to end. That also took a while after the researcher started his PhD journey. When preparing for his farewell speech as President of MASW in the 2017 AGM, the researcher concluded that much of the work of the Association under his leadership for the past eight years was very much related to the events and decisions laid down in 2010 through the Six-Point Memorandum in Enhancing Social Work in Malaysia. Besides, many of the efforts and work during his tenure are still ongoing, particularly on the Social Work Profession Bill. In addition, personal bias could have occurred if post-2010 events are being studied as the researcher was personally involved in the process. In the end, it was decided that this study focuses on the period from 1969 until 2010.

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1.7 Research Framework

This study refers to and adapts the following ideas in formulating the research framework:

(1) Social work timeline by Pierson (2011) (Figure 1.1) - In his study on the history and context of social work in the UK, Pierson (2011) developed a social work timeline in mapping out the year of critical events that have significant impacts on social work there.

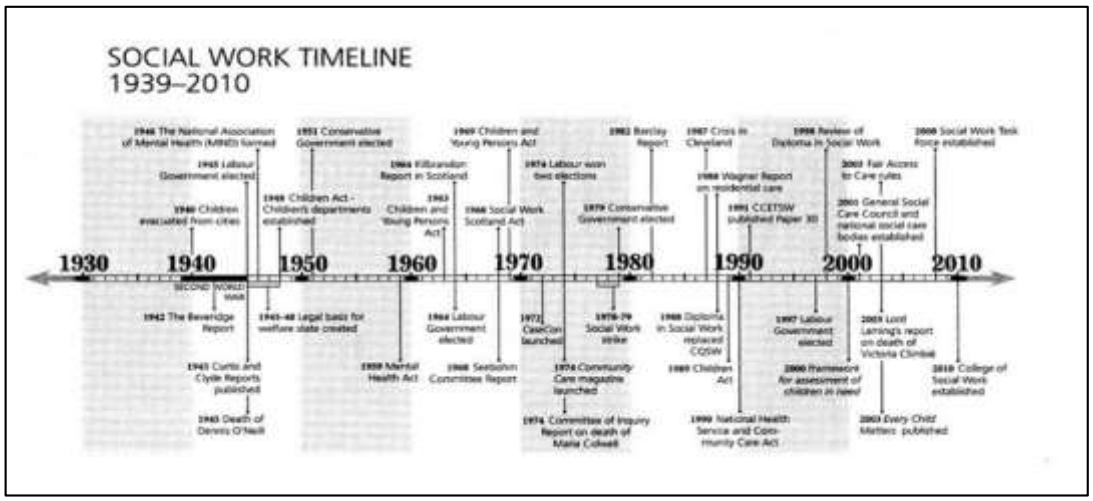

Figure 1.1. Social Work Timeline

(2) Professional features used by Weiss-Gal & Welbourne (2007, 2008) - The two authors combined both the trait and power perspectives of the profession into eight indicators: (i) public recognition of professional status, (ii) professional monopoly over specific types of work, (iii) professional autonomy of action, (iv) possession of a distinctive knowledge base; (v) professional education regulated by members of the profession, (vi) an effective professional organization, (vii) codified ethical standards, and (viii) prestige and remuneration reflecting professional standards. This study uses all eight indicators.

(3) Thesis of Professionalism by Evetts (2003, 2013 & 2014) – the author has theorized two ways in which professionalism is applied to benefit different groups namely occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism.

The social work timeline is used to map out key events or initiatives in chronological order that describes the professionalisation of social work in the country. The professional features, on the other hand, describe the characteristic of professional social work developed during the professionalisation process. The idea of occupational

professionalism and organizational professionalism examines the aspiration of the social work profession (represented by current and former MASW leaders), social work educator (represented by academics from social work programs at universities), and DSW (represented by both present and former senior officials like DG or Deputy DG at DSW) in advancing the profession and professionalism of social work. Data were generated from both expert interviews and documents. Thematic analysis was the method of data analysis, and triangulation was used to validate the data generated from the interview with relevant documents. The research framework is illustrated in Figure 1.2 while further details will be elaborated in Chapter Three.

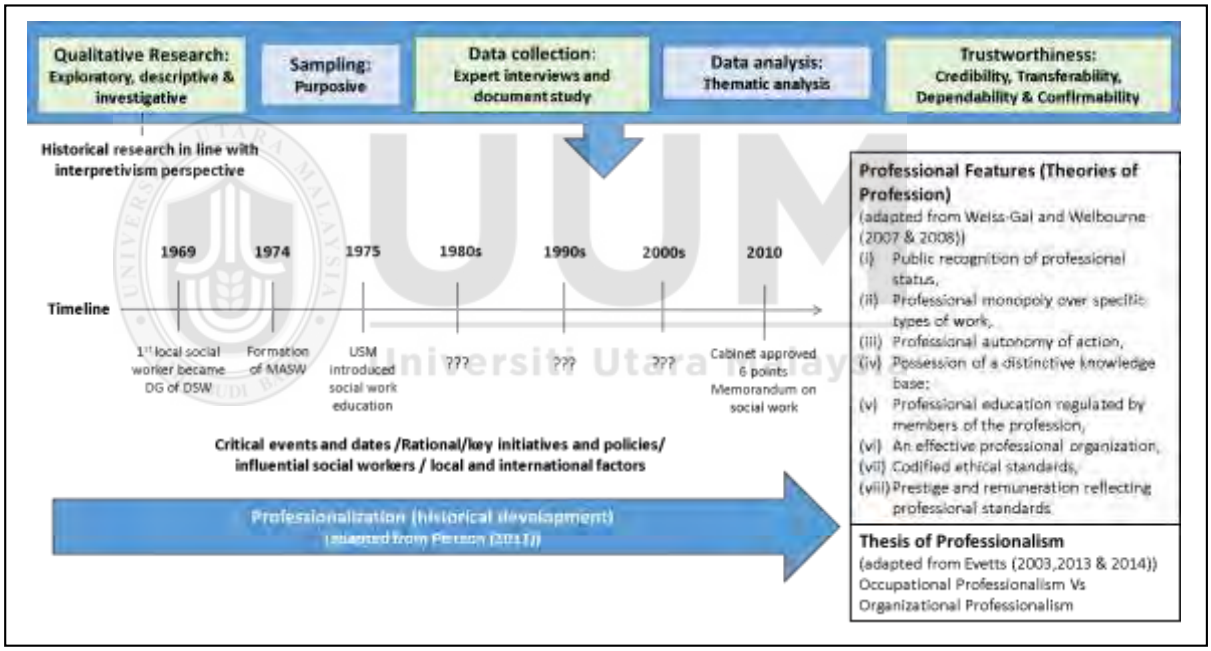

Figure 1.2. Research Framework

1.8 Operational Definitions

1.8.1 Social work and social workers

According to the IFSW (2018), social work is defined as "a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that facilitates social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice,

human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance well-being".

In this study, social work is defined as a practice-based profession and an academic discipline at the institutions of higher learning. A social worker is a full-time practitioner with relevant social work qualifications and training but may include practitioners who hold social work positions with other tertiary qualifications, such as social welfare officer, community development officer, or medical social officer. Social workers also include social work educators whose primary practices are teaching, training, and research in social work at the university.

1.8.2 Profession, professionalisation, and professionalism

In this study, a profession is defined as a distinct and generic category of an occupational group (Evetts, 2003, 2014) of which its members possess knowledge and skills, through shared education and training, distinctive from other occupational groups, regulated with minimum standards and qualifications set for entry into that profession that has a recognized professional identity (Welbourne, 2009).

Professionalisation refers to a process that adheres or moves towards achieving full professional status or professional standing of a profession through specific knowledge and expertise, education and training, code of ethics, professional culture, public recognition, and remuneration (Green, 1957; Hugman, 1991 & 1996; Toren, 1972; Weiss-Gall & Welbourne, 2008). In this study, the professionalisation of social work

refers to the process of improving the status of social work as a profession by relevant stakeholders. This includes efforts in making social work recognized as a profession through professional education and training, ensuring trained or qualified social workers are being employed in relevant social work positions, and devising a mechanism to regulate the profession.

Professionalism refers to a value system and an ideological interpretation of an occupational group in putting on a professional and skilled performance to ratify meaningful and legitimate work practices (Evetts, 2003).

1.8.3 Stakeholders

According to Freeman (1984), a stakeholder is defined as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives. Eden and Ackermann (1998), on the other hand, saw stakeholders as 'people or small groups with the power to respond to, negotiate with, and change the strategic future of the organization' (1998, p. 117). In addition, stakeholders can be from the internal or external of the organization, and they can be at senior or junior levels.[2]

There are three stakeholders in this study. The first group consists of social workers in leadership positions in the professional association of social workers, namely those who have been elected and served in the Executive Committee of the MASW. The second group consists of social workers and social welfare officers in leadership positions in DSW, namely those who have served as DG of the Social Welfare of Malaysia. The

[2] stakeholdermap.com

third group consists of social work educators in leadership positions in the social work program at Malaysian universities, such as the head or coordinator of the program.

1.8.4 Strategies

Watkins (2007) defined strategy as to how people throughout the organization should make decisions and allocate resources to accomplish key objectives. A good strategy provides a clear roadmap, consisting of a set of guiding principles or rules, that defines the actions people should take (and not take) and the things they should prioritize (and not prioritize) to achieve the desired goals. On the other hand, Porter (1980, p. 14) asserted that developing a competitive strategy is like "developing a broad formula for how a business is going to compete, what its goals should be, and what policies will be needed to carry out those goals".

Both definitions point to the need to know what to achieve (goals and objectives), actions to be taken to achieve the goals, a clear roadmap (policies), and priorities when formulating strategies. Therefore, in this study, strategies refer to a roadmap of actions that includes goal identification and short-term and medium-term tasks or tactics to be taken that involve the three stakeholders in making social work a recognized and leading profession in the field of social welfare in the next ten years.

1.9 Significance of the Study

Earlier, the researcher has identified a few research gaps in the study of professionalisation of social work in Malaysia which derived from a disjointed documentation of the process particularly after the 1970s, the lack of research based on

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an appropriate theoretical framework, as well as the ambiguity over the roles and efforts of the DSW, MASW and social work education in advancing the profession.

In this regards, this study has documented the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from 1969 until 2010 based on oral history of social work leaders who were active and present at those time periods and document study of relevant annual reports, minutes of meetings and publications from DSW, MASW and universities. It is to this date, in the researcher's knowledge, the only study that covers the professionalisation of social work over the four decades in Malaysiam as well as studying the efforts of DSW, MASW and social work programs (with names of key people, institutions, programs, laws and policies) in advancing the profession. It can serve as a critical reference or country case study in understanding the history of social work and its development in Malaysia.

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In addition, this study is also the first study that analysizd the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia based on a theoretical framework which utilizes theories of profession which emcompasses the Trait Model, Power Model and the thesis of Professionalism. The analyses identified what has been achieved and what has yet to achieved by the social work profession, as well as explainations on why some efforts were successful while some were not, and what can be considered or taken action in the future.

This study is significant because it can provide a clearer direction for the professional body, academia, and policy makers involved in advancing social work for the country. For DSW, they can learn how the country social welfare services was closely tied with

social work, how their predecessors have tried to strengthened their organizations through professionalizing their workforce, and what were the factors that have impacted the stagnation of professionalisation in the department. For MASW, they can learn that having the professional body alone does not mean that the professionalisation is complete. It needs structures, capacities, resources and strategies in taking the leading role in advancing the profession. For social work programs, the educators can learn that by producing social work graduates alone does not guarantee social work being recognized as a profession. They need to be more active in engaging the public and the government as opinion leaders and solution providers. Furthermore, these stakeholders can have a better institutional memory of their respective organizations, and can see they can no longer work in silos because conserted effort is required among them to raise the profesional image and profile of social work in Malaysia.

In a nutshell, this study is significant as it fills the gaps on the professionalisation study of social work in Malaysia, both from historical and theoretical perspective, and can serve as a reference for future research by local and international researchers. It can also serve as a country case study on social work professionalisation for other developing countries. More deliberation can be found in the contribution of the study section in the final chapter.

1.10 Scope of the Study

This study specifically focuses on the professionalisation of social work from 1969 until 2010 by incorporating important historical development that has shaped the profession since independence. Several key stakeholders were engaged, namely the leaders and former leaders of the MASW, social work educators, and the present and former DG of

the Social Welfare Department (DSW), to provide their views on the development of social work and efforts taken in promoting the profession in the country. Information was also gathered from documents and the minutes of meetings of MASW, social work programs of universities, and the National Joint Consultative Council on Social Work Education (NJCCSWE), and DSW.

1.11 Organization of the chapters

The present study is organized into eight chapters. Chapter One mainly focuses on the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, research framework, and operational definitions of the key concepts. Chapter Two reviews related professionalisation theories and relevant literature on the professionalisation of social work inside and outside Malaysia.

Chapter Three details the qualitative research method used in this study. Discussion includes the research design, respondent identification and selection, interview question and protocol design, data collection, thematic data analysis, limitations of the method chosen, and issues of validity and ethical consideration.

Chapter Four first deliberated on the early beginning of social welfare services and social work introduced from the colonial period until the independence of Malaya and the formation of Malaysia. Although this period is not within the scope of this study, it sets the context and provides the link in understanding the early development of social work with the professionalisation of social work in post-1970 Malaysia. The chapter then explores and discusses key events, initiatives, and personalities that have

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contributed to or have impacted the professionalisation of social work from 1969 until 1989.

Next, Chapter Five looks into similar items for the next two decades, beginning from 1990 until 2010. In essence, both Chapter Four and Five generate the social work timeline that captures the historical development and professionalisation of social work in Malaysia for approximately forty years from 1969 to 2010.

Chapter Six deliberates and discusses the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from the professionalisation theory perspectives to understand the accomplishments, underachievement, challenges, and ongoing struggles the social work profession continues to face. Several strategies and suggestions in advancing the social work profession further for the three particular stakeholders are presented from the findings.

To conclude the study, Chapter Seven revisits the research questions and objectives of the study by summarizing the findings in previous chapters, provides strategies in moving forward, outlines the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

1.12 Chapter Summary

Social work in many parts of the world are constantly developing, yet its status as a profession has not been acknowledged or recognized, more so in developing countries like Malaysia. Yet, without understanding how it has developed and reasons why it has not achieved its full aspiration as a profession, it gives no solid foundation for the profession to develop measures to enhance itself and to advocate its positions to policy makers and the general public. Therefore, this study is significant in identifying the

successes, shortcomings and challenges of social work in Malaysia from the professionalisation theoretical perspectives, which can provide valuable insights for the government, the practitioners and its professional association, and the social work educators to develop effective strategies in making social work a recognized profession in Malaysia eventually.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews past literature and discusses the conception of social work (history and context), the theoretical framework of profession and professionalisation, and issues related to the professionalisation of social work.

2.2 Conception of Social Work

This section reviews the concept and meaning of social work from both historical and developmental perspectives. It moves from the early history of social work in the US and the UK to the chronological development of the local definition of social work (US and UK) and the global definition of contemporary social work.

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2.2.1 Brief History of Social Work

It has been widely acknowledged that contemporary social work emerged during the middle of the 19th century in the UK and the US due to social issues. It started through philanthropic, faith-based, and voluntary organizations, such as the Charity Organization Society and the Settlement House Movement, due to the industrialization, urbanization, and migration of people and families into the cities (Bamford, 2015; Bamford & Bilton, 2020; Dulmus & Sowers, 2012; Ehrenreich, 2014; Horner, 2012; Pierson, 2011; Suppes & Wells, 2013; Stuart, 2019; Younghusband, 1981, Zastrow, 2010). From a humble beginning as friendly visitors in assisting the poor and the needy, social work has expanded into an occupation by the turn of the 20th century in different settings, such as general hospitals, public schools, psychiatric clinics, and juvenile court

with the increasing role of government in providing public social welfare services. Various social work positions were created like almoners (later changed to hospital social workers), children social workers, psychiatric social workers, and probation officers.

The two world wars and the Great Depression (1929-1933) sandwiched in between the two wars had impacted social policy and social services in the US and the UK (Dulmus & Sowers, 2012; Suppes & Wells, 2013). For instance, the US introduced the New Deal (1933), the Social Security Act (1935), and the National Mental Health Act (1946), while the UK introduced the National Insurance Act (1946), the National Health Services Act (1946), and the National Assistance Act (1948). These laws saw the government in these two countries taking up greater roles in funding allocation and social welfare services provision (Bamford, 2015; Ehrenreich, 2014; Horner, 2012; Pierson, 2011; Suppes & Wells, 2013; Stuart, 2019; Younghusband, 1981, Zastrow, 2010). Consequently, social work positions expanded and firmly established themselves within the social welfare and social services. With the expansion of tertiary social work education and the establishment of national social work professional organizations, social work was progressing from an occupation to a profession. Its professionalisation is discussed in the later part of this chapter.

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2.2.2 What is Social Work?

Although social work has existed for more than a century, it is still not easy to get a one-line definition of social work as it is often referred to as a complex, heterogeneous field that has been interpreted in many different ways (Staub-Bernasconi, 2009). Younghusband (1981) even claimed that while it is common for people define social

work and social worker, the exercise is not a very profitable undertaking (p. 23). Nonetheless, it would be good to analyze the definition of social work from different periods for a clearer understanding.

Mary Richmond, one of the early pioneers of social work and social work education, defined social work as 'those processes which developed personally through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their environment' (1928, p. 98-99). Her definition of social work was derived from her years of experience of casework practice with the Charity Organization Society, which eventually led her into writing two classic social workbooks, *Social Diagnosis* (1917) and *What is social case work? An introductory description* (1922) (Social Welfare History Project, 2011).

Richmond's work has influenced many social work scholars in years to come (e.g., Biestek, 1957; Friedlander, 1958; Hollis, 1972; Perlman, 1957; Robinson, 1930) who focused on social casework and casework relationship when writing about the concept of social work. For instance, Perlman (1957) defined social casework as 'a process used by certain human welfare agencies to help individuals cope more effectively with their problems in social functioning' (p .4). She further identified four essential components or nucleus of casework where 'A *person* with a *problem* comes to a *place* where a *professional representative* helps him by a given *process'* (p. 4, italic in the original text). Perlman's definition has positioned the social worker as a professional who helps clients deal with problems through the casework process. This was also very much in line with the efforts to establish social work as a profession and later spurred the studies

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in demonstrating and self-examining the effectiveness of social case work as a professional practice (Fischer, 1976, 1979; Wood, 1978).

Another pioneer social worker who had impacted the social work profession and its practice was Jane Addams. Starting her work in the settlement house movement in 1888, Jane Addams was credited with social reform (Larkin, 2006; Lundblad, 1995) and social justice (Suppes & Wells, 2013) by emphasizing social work. Jane Addams and her co-founder of Hull House in Chicago, Ellen Gates Starr, were recognized as pioneers of community practice in social work (Reich, 2012). Addams and her colleagues believed that poverty resulted from unjust and unfortunate social conditions. They responded to the needs of the neighbourhood largely made up of migrant communities by introducing and developing social services, including daycare for the children of factory workers through mutual aid. They also advocated for better working conditions and protective legislation for children and women, as well as child labor legislation and mandatory minimum education laws (Suppes & Wells, 2013). Due to her perpetual efforts in advocating for social justice, in 1931, Addams was the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and perceived by many as the 'Mother of Social Work' in the US (Derry, 2019; Joslin, 2004; Schneiderhan, 2011).

While Mary Richmond and Jane Addams have been long recognized as the most influential figures in the history of the social work profession (Franklin, 1986), Richmond's casework ideology and Charity Organization Society (COS) settings are clearly different from Addams's intellectual peaceful activist approach and the settlement movement method from the very beginning (Augustine & Gentle-Genitty, 2013). Nevertheless, by the early 1900s, the settlements and COS began to merge into

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a new field of social work (Trattner, 1999). Therefore, it is worth noting an event in 1905 that symbolized the two orientations 'merging into social work'. This was when *The Commons*, the journal of one settlement house, merged with *Charities*, the publication of the New York Charity Society, into *Charities and the Commons* (Lundblad, 1995). The term social work, coined around the turn of the century, developed from the term social works, as in good works (Specht & Courtney, 1994). Eventually, both casework and community work became essential social work methods taught in social work education.

Meanwhile, as time progressed, the functions of social work and the roles of social workers became extensive and more diverse (Gibelman, 1995; Morales et al., 2010). The definition of social work also became much broader. For example, Pincus and Minahan (1973) presented a more comprehensive definition by saying that "social work is concerned with the interactions between people and their social environment which affect the ability of people to accomplish their life tasks, alleviate distress, and realize their aspirations and values" (p. 9). The purpose of social work, they concluded, is to "(1) enhance the problem-solving and coping capacities of people; (2) link people with systems that provide them with resources, services, and opportunities; (3) promote the effective and humane operation of these systems; and (4) contribute to the development and improvement of social policy" (p. 9). While not deviating from social casework and micro practice, Pincus and Minahan's definition has broadened the scope of social work to mezzo and macro practices that encompass empowerment, linkage, service and policy advocacy, and development.

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Social work continued to evolve and went through self-examination in the 1980s, but generally, its status as a profession had been largely accepted in the US and the UK (Bamford, 1990, Bamford & Bilton, 2020; Fischer, 1981; Popple, 1985; Reeser & Epstein, 1990; Wenocur & Reisch, 1983). The definition of social work from the 1990s onwards clearly had a strong emphasis on the profession or being professional (Payne, 2006; Welbourne, 2009). Thomas and Pierson (1995) defined social work as "the paid professional activity that aims to assist people to overcome serious difficulties in their lives by offering care, protection, and counselling" (p. 357), while Suppes and Wells (2013) defined social work as "the major profession that delivers social services in governmental and private organizations throughout the work, social work helps people prevent or resolve problems in psychosocial functioning, achieve life-enhancing goals, and create a just society" (p. 4).

With globalization, more countries, including the third world, were also introducing social work into their social welfare system (Midgley, 1981, 1990, 1997). Such development has spurred interest in the studies of social work from an international profession perspective around the turn of the millennium (Gray, 2005; Hare, 2004; Hugman, 1996; Lyons, 2006; Midgley, 1997, 2001).

In line with the demand for a global definition, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), with 76 member organizations representing 475,000 social workers throughout the world in 2000 (IFSW, 2000), provided a broader definition which was adopted in 2001.

> "The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people

> to enhance well-being. Utilizing theories of human behavior and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work" (Ramsay, 2003).

Based on that definition, social work is seen as a profession guided by a body of knowledge, values and skills and is committed to the pursuit of human rights and social justice to the enhancement of the quality of life, the development of the full potential of each individual, group, and community in society (Chenoweth & McAuliffe, 2008; Hare, 2006).

The IFSW definition was further expanded, combining both practice and education. It was finally adopted by both IFSW and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) in 2014. The definition says that

> "Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels." (IFSW, 2014).

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There are three new key ideas in the IFSW 2014 Global Definition as compared to the 2001 definition. One, it highlights that social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline. This new inclusion indicates the importance of professional practice and continuing expansion of social work education globally (Askeland & Payne, 2017; Gabel & Healy, 2012; Healy, 2008a; Hendriks & Kloppenburg 2016; Noble, Straus & Littlechild, 2014). Second, it includes the values of collective responsibility, respect for diversity, and indigenous knowledge, which address the debates on western colonialization of social work values and methods, culturally appropriate practice, as well as indigenous social work practice (Gray, 2005; Gray et al., 2009, 2013; Ling, 2004, 2007; Sewpaul & Henrickson, 2019). Third, social workers and social work associations are encouraged to amplify the global definition at the national or regional level as a sign of unity and solidarity for the profession. The IFSW's global definition has since been used as a reference in some countries with additional amplifications on the areas of priorities or concern in their respective countries (AASW, 2020; BASW, 2021; CASW, 2020).

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In Malaysia, the Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW) adopted the IFSW's definition in coming up with its definition of social work:

> "Social work is a profession guided by a body of knowledge, values and skills, utilizing a bio-psycho-social approach to facilitate optimal social functioning of individuals, families, groups and communities. Social workers uphold a code of ethics and conduct based on the values of human rights and social justice. The profession also contributes towards social development and social change through the enhancement of social policies, legislation, programs and services, appropriate to the needs of

Malaysia's diverse socio-cultural population for a better quality of life" (MASW, 2011).

The definition embraces the IFSW 2001 global definition but has included the elements of macro practices as well as Malaysia's multi-ethnic and diverse culture society, very much in line with the IFSW 2014 global definition.

To summarize, the definition of social work is constantly evolving. It started with the early emphasis on the casework process and then the functions of social work. It positioned itself as a profession guided by knowledge, values and ethical principles, and now it is to be seen as both an international profession and an academic discipline. Nonetheless, all these definitions would not be fully appreciated until they are linked with the study of a profession to understand how far social work has gone in professionalizing itself, which the subsequent section aims to address.

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2.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Professionalisation

Evetts (2013) contended that profession, professionalizaton, and professionalism are the three concepts that have been used extensively in sociological research on professional groups. She described that profession represents a distinct and generic category of occupational work, professionalisation is the process to achieve the status of profession and professionalism as an occupational or normative values. Although this study primarily focuses on professionalisation, it is important to examine and discuss these three concepts as they are interlinked.

2.3.1 Theory of Profession

The Dictionary of Social Work defines a profession as "a group or body, of some social standing, claiming expertise in an area of work" (Thomas and Pierson, 1995, p. 296). A profession can also be regarded as a distinct and generic category of an occupational group (Evetts, 2003, 2006, 2014). Evetts (2014) opined that many sociology researchers view professions as an "essentially knowledge-based category of service occupations which usually follow a period of tertiary education and vocational training and experience" (p. 33).

The study of a profession is the most active, particularly in the field of sociology (Evetts, 2003; Macdonald, 1995; Nolin, 2008), and can be traced back to the ideas of classical sociologists like Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber and modern-day sociologists like Talcott Parson, T. H. Marshalls, and Everett Hughes (Abbots, 1988; Evetts, 2003, 2012, 2013; Hermanowicz & Johnson, 2014; Nolin, 2008). The philosophical narration and debates of these scholars on the 'sociology of profession' are beyond the scope of this study. However, this study reviews the theories, models, or approaches that are more contemporary and meet the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter One.

Many scholars acknowledge two major models or approaches, namely the trait model and the power model, both of which emerged in the study of social work as a profession and its professionalisation (Abbots, 1988; Evetts, 2003, 2013; Hugman, 1991, 1996; Weis and Welbourne, 2008; Welbourne, 2009). Meanwhile, Popple (1985) highlighted three: the additional being the process model. According to Popple, the process model is a different version of the trait model because the proponents of the process model

reject the dichotomous nature of the trait model and assert that occupations span a continuum of professional attributes. "They perceive professionalisation as a process and attempt to identify events in the "life history" of occupations that constitute the process" (p. 562).

Nolin (2008), on the other hand, identified that the study of profession has gone through three stages:

(i) The study of a profession (1930-1970) – the profession is seen as a key function in modern society where the profession had gained societal status by exhibiting prescribed attributes that separate them from other occupations. Studies by Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933), Goode (1957), Greenwood (1957), and Hughes (1958) are seen as the representation of the trait model or approach.

(ii) The study of professionalisation (1960-1980) – researchers emphasized the process of professionalisation rather than the problematic concept of a profession (Wilensky, 1964). There had also been an effort to differentiate profession, semi-profession, and non-profession (Austin, 1978; Etzioni, 1969; Toren, 1972).

(iii) Social context (from 1980 onwards) – almost at the same time with the study of professionalisation, some researchers were already studying the socio-history and power dynamics of a profession in relation to other competing occupations, bureaucracy, government, and clients (Fielding & Portwood, 1980; Freidson, 1970, 1972; Johnson, 1972), which eventually known as the power model.

Similarly, tracing the historical development of studies on profession, Evetts (2003, 2013) further concluded that studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s focused on the concept of a profession with references to distinctive characteristics, while studies in

the 1970s and 1980s shifted the focus to professionalisation or the process of the occupational groups, pursuing, developing, and maintaining the closure of their respective occupations. In short, the trait model looks at the characteristics or traits that could differentiate professions from other occupations, while the power model looks at how occupations struggle for autonomy and occupational control.

2.3.1.1 Trait Model

The idea of looking at a characteristic or trait as the basis of analysis can be attributed to Alexander Flexner (Rhodes, 1985), who was invited to address a group of social workers in 1915 to give his views on whether social work can be regarded as a profession. Flexner (1915) listed the following criteria that established professions like medicine, law, and engineering possess:

(i) They involve essentially intellectual operations.

(ii) They derive their raw materials from science and learning.

(iii) They work up this raw material to a practical and definite end.

(iv) They possess an educationally communicable technique.

(v) They tend towards self-organization.

(vi) They are becoming increasingly altruistic in nature.

Flexner's criteria of profession influenced the study of a profession for years to come, including the field of social work. For example, Greenwood (1957), who also referred to Flexner's study, identified five components that are essential as attributes or traits of a profession: (1) a systematic body of theory that provides the basis for activity and operations; (2) professional authority based upon the knowledge imparted via extensive specialized education; (3) the sanction of the community in the form of powers and

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privileges conferred upon the profession; (4) a code of ethics that regulates the conduct of the members of a profession, and (5) a professional culture reflecting roles, values, symbols, and a formal professional organization.

Both Flexner's and Greenwood's analyses are a reflection of the Trait Model. Greenwood's criteria in analyzing social work as a profession remains a key reference to the trait model in many studies (for example, see Beddoe, 2013; Hugman, 1991, 1996; Koukouli, Papadaki & Philalithis, 2008; Welbourne, 2009; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2009). Through the years, several other attributes, such as altruism, commitment to service, the autonomy of action, long period of training, and control over the entry into the training, prestige, and trustworthiness, were also being studied or identified (Abbot, 1995; Hugman, 1991, 1996; Macdonald, 1995; Welbourne, 2009).

The trait model also provides the basis for the study of a 'semi-profession' where some scholars view a profession as an ongoing process in the ever-changing society (Etzioni et al., 1969; Toren, 1972). They argued that it is possible to distinguish among different types or degrees of each element described by the different models of the profession, and different attributes of professionalisation may have developed to varying degrees that one may rank higher in certain characteristics and low in another. These two distinctions are vital in ranking an occupation on a continuum of professionalisation (Toren, 1972). These scholars concluded that the forms of knowledge and skill in the 'semi-profession' were less easily defined; some of its traits only partially developed, and therefore lacking a clear basis for claims to strong professional boundaries (Hugman, 1996).

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On the other hand, Wilensky (1964), who studied the professionalisation of eighteen occupational groups, asserted that occupations would pass through a sequence of steps as they develop into a profession. These include becoming a full-time and paid activity, establishing university training, forming a national organization, redefining the core tasks (between professional and non-professional tasks), experiencing conflicts between existing workers with experience and new workers with educational qualification, competing among similar professions, developing a code of ethics, and eventually gaining legal protection through political means. Interestingly, although his developmental approach was much akin to the trait model, Wilensky had touched on issues addressed by the power model and subsequent studies of professionalism when he concluded that only a few occupational groups would achieve the authority of the established profession due to weak or vague technical knowledge and the influence of bureaucracy and client orientation on professional ideal and collegial control.

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The trait model is not without any critique. The common critics are its lack of theory and rigorous empirical data (Abbots, 1988; Brante, 2011; Freidson, 1970; Johnson, 1972). For example, Brante (2011) criticized that some of the attributes suggested in the trait model "seem to be based on generalized intuitions, or to be cases of abstracted empiricism; they are not theoretically anchored" (p. 8). Johnson (1972) contended that the trait approach does not pay attention to the ideological component of the development of occupations, which is full of power struggles and conflicts of interest. The trait model is also being criticized of being static and ignores historical contingencies that shape occupational status (Freidson, 1970; Johnson, 1972). Similarly, Saks (2012) disagreed with Wilensky's theorizing that professionalisation always follows the linear process based on knowledge and expertise. Comparing pharmacy and

optometry in the US and herbalists and acupuncturists in the UK, he argued that merely emphasizing knowledge and expertise is not sufficient as "professionalism is a social-political process, involving power and interests in the market at a macro level" (p. 5).

Notwithstanding these criticisms, many studies have used the trait model to describe the professionalisation processes in occupations. In many instances, the aim is to argue or prove that the occupation described is a profession or is emerging or developing to become a full profession (Johnson & Yanka, 2001).

(ii) Power Model

The trait model of professionalism tends to be less abstract in formation and comprises a list of attributes to represent the common core of professional occupations (Johnson, 1972). However, the proponents of the power model argue that profession is not a word involving a rational definition; rather, it is an evaluation that many occupations got to great length to achieve (Popple, 1985). Freidson (1970), based on his study on the professionals in the health services, explained that the term profession should be regarded as a description of a certain pattern of occupational control through a social structure that organizes the delivery of its services. Professionalism, according to this argument, is a form of occupational control justified by the expert nature of the work involved. Above all, professionals want autonomy and control of their own terms of work. To this end are claims for the exclusion of the uninitiated, control of entry, and licensing of members directed (Wilding, 1982).

For Johnson (1972), the power resources of occupations to control their activities or operations are most crucial. These include the key components of their work, the choice

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and development of the techniques employed, the selection, training, and licensing of members, and autonomy in defining the nature of services and who is entitled to receive them (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). In Johnson's view, the conditions that give rise to professional power depend on the social relations between producers and consumers. Johnson saw three forms of institutionalized control on occupations, which are connected to the relations between the producer, the client and the power elite:

(i) Collegiate control: the occupation defines the needs of the client. The producer and power elite belong to the same group.

(ii) Patronage: the client defines its own needs. The client (corporate or communal) and power elite belong to the same group.

(iii) Mediation: a third party (often the state) defines the needs and method of fulfilment. The third party interferes between a producer and client.

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It is argued that the ability to obtain and maintain a professional status is closely related to concrete occupational strategies and wider social forces and arrangements of power. Such a perspective leads to a consideration of the social meaning of occupational tasks, the resources behind the emergence and continuation of professionalism, and the social consequences of professionalism.

To recap, the trait model examines the attributes or traits that could differentiate professions from other occupations, while the power model studies how occupations struggle for autonomy and occupational control by pursuing, developing, and maintaining the closure of their respective occupations.

There are views that the pursuit of what constitutes a profession, from the sociology of professions perspective, is no longer seen as a worthy effort and rarely discussed (Evetts, 2013; Saks, 2012). Evetts (2013), for example, stated that 'the definitional precision (about profession) is now regarded as a time-wasting diversion as it is neither assisting the understanding of the power of particular occupational groups nor the discourse of professionalism in all occupations" (p. 780). She, however, asserted that the 'concepts of professionalisation continue to be important to the analysis of newly emerging occupations seeking status and recognition for the work often by standardization of the education, training, and qualification for practice" (p. 782).

Despite the cease of debates on the essential characteristics of a profession, Saks (2012) argued that defining a profession is important as "it is actually at the root of understanding what professions they are about and how they operate" (p. 1). Researchers continue to use the trait model or a combination of both trait and power models when studying issues of professionalisation of social work. For example, Kornbeck (1998) suggested six requirements that social work must fulfil to become a profession in Europe. The six requirements, which will be further deliberated, are derived from both the trait and power model. In addition, using the combination of trait and power model, Weiss-Gal & Welbourne (2007, 2008) found in their study of social work some common features like the establishment of professional organizations, formulation of a code of ethics, development of a specific body of knowledge, and placement of social work training in tertiary education in ten countries. However, none of the countries in their study has a monopoly over the fields of practice; only some have legislation on title protection, a lack of control over training and entry into the profession, and enforcement of the code of ethics. In short, social work may have

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exhibited the essential professional characteristics; yet, it does not enjoy a similar recognition as a profession from the public and the state due to other factors like weaker occupational control (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008) and occupational closure (Harrits, 2014).

In this regard, the longer definition proposed by Welbourne (2009) perhaps encapsulates the all-inclusive meaning of profession from both approaches the best:

> *"*A profession is skilled, defined by the shared training undertaking by its members; distinct from other occupation groups, and with roles and tasks that are reserved (by convention or by statute) only for the members of that profession. It is a regulated group of individuals, with minimum standards set for entry to the profession and recognized membership qualifications. It has a recognized professional identity, which gives it social standing and authority to express views and promote policies*"* (p. 20).

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2.3.2 Thesis of professionalisation

The online Collins Dictionary[3] defines professionalisation as the act or process of imposing a professional structure or status on (something), while the online Oxford Dictionaries define it as a way that gives (an occupation, activity, or group) professional qualities, typically by increasing training or raising required qualifications.[4]

[3] www.collinsdictionary.com
[4] www.oxforddictionaries.com

There have been attempts to define the sequences of professionalisation, with the most influential being Wilensky (1964), who understood professionalisation as the sequence of seven steps: (1) a job becomes a full-time occupation; (2) establishing a training school; (3) establishing a university program; (4) founding a local professional association; (5) founding a national professional association; (6) creating a state license; and (7) creating a code of ethics. He argued that not all occupations could be professionalized by merely claiming of having the technical know-how and observing a professional norm among the practitioners.

Johnson (1972, in Thomas & Pierson, 2009) also saw professionalisation as a process that involves a sequence of events or development where

> "a particular skill or area of knowledge emerges in response to changes in economic and social activity; people gather together to exchange ideas and to develop the new territory; if the 'field' has commercial or social potential, the group will increase in number; the members seek to define and set boundaries on the new activity and by so doing seek to distinguish it from associated activities; decisions are made about who can be a member and later a 'practitioner', and the final stages involve controlling the qualifying process and the conduct of members. The stage will incorporate the training of professionals into the mainstream of higher education if the activity is regarded as sufficiently important, although professional organizations will still have some measure of autonomy" (p. 296-297)

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Evetts (2013) defined professionalisation as the process of achieving the status of a profession, which includes pursuing, developing, and maintaining the closure of the occupational group. Likewise, Noordegraf (2007) saw that professionalisation is not simply a matter of step-by-step strengthening of professional control in specific occupational domains but a matter of controlling and controversial attempts to get a grip of occupational control.

In short, professionalisation can be seen as progress (made by occupation or a group of people) towards a full professional status across a range of criteria, including the development of a distinctive knowledge base, registration and protection of title, the development of a Code of Ethics, recognized training (through higher education), and a corporate organization or association (Hugman, 1991; Welbourne, 2009).

In the previous discussion on profession, Evetts (2003) and Nolin (2008) both identified that the study of professionalisation emerged in the 1960s after years of study on profession. Professionalisation, thus, can be described as the process to attain the profession status by an occupation (Evetts, 2003) and can be found in studies of both the trait model and the power model.

2.3.3 Professionalism

The term professionalism has been mentioned by many researchers even in the early stage of the study of a profession (Flexner, 1915; Marshall, 1939, Wilensky, 1964). However, the focus of the study at the time was on profession without giving much interpretation or division between profession and professionalism. The terms 'profession' and 'professionalism' were used almost interchangeably. For example,

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when using banking to demonstrate his point on why banking has yet to meet the criterion of a profession due to its scientific knowledge at that time, Flexner (1995, 2001, p. 197) said, "Banking is an activity with certain professional characteristics…is as yet far from being to a sufficient extent the application of economic science…For the present, however, banking practices are still too largely empirical to square up with the modern conception of professionalism." He only used professionalism once in the phrase in his speech without giving any interpretation of the term.

A British sociologist and philosopher, T. H. Marshall, used *The Recent History of Professionalism in Relation to Social Structure and Social Policy* as the title of his article where he wrote about the changes experienced by professionals involved in providing services through a very early form of the Welfare State (Marshall, 1939). His usage of professionalism also resembled the altruistic nature of the trait model. Marshall (1939, p. 332, as quoted in Lethbridge, 2019) saw professionalism as "not concerned with self-interest, but with the welfare of the client." Wilensky (1964) used professionalism in many parts of his article *The Professionalisation for Everyone*? When inspected closely, he used both terms interchangeably. Here are two examples:

> "The paper argues that these loose criteria are less essential for understanding professional organization than the traditional model of professionalism which emphasizes autonomous and the service ideal." (p. 137)

> "The crux if the issue of autonomy for salaried professionals is whether the organization itself is infused with professionalism (as measured, say,

> by a large percentage of professionally trained employees and managers) and whether the services of the professionals involved are scarce (as measured by a large number of attractive job offers from the outside." (p. 147)

In the first example, the meaning remains the same if the word professionalism is replaced by profession because the attributes of autonomy and the service ideal are associated with the trait model of the profession. In the second example, the word professionalism can be substituted with professionals because it is measured by a number of professionally trained personnel hired where it does not explain the meaning of professionalism clearly.

Therefore, this section will use the work of Professor Julia Evetts, a sociology professor from the UK, i.e., the theory of professionalism (Evetts, 2003; 2006; 2008; 2013) in making sense of the meaning of professionalism. Evetts (2003) first raised the question of why and in what ways a set of work practices and relations that was originally associated with medicine and law in the Anglo-American societies attracted other occupational groups like engineers, accountants, pharmacists, teachers, social workers etc. in different social systems around the world, to strive to achieve the status of a profession. In other words, what is so appealing to these occupational groups in becoming a profession? Evetts (2003) categorized earlier studies on professionalism into two major interpretations: (i) a normative value system and (ii) a controlling ideology. The analyses of professionalism as a normative value system describes the meaning and function of professionalism for the stability and civility of social systems. This interpretation represents a more positive outlook of the contributions of normative

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social order. Thus, it is more appreciated and utilized by professional workers in their relationship with clients, occupational identities, and work practice.

On the other hand, professionalism as a controlling ideology interpretation arises when the concept of professionalism as a value system was criticized and rejected (Evetts, 2003). The literature of this perspective instead focuses on market closure and monopoly of work, occupational dominance, promoting own occupational self-interests (e.g., salary, status, and power) and the monopoly protection of an occupation jurisdiction (Evetts, 2013, p. 785). This was seen to be an initiative controlled by the professional themselves for their own interest. It is therefore seen as being more negative as a hegemonic belief system and mechanism of social control for professional workers (Evetts, 2003, p. 399). Evetts (2013) further described that professionalism as occupational or normative values indicates that it is "something worth preserving and promoting in work, by and for workers", and also "includes a reassessment of quality of service and professional performance in the interests of both customers and practitioners" (p. 782).

Referencing to McClelland's (1990) categorization of professionalisation 'from within' (successful manipulation of the market by the group) and 'from above' (domination of forces external to the group), Evetts (2013) theorized two ways in which professionalism is applied to benefit different groups. She termed the first as 'occupational professionalism,' which incorporates professional values, collegial support and authority, practitioner trust by both employers and clients, and discretion and occupational control of the work that depend on a common and lengthy system of education and training, guided by professional ethics and monitored by professional

associations. Occupational professionalism operates when the appeal to professionalism is made and used by the occupational groups (from within).

The second form of professionalism is termed 'organizational professionalism.' It integrates the discourse of control used increasingly by managers in the workplace, hierarchical structures of authority and decision making, standardization of work procedures and external forms of regulation, and accountability measures, such as target-setting and performance review. Organizational professionalism operates when the appeal to professionalism is being imposed 'from above' by employers and managers to promote change and impose the regulation of practice. Table 2.1 summarizes the differences between organizational professionalism and occupational professionalism.

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Table 2.1

Two Different Forms of Professionalism in Knowledge-Based Work

Organizational professionalism	**Occupational professionalism**
Discourse of control used increasingly by managers in work organizations	Discourse constructed within professional groups
Rational-legal forms of authority	Collegial authority
Standardize procedures	Discretion and occupational control of the work
Hierarchical structures of authority and decision-making	Practitioner trust by both clients and employers
Managerialism	Controls operationalized by practitioners
Accountability and externalized forms of regulation, target-setting and performance review	Professional ethics monitored by institutions and associations
Linked to Weberian models of organization	Located in Durkheim's model of occupations as moral communities

Evetts (2003, 2013) asserted that the meaning of professionalism is not fixed. It changes over time both in its interpretation and function. Therefore, she argued that all the different interpretations "are needed in order to understand the appeal of professionalism in new and old occupations, and how the concept is being used to promote and facilitate occupational change" (p. 790).

Meanwhile, Noordegraaf (2007) noted that most scholars hold the view of professionalism as "applying general, scientific knowledge to specific cases in rigorous and routinized or institutionalized ways" (p. 765). However, he criticized the narrow interpretation of profession and professionalism that is restricted to what he terms as "real" or "pure" professionalism. "Pure" professionalism represents the logic for an occupational group to control the content or knowledge that sets professional work apart from nonprofessional work, and to institutionalize control over the professional practices by professionals. In this regard, the "pure" professionalism view is similar to the interpretation of professionalism as ideology control (Evetts, 2013).

Noordegraf (2007) contended that professionalism in the public sector is never really pure. Instead, it calls for "organizational professionalism" as a modern welfare state combines both bureaucratic and professional control. It is also harder to obtain strong professionalism in a more neoliberal environment that emphasizes cost control, value for money, and service quality. He, therefore, highlighted three major reactions to the study of present-day professionalism: (i) pure professionalism, (ii) situated professionalism, and (iii) hybridized professionalism. Pure professionalism applies to classical professions like medicine and law, where it is critical to differentiate who can

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and who cannot be regarded as professionals. Situated professionalism applies to professionals that act as professionals but is embedded within an organizational system. Hybridized professionalism sees that professionals are reflective practitioners who know how to operate in organized, interdisciplinary settings that cannot be organized easily, can see the interrelatedness of different systems and subsystems, and learn how to behave in neo-bureaucratic settings. Therefore, Noordegraf concluded that professionalism could no longer be simply seen as a matter of occupational control (pure professionalism) or organizational control (situated professionalism) but as reflective control to establish meaningful connections between clients, work, and organized action. Measurement and control methods are about "showing professionalism or putting on a professional performance to enact meaningful and legitimate work practices" (p. 778).

2.3.4 Debates on Profession and Professionalisation

One of the theses of the power perspective was by Larson (1977), who contended that professionalisation is based on an ideology sets on market dominance and the prevention of the free market of labor, and thus making the profession an exploitative group (Hermanowicz & Johnson, 2014). Larson claimed that professionalisation amounts to

> "the process by which producers of special services sought to constitute and control a market for their expertise. Because marketable expertise is a crucial element in the structure of modern inequality, professionalisation appears also as a collective assertion of special social status and as a collective process of upward social mobility…[The] constitution of professional markers inaugurated a new

> form of structured inequality. (Larson, 1977, xvi-xvii, quoted from Hermanowicz & Johnson, 2014).

One of the biggest critics of profession and professionalisation, perhaps, was Ivan Illich, who named the mid-twentieth century the Age of Disabling Professions (Illich, 1977). He argued that the professionals, with their growing power and status, have dictated the thinking and decision of the community through their expert prescription of what is best and what is needed by the people. The power structure created by the professionals has created a state of dependency that destroys people's ability to fend for themselves and compromises people's right to make own decision while not conforming to decisions made by the professionals. Similarly, Friere (cited in Welbourne, 2009) raised the doubt over the benefit the public can gain from the professionalisation of an occupation group hoping to gain status, pay, and influence. It could also imply more restrictions on people who can join the profession, and the exclusivity approach of professionalisation could challenge the strength of social work grounded in its openness to people from diverse backgrounds (Welbourne, 2009).

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2.4 International Studies on Social Work Professionalisation

Before and until the turn of the 21st century, the study on social work profession and professionalisation has always been conducted in western countries, more notably the United States (e.g., Abbot, 1988, 1995; Greenwood, 1957; Popple, 1985; Toren, 1972; Waltz & Groze, 1991; Wilensky, 1964) and the United Kingdom (e.g., Dominelli, 1996; Howe, 1994; Hugman, 1991, 1996; Lymbery, 2001). Nevertheless, the attention has slowly moved towards the study of social work from an international profession perspective (Gray, 2005; Hare, 2004; Midgley, 2001) and other regional or country

perspectives (Chui, Tsang, & Mok, 2010; Chytil, 2006; Doron, Rosner & Karpel, 2008; Hugman, Durst, Le, Nguyen & Nguyen, 2009; Kiik & Sirotkina, 2005; Koukouli, Papadaki & Philalithis, 2007; Lin & Wang, 2010; Matthies, 2011; Radulsecu, 2006; Wang, 2011; Weiss-Gal et al., 2004; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008).

From the European perspective, Kornbeck (1998) suggested six requirements social work has to fulfill to become a profession in Europe. The six requirements are (1) 'academization' - a scientific orientation of social work education, (2) 'commodification' – more paid work than charity, (3) 'institutionalization' – registration and licensure, (4) 'unification' – common core education and code of practice, (5) 'licensiation' – minimum credentials required for licensing, and (6) 'monopolization' – only licensed social workers can perform specified tasks.

Based on both the trait and power model of professionalisation, Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2007, 2008) conducted studies on the professional features of social work in Chile, Germany, Hungary, India, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, UK and the US. The eight features in the cross-national studies were (i) public recognition, (ii) monopoly over types of work, (iii) professional autonomy, (iv) knowledge base, (v) professional education, (vi) social work organizations, (vii) ethical standards, and (viii) prestige and remuneration. They reported different patterns of features: certain features are common, some are not, and some only in a few countries. The features that are common in nearly all countries in the studies include the establishment of professional organizations, the formulation or adoption of a professional code of ethics, the development and dissemination of a specific body of knowledge, and the placement of social work training in institutions of higher education. In contrast, none of the countries

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reported a monopoly over the fields of practice, while only some have legislation on title protection, control over training, entry into the profession, and enforcement of the code of ethics.

Most of the professional features achieved by social work in the countries studied here appear to have been achieved primarily through the profession's 'inner' power, which refers to the ability of social workers to work cooperatively as an organized group or professional entity and exert influence over the behavior of the body of social workers as a professional group. By contrast, there is a significant international variation in the achievement of those aspects of professionalisation that requires cooperation between the social work profession and the state or external agencies. These include enforceable licensing procedures, restrictions on the use of the social worker title, sanctions for breaches of the code of ethics, control over training and entrance into the profession, and monopolies over types of work. The extent to which social work has attained these features in different countries may reflect its 'external' power and influence and its impact on social work's professional development.

Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2008) concluded that the path of professional development in social work in any given context appears to be shaped by the interaction between three complex, subtle and sometimes very unstable variables:

(i) The level of internal professional power and the cohesiveness of social work in working to achieve certain defined professional aims (an accepted code of ethics, strong professional associations).

(ii) The external influence that the profession is able to bring to bear to achieve other aims (state licensing and restriction of title, remuneration, state sanctions for

breaches of the code of ethics, control over education and entrance to the profession).

(iii) The political, economic, and social context within which it is operating (professional prestige, scope for asserting professional knowledge, and expertise at a policy level).

Furthermore, today's modern welfare states are said to combine both bureaucratic and professional control as professionalism in the public sector was never really 'pure' as settings such as welfare and housing are contested domains, and social work encounters ambiguity in both technical and ethic aspects (Noordegraaf, 2007, 2015 & 2016). Thus, the two main theoretical frameworks of either the trait model or the power model, when used separately, may no longer be sufficient in understanding the professionalism challenge of social work in the current time.

Consequently, Evetts (2013) argued for analyzing the ideology of professionalism and the appeal of professionalism, shifting away from the analysis of profession and professionalisation. She asserted that "it is necessary to try to understand how professionalism as a normative value system and ideology is now being increasingly used as a discourse in modern organizations and other institutions and places of work as a mechanism to facilitate and promote occupational change" (p. 788). Saks (2012) concurred with her view by suggesting that "attention needs to be paid to the ideological dimensions of professions above and beyond knowledge and expertise in understanding the success and failure of professionalisation in defining professions" (p. 5).

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Miller (2014) used Evett's theoretical framework of occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism to examine the conflicting views of the counseling profession in New Zealand over the acceptance of local Maori-centered knowledge and approach to counseling, particularly in relation to the statutory registration of counselors. In her study, occupational professionalism was used to look at the need of the counseling profession to gain exclusive status and protect clients from non-registered practices, while organizational professionalism focuses on the approach used by the authority to form a strong identity for the occupation, trustworthiness and competence to practice ethically through legislation. The statutory regulation (the Counselor Act) encompasses all attributes of organizational professionalism like social control, accountability, and regulations of standards). Although the local knowledge had been incorporated into the professional body's policy, it was not in the protocols of statutory registration. Therefore, when it comes to the ambiguity of local knowledge and practice, she found that organizational professionalism prevails over occupational professionalism. Tensions arise among practitioners affected by the requirement, and the government has to halt all applications pending a review of the Act. She concludes that Evett's theoretical framework is useful as "the strive for professionalism can be interrupted" by local knowledge.

2.5 Issues and Challenges in Social Work Profession and Professionalisation

The professionalisation of social work is not without any challenge or obstacle, especially on the professionals and paraprofessionals tensions (Austin, 1978). Social work is said to have suffered from being a profession that is predominantly female and working with highly marginalized groups, thus, of little glamour or status (Dominelli, 1996; Hugman, 1991).

The welfare policy change and service orientation have been seen as a threat to social work as a profession. Dominelli (1996), for example, criticized the competency-based approach adopted by the British government as a serious barrier to the human-centric nature of social work and threatens to deprofessionalize social work by letting non-social work professionals define the key roles and requirements for training and process. Green (2006) also argued that general perceptions, in particular of the government, of social work as a merely practical activity rather than as a professional occupation that requires analytical and intellectual skills has contributed to the weak professional standing of social work. Consequently, social workers are being asked to perform a more technocratic, statutory, and routinized role and function. Therefore, Green (2006) contested that the combination of the ambiguity about what social work is and what social workers should do and the powerful state intervention in relation to social work as a profession has squeezed social work, particularly statutory social work, into "depoliticized, statutory and residual casualty role" which emphasizes "positivist, individualized, competence-based practice and a technical modus operandi, governed by endlessly proliferating governmental policies and procedure" (p. 259).

On a similar note, Healy (2009) argued that social welfare professionals like social workers and social welfare workers in Australia face the challenge on their professional identity and influence from the New Public Management (NPM). The NPM has been under heavy criticism for reducing government responsibility in comprehensive service provision as a measure to reduce public expenditure. Consequently, the service provider roles have been shifted to the non-governmental organizations with limited industrial regulation that allows for employing a non-qualified workforce. The competency-based

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approach to workforce planning has also shifted professional work to specific managerial tasks that do not require professional qualification.

2.6 Social Work in Malaysia

This section presents an overview of the development of social work in Malaysia based on past research and publications. It touches on the history of social welfare and social work, social work professional organizations, social work education, and issues of social work in Malaysia.

2.6.1 Brief History of Social Welfare and Social Work in Malaysia

It is not possible to talk about the beginning of social work in Malaysia without talking about the historical development of social welfare in the country. Some scholars acknowledge that social work was introduced to Malaysia in the form of social welfare during the British colonial period (Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000; Fuziah, 2006; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Sinnasamy, 2006; Siti Hajar, 2006 & 2007; Sushama, 1992b). For the early history of social welfare in Malaysia, these authors referred mainly to the work of Lucy Philips Mair, a British social anthropologist, who wrote *Welfare in the British Colonies*, which studied social policy in Africa, Malaya, Hong Kong, Ceylon, Fiji and the Western Pacific Islands, and the West Indies (Mair, 1944). Her writing mainly covers the general welfare services introduced by the British colonial office in these colonies before World War II.

2.6.1.1 Social Welfare in Malaya before World War II

In her book, Mair looked at the provision of education, labor, health, and social welfare services in these British colonies. Malaya was specifically mentioned in the chapter on

labor and health, but not in education and social welfare. Therefore, the earliest form of social services introduced in Malaya was related to the interest of migrant workers who were brought in by the British administration for economic activities (Fuziah, 2000; Ismail, 1990,). The creation of the Chinese Protectorate in 1877 which that handled all matters related to the Straits Settlements' Chinese residents and laborers (Fuziah, 2000; Lim, 2008), followed by the establishment of a Labor Department in 1912 (Fuziah, 2006; Mair, 1944) indicates the priority and policy direction of the British Colonial Office then. The establishment of the Labor Department was also recognized as the beginning of social welfare in Malaya by some authors (Doling & Omar, 2000; Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000; Ismail, 1990; Sushama, 1985).

In 1937, the British Colonial Office in Malaya established the Department of Social Services. In addition to providing welfare services to migrant workers, it helped solve social problems faced by the local communities and indigenous people (Mair, 1944). Community work carried out by village committees, charities, youth, and prisons were all under the jurisdiction of this department (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013). Mair (1944) also highlighted that social work at the time had become a known discipline that required specific skills and knowledge, and all the social workers in the colonies were mainly made up of expatriates from the United Kingdom who were professionally trained in social work from the London School of Economics (LSE). Their three main areas of work were public assistance, service to youth, and welfare work for the rural population (Mair, 1944). All these services were halted when Malaya was under the occupation of the Japanese during World War II.

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2.6.1.2 Social welfare in Malaya: 1946-1957

While Lucy Mair is credited as the main source of reference to social welfare in Malaya before World War II, the work by Kathleen Jones's *Social Welfare in Malaya* (Jones, 1958) serves as the main reference to the social welfare services introduced by the British Administration after the war. Kathleen Jones, Professor of Social Policy as well as the founder of the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of York in 1965, had followed her husband who was recalled to the army during the Malayan emergency where she taught British and Asian History to the sixth form in the Victoria Institution in Kuala Lumpur (Department of Social Policy and Social Work, 2010). Her book *Social Welfare in Malaya* was accredited as the first study of Malaysian social services (Bradshaw, 2010) and was quoted by many authors writing about social welfare in Malaysia (e.g., Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000; Farah Shameen, 2018; Fuziah, 2006; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Siti Hajar, 2006 & 2007; Sinnasamy, 2006; Sushama, 1985). Due to the richness of her writing, this study uses it in Chapter Four as the key reference in discussing the development of social welfare and social work in Malaysia before independence.

After the end of World War II, the British returned to Malaya. The priority of the British Military Administration was to deal with the aftermath of the war (Sushama, 1985), which included the distribution of food, clothes, and medication to a large number of war survivors (Fuziah, 2000). Initially, these services were provided with ad-hoc arrangements. However, with the establishment of the Civil Administration replacing the Military Administration, the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) was established in the Federation of Malaya in 1946 (Fuziah, 2000 & 2006; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013).

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Due to the lack of trained local social workers and no training facilities of such a discipline at that time, four local officers were selected to do a two-year course in Social Welfare at LSE in the same year (Fuziah, 2006; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013). Subsequently, social welfare cadets from Malaya at the time received their social work education in the UK annually until the 1950s. In 1952, the School of Applied Social Studies was established in the University of Malaya (UM) (which was located in Singapore then) to train local social workers through a diploma program (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Jones, 1958; Lee, 2011). Hence, many social welfare officers were sent for social work training in Singapore.

This group of social welfare pioneers who gained social work training abroad were instrumental in charting the early development of welfare programs in the country (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; MASW, 2003). For instance, on 1st March 1950, the DSW appointed 12 social welfare officers to serve the Juvenile Court. They were later known as probation officers. The services of the department also expanded in the 1960s and 1970s to services for the disabled, in hospitals, drug rehabilitations, school welfare, and community services for flat residents and advocacy work for women (MASW, 2003). Faizah (2006) also noted that DSW played a leading role in social services, and the implementation of its programs and services emphasized accountability, which consists of three perspectives: efficiency, quality, and efficacy.

The term 'social welfare officer' used during the colonial time continues until today at the DSW (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013). For example, all laws related to social welfare services like the Child Act 2001, the Domestic Violence Act 1994, the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008, the Destitute Persons Act 1977, and etc. put 'social welfare

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officer' as the authorized personnel responding to corresponding situations (Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014).

One notable study on the history of social welfare and social welfare services in this era was by Fuziah (2006) who studied the British Colonial policy on social welfare in Malaya, especially on child welfare service from 1946-1957. Using archival documents and interviews with former social welfare officers who were in the service during that era, Fuziah's work complemented Kathleen Jones's work with details of official documents as supporting evidence. Nonetheless, Fuziah (2006) concluded that although the British Administration was responsible in introducing various social welfare services in Malaya, these services did not follow the model of welfare sistem used in the UK.

2.6.2 Development of Social Work Education in Malaysia

While the work of Lucy Mair and Kathleen Jones stated in the earlier section are the main references on the history of social welfare in Malaya, the name of Jane Macdonald Robertson is almost synonym to the early social work education at the University of Malaya in Singapore (Hodge, in Fuziah and Ismail, 2013). Jane Robertson was the first Head of the School of Social Studies at the university, and her book chapters *Two decades of social work education in Singapore and Malaysia* (Robertson, 1980a) and *Problems related to practical training in social work* (Robertson, 1980b) were references for some authors writing on the early development of social work education in Malaya (e.g., Fuziah, 2006; Fuziah et al., 2020; Lee, 2011). Both of her writings about the social work education at the University of Malaya and the challenges of the program will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

Hence, the first social work education program in Malaya during the British Administration was introduced in 1952 at the University of Malaya in Singapore (Fuziah, 2006; Jones, 1958; Lee, 2011; Robertson, 1980). The program offered was Diploma in Social Studies, designed as a postgraduate diploma and catered to training social welfare officers in Singapore and Malaya (Robertson, 1980). In 1962, in a restructuring exercise, the campus in Singapore was renamed the University of Singapore (later renamed as the National University of Singapore), while the Kuala Lumpur campus maintained the name of University of Malaya. After the separation of Malaysia and Singapore in 1965, a special arrangement was made to ensure the staff employees from the DSW would be sent to Singapore for their social work education (Wee, 2002).

Therefore, some authors suggested that formal social work education at the tertiary level in Malaysia only started in 1975 at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) (Ismail, 2011; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Sinnasamy, 2006, Teoh, 2014). The establishment of the social work program at USM was well documented by Yasas (1974), who was then the Regional Advisor on Training in Social Work and Community Development of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (UNECAFE). It was reported that the establishment of social work education at the degree level at USM was a joint effort between the Ministry of Social Welfare and USM, following an idea which was mooted from a United Nation Conference of Social Welfare Ministers in 1968 in Bangkok, Thailand (Ismail, 2011; Yasas, 1974;). Some of the key people involved in the formation of the social work program at USM were Mr S. Sockanathan, DG of Social Welfare Malaysia; Miss Frances Maria Yasas, the Regional Advisor on Training

in Social Work and Community Development of UNECAFE; Dr Blake, Dean of the Faculty of Social Science of USM; Miss P.C. Sushama, executive committee member of the Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW), and a group of deputy directors from the Ministry of Social Welfare (Yasas, in Fuziah & Ismail, 2013).

The initiative was based on the advice given to Malaysia at the United Nations Conference of Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare in 1968 in Bangkok, Thailand. The name given to the program was "Social Development and Administration" (SDA), although the name proposed by UNECAFE was "Social Work and Community Development" as social development was perceived more suitably by the government at that time. Nonetheless, the name SDA did not portray a clear identity of social work and had created confusion for many people and organizations wanting to know about social work in Malaysia. As a result, the SDA program was seen as a dumping ground for students from other fields and those whom the university did not know where to place (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013). There had been debates about the name of the program (Fattahipour, 1988 & 1991) and attempts to change the name from SDA to Social Work. It was finally changed to "Social Work Program" in 1995 (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Ismail, 2011).

As the sole social work program in Malaysia for almost two decades, USM has played an active role in producing local professional social workers. It has also been involved in various international social work activities by joining the membership of IASSW and the Asia and Pacific Association for Social Work Education (APASWE). It also hosted two APASWE seminars over the years (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013).

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The number of social work programs at public universities increased after 1990 (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Sinnasamy, 2006; Teoh, 2014; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014; Zuraiju & Omar, 2020). Zuraiju and Omar (2020) identified the social work program offered in chronological order, as shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2

Social Work Program Offered at Public Universities in Malaysia (1975-2014)

Year	University	Name of Programme
1975	Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)	Bachelor of Social Work
1992	Universiti Malaya (UM)	Bachelor of Social Administration
1993	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)	Bachelor of Social Sciences (Hons) Social Work Studies
1997	Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)	Bachelor of Social Work Management
1999	Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)	Bachelor of Science (Human Development)
2000	Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)	Bachelor of Social Work with Honors
2000	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)	Bachelor of Social Sciences with Honours (Social Work)
2014	Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UNIZA)	Bachelor of Social Work with Honours

Source: Siti Nur Edlyn Nadia & Noralina (2020)

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All universities, except UM and UPM, use the term social work in their program. UM uses Social Administration while UPM uses Human Development with social work as one of the elective or minor courses. Actually, there are two errors in the table reported by Siti Nur Edlyn Nadia & Noralina (2020) based on other more accurate sources. First, UKM started with Master of Medical Social Work in 2000 (NJCCSWE, 2009; Sinnasamy, 2007) and the Bachelor of Social Work was only introduced in 2003 (Sinnasamy, 2007). Second, the Bachelor of Social Work at UMS was introduced in 2004 (Sinnasamy, 2007). It is important to get these errors sorted and this study will provide more details on page 266 in Chapter Five.

The increase in social work programs in a short time has raised concerns over the differences in curriculum design and the lack of qualified and experienced social work educators (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Sinnasamy, 2006). Hence, under the initiative of USM, seven universities came together in 2000 and formed the National Joint Consultative Council on Social Work Education (NJCCSWE) with the inclusion of the Malaysian Association of Social Workers. This grouping aims to provide support to less experienced social work program to ensure quality and standardization of social work education in the country (Ismail, 2011; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013).

2.6.3 Social Work Professional Organizations in Malaysia

When studying the development of medical social work in Malaysia, Lee (2011) reported that the first professional body for social work began with medical social workers, and it had a very close link with the development of social work in Singapore. It was a group of Almoners in Singapore that first mooted the subject of a formal organization to uphold the professional standards and established the Malayan Association of Almoners (MAA) in November 1954. In 1956, members from the Alumni of Social Studies Department in the then University of Malaya formed the School of Social Studies Association, which then changed its name to the Association of Professional Social Workers (APSW) in 1960.

With the separation of Malaysia and Singapore in 1965, the Singapore group of the MAA registered itself as the Singapore Association of Medical Social Workers (SAMSW) in 1967. SAMSW merged with APSW in 1970 and formed the Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW) in 1971 (Singapore Association of Social Workers, undated). Meanwhile, the Malaysian Chapter of the MAA changed its name

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to the Malaysian Association of Medical Social Workers (MAMSW) and was officially recognized by the Public Service Department, where members enjoyed privileges of official leave for meetings and conferences (Lee, 2011; MASW, 2003).

The Malaysian Association of Professional Social Workers (MAPSW) was formed on 3rd March 1973, and registered with the Registrar of Society on 28th March 1974. Its formation was the result of a general agreement among social workers in the social welfare services and in hospitals that there should be only one national body representing their professional interest (MASW, 2003). Its first Annual General Meeting was held on 30th March 1974 with a start-up membership of 60. Subsequently, MAMSW was dissolved in May 1975 so that all social workers are members of a single national professional association (MASW, 2003).

In 1989, MAPSW dropped the word Professional and renamed the Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW) until today (Lee, 2011). Due to a lack of effective voice of MASW, the medical social workers decided to revive their own association namely the Malaysian Association of Medical Social Workers (MAMSW) in 1996 (Lee, 2011). However, the Malay name of the MAMSW (*Persatuan Pegawai Pembangunan Masyarakat (Perubatan) Malaysia*) did not use the term 'social workers' but 'social development officer (medical)' instead, which is the formal title of their positions in the public service.

The connection between DSW and MASW was strong, especially in the early days of the MASW. Ten out of sixteen Presidents of MASW since 1973 was from DSW (Table 2.3). Therefore, the point made by Sinnasamy (2006) that social work and social

welfare are inseparable has some ground. Nonetheless, the last person from DSW who was elected President was Mr. K. N. Singaham, over twenty years ago as Mrs Amy Bala only became President after retiring from the DSW.

Table 2.3

List of President of MASW (1973-2020)

	Name	Tenure	Background
1	Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda	1973-1974, 1982-1985, 1989-1991	DSW
2	Muhammad Mohd Nor	1974-1975	DSW
3	Puan Sri Chong Eu Ngoh	1975-1978	DSW
4	Dato' Adnan Hj Abdullah	1978-1981	DSW
5	Mohd Hassan Hj Ngah Mahmud	1981-1982	DSW
6	Dato' Mohamad Hussain	1985-1987	DSW
7	Anthony Tan	1987-1989, 1997-1999	NGO
8	Tuan Hj Hitam Chik	1991-1993	DSW
9	Puan Hjh Umi Kalthum Abdul Karim	1993-1995	DSW
10	Associate Professor Siti Hawa Ali	1995-1997	Academic
11	K.N. Singham	1999-2001	DSW
12	Elsie Lee	2001-2003, 2003-2005, 2007-2009	UMMC
13	Amy T.K. Jones	2005-2007	DSW
14	Teoh Ai Hua	2009-2011,2011-2013,2013-2015, 2015-2017	Academic
15	Prof Dr Ismail Baba	2017-2019	Academic
16	Associate Professor Dr Muhamad Suhaimi Mohd	2019-2021	Academic

Source: Adapted from MASW website (www.masw.org.my)

2.6.4 Issues of Social Work in Malaysia Raised in Past Studies

Several issues faced by social work in Malaysia have been highlighted (Azlinda & Paramjit, 2019; Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Ismail Baba, 2011; Sinnasamy, 2006; Teoh, 2014; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014). The common ones include the lack of professional status and a poor public image of social work as a profession, a lack of employment of qualified social workers in social services, the need for standardization of social work

education, and a lack of attention or priority on social welfare and social work by the government. Azlinda and Paramjit (2019) further indicated that the lack of political will in supporting the profession is also contributing to the stagnation of the current status.

The professional status of social work is being repeatedly questioned because there is no accrediting body of social work. Ismail (2011) contended that the Malaysian Association of Social Workers, as a professional body, has not been able to achieve much progress due to the lack of participation of qualified social workers and its members. A poor public understanding of social work has also resulted in employers, both from the government and non-government, not seeing the necessity to employ qualified social workers (Ismail, 2011). Ismail (2011) further criticized the Public Service Department, which controls and monitors the employment of workers in the public service, for disregarding the need for social workers (social development officers as the title in the public service) to have a degree in social work as a prerequisite qualification.

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Several social work educators pinpointed the lack of regulated standards either by the government or the local professional association and the relaxing of admission criteria from the early 1970s when non-social work graduates were recruited into social work positions in the public social welfare services (Chong, 1998; Ismail, 1998; Siti Hawa, 1991). As a result, very few qualified social workers were employed at DSW and hospitals, while the recruitment of non-qualified social workers in the field had weakened the image of the profession (Ismail, 2011; Sinnasamy, 2006; Teoh, 2014; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014;). A survey by MASW found that less than ten percent (42 out of 433) of respondents from DSW, hospitals, and NGOs have tertiary social work

education (MASW, 2005; Lee, 2007). In another study, Lim (2007) reported that, despite the increase in the number of medical social workers in government hospitals in the mid-1990s, only 19 percent were trained in social work as at 2004.

Sinnasamy (2006) identified four major issues and challenges confronting professional social work development in Malaysia: (a) the urgency to improve the image of the social work profession; (b) the need to develop integrated social work education and training opportunities; (c) the importance of raising professional social work practice standards; and (d) the necessity to resolve the dilemma in employment for social workers and create more employment opportunities. Similarly, an earlier article by Zaharah (1992) also argued that social welfare services have always been marginalized in national development plans and budget allocations; the definition of welfare responsibilities tends to be too general and unclear; and the usage of the term is confined to the traditional functions of delivery. Anthony Tan, President of MASW at the time (1997-1999), asserted that the lack of professional and skilled personnel in the service has also impacted the development and effectiveness of the social welfare services ("Social work is just more than charity," 1998).

Crabtree (2005) noted similar challenges for social work in Malaysia. He noted that the government does not see the need to standardize social work training and is reluctant to increase public expenditure in the state's social welfare even though many non-governmental organizations are expected to support the disadvantaged heavily. There are insufficient supportive infrastructure and services in the community, and many services cannot be obtained directly by potential clients. Consistently, Ali (2005) urged the government to see the urgency in establishing community-based rehabilitation

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facilities to provide successful care and improve the quality of life for people with mental illness in Malaysia.

Lim (2007) noted that limitations in workforce, professional qualifications and skills, supervision, support staff, and physical space contribute to diminishing quality in the delivery of medical social work services, subsequently resulting in poor perceptions of medical social workers, their practice, and profession. She also found that the majority of the medical social workers in public hospitals are mostly handling the "financial assessments of patients for the waiver of hospital bills, purchasing of specific medical prosthesis or implants, and the payment of certain medical investigation or procedures" (p. 116). Crabtree (2005) concurred with the weak social work practice in Malaysian hospitals but noted that social work in the hospital setting is a little better recognized than social work in other fields of practice like social welfare, schools, and prisons. Crabtree's findings are valid since the medical social work was one of the allied health professionals regulated under the Allied Health Profession Act 2016, although it was termed as a medical social officer in the law (Allied Health Profession Act, 2016).

Lee (2011) identified poor self-perception among untrained medical social workers. Nevertheless, medical social workers saw the importance of associating themselves with a professional organization, which led to the re-establishing of the MAMSW. Medical social workers were also advocating to secure a professional standing through the Allied Health Professionals Bill and the scheme of service for a professional career path. For example, they advocated for a service grade of S42 instead of S41 for medical social workers with a Master of Medical Social Work from Universiti Kebangsaan

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Malaysia, equal to the grade of other professionals like counsellors and clinical psychologists.

Interestingly, Fulcher (2002) claimed that the western definition of social work does not work well in Malaysia due to cultural, value, and language differences. He suggested that Malaysian social workers "shape their own working definition without relying too heavily on Western social work theory" (p. 15). He offered four working hypotheses to consider in developing a working definition of social work in Malaysia:

(i) Differences in approach to language acquisition and customary problem-solving practice amongst the people of Malaysia pose real challenges for a working definition of social work that is culturally determined and informed by some social values that are different for Malaysia from contemporary Western social values.

(ii) Normative methods of social enquiry, customary help-seeking, and help-giving practices amongst Malaysia's different cultural communities shape the working definition of social work required of that country's health, education, and community social services.

(iii) The working definition of social work is shaped by legislation and customary practices administered through social institutions inherited, re-shaped, and sustained at local, regional, and national levels by a democratically-elected parliamentary government that recognizes how religious practices are a daily feature of community life across Malaysia.

(iv) Responsive human services for Malaysia require a working definition of social work that is highly sensitive to cultural variations and customary help-seeking practices across diverse cultural populations.

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In response to Fulcher's propositions, Ling (2002, 2007, 2009) acknowledged the need to adapt cultural and indigenous differences in local social work practices and social work education. She noted that social work is an alien concept as there is no equivalent term for a social worker in the local language as compared to other professionals in the field of health and disability (Ling, 2007). Hence to the locals, "a social worker is a stranger in an office" (Ling, 2007, p. 120). The professional identity and boundary of social workers will not be achieved if social workers can only play a supporting role and strengthen the existing system. Therefore, Ling (2007) advocated for a dynamic two-pronged approach that balances between strengthening the existing helping practices and developing social work, which "involves recognizing the strengths of these helping systems, building on or further developing certain elements of the helping systems, and developing social work or social services to supplement or complement the gaps between the systems" (p. 161).

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It seems that the MASW had taken note of Fulcher's suggestions and Ling's ideas when they adopted the IFSW global definition of social work. The definition of the IFSW global definition Ramsay, 2003) as compares to the definition of social work for Malaysia (MASW, 2011) is as follows:

> "The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilizing theories of human behavior and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with

their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work" (Ramsay, 2003)

"Social work is a profession guided by a body of knowledge, values and skills, utilizing a bio-psycho-social approach, to facilitate optimal social functioning of individuals, families, groups and communities. Social workers uphold a code of ethics and conduct based on the values of human rights and social justice. The profession also contributes towards social development and social change through the enhancement of social policies, legislation, programs and services, appropriate to the needs of Malaysia's diverse socio-cultural population for a better quality of life" (MASW, 2011).

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In comparing the IFSW global definition and the MASW definition above, the latter's definition has maintained some of the key concepts and values, such as social change, human rights, and social justice, but it has given more elaboration in setting the context for the country. It emphasizes the bio-psycho-social approach and the micro, mezzo, and macro practice perspective and frames human rights and social justice values within the code of ethics. The MASW definition also highlights the role of the profession in social development and intervention through government policy and services that have to be culturally appropriate for the multi-ethnic society of Malaysia.

Studying the application of social work values and ethics among social welfare officers at the DSW, Amna (2013) discovered that only a small number of her respondents applied social work values and ethics in their practice. Her respondents tended to have

judgmental attitudes and used personal values in a case simulation instead of referring to professional values and ethics. She concluded that social welfare officers still do not have a full understanding of social work values and ethics. Perhaps this could be linked to the number of non-social work trained people being employed as social welfare officers, as highlighted earlier by several authors (Ismail, 2011; Lee, 2007; Sinnasamy, 2006; Teoh, 2014; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014), who may not embrace the professional norms of social work (Ismail, 1998).

Lee (2007) argued that without formal or regulated standards established by the government or the professional body, the employing organizations of social workers like the Department of Social Welfare and Department of Health would define their own roles and responsibilities for social welfare officers and medical social workers (p. 26). In this regard, their roles and responsibilities "may not be essentially social work practices but influenced by other factors" (p .26). She further argued that without any national standards as a benchmark, it would impose ambiguity on (1) the manner social work service is provided and evaluated, (2) the differentiation between good and bad practices, (3) the effectiveness of social work education in producing graduates with competent practice, and (4) the evaluation of service quality by relevant stakeholders. Lee noted that the need to establish benchmarks for monitoring and regulating the practice of social workers, like many developed countries that have already put in place standards for ensuring ethical and accountable practice, had driven the Malaysian Association of Social Workers and the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia to develop the National Competency Standards for Social Work Practice in 2004 and presented the document to the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development in October 2005. Therefore, Lee (2011) argued that professional standing

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is synonymous with professional regulation, and there are various ways of monitoring professionalism, for example, "professional self-regulation, professional association regulations, constitutional and legislative regulation, recruitment, and employment rules and policies, and complaint tribunal" (p. 23). For her, the professional standing of social workers and the professionalism of its practice can only be safeguarded through a regulatory means managed by the profession itself in determining the criteria of recruitment and having control over the conduct of its members.

Teoh (2014) highlighted three challenges of social work education. The first is to produce social work graduates who are more competent in practice than non-social work graduates. The second is the availability and opportunity of social work education, both at undergraduate and diploma level, for existing workers without quitting their job. The third is the readiness of tertiary social work programs to offer training courses for continuing professional education (CPE) (Cervero & Daley, 2016; Smith et al, 2006) should social work legislation is established and enforced. He suggested that while focusing on standardizing social work education at the tertiary level, efforts must be taken to improve its quality through the integration of the National Social Work Competency Standards in Social Work Practice into the curriculum and training programs. Social work educators must take the leading role as a full application of the National Social Work Competency Standards by the profession is crucial as it demonstrates the value of professional education and training.

In line with the increment of social work programs in Malaysia after 1990s, as well as with more social work educators have gained their PhD after 2010, there were more publications on social work or by social work educators after 2015. A search through

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academic search engine like Google Scholar and ResearchGate using keywords like social work, *kerja sosial*, social welfare and Malaysia, it is noticeable that not only the number of publications have increased immensely, the research topics have also expanded into a wider spectrum ranging from child welfare, child protection, elderly care, mental health, health, juvenile justice, criminal justice, school social work, domestic violence, drug abuse, spirituality in social work, refugees, and notably more on social work education and social work students' learning respectively. The following Table 2.4 summarizes the 118 journal articles or publications related to social work in Malaysia, written in either English or *Bahasa Melayu* (in italic), that were published from 2015 to 2020. While the figure is not exhaustive, seven out the 118 were related to social work profession or professionalisation and will be further discussed in the next section.

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Table 2.4

Summary of journal articles and publications on social work in Malaysia (2015-2022)

Research topic (Number of studies identified)	**Title of article/book**	**Name of publication**	**Author(s)**
Social work education (8)	*Kaedah penyelidikan kerja sosial: Pengalaman di lapangan* (Social Work Research Methods: Experiences on the ground)	Book	Siti Hajar & Haris (2016)
	Latihan industri berpaksaikan vokasional penjagaan warga emas dalam kursus kerja sosial gerontologi, FSSK, UKM (Vocational oriented industrial training on elderly care in gerontology social work, FSSK, UKM)	ASEAN Journal of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education	Khadijah et al. (2019)
	Ke arah memperkasakan pendidikan kerja sosial di Malaysia Satu penelititan kontemporari (Empowering social work education in Malaysia A contemporary analysis)	International Journal of Modern Trends in Social Sciences	Samir Muhazzab & Muhd. Dhamir Audi (2019)

	Pendidikan kerja sosial di Malaysia: satu penilaian kritikal (Social work education in Malaysia: A critical assessment)	Jurnal Kemanusiaan	Muhd Dhamir Audi & Samir Muhazzab (2019)
	The development of social work undergraduate programs in Malaysia public universities: Issues, challenges and opportunities	Pertanika Journal of Social Science And Humanities	Samir Muhazzab, Mohd Suhaimi & Tunku Latifah (2019)
	Information technology and social work education in Malaysia: Challenges and prospects.	Information Technologies: Teaching to Use-Using to Teach	Chong (2020)
	Current development of social work education in Malaysia: Views of its educators	The Malaysian Journal of Social Administration	Siti Nur Edlyn Nadia & Noralina (2020)
	Implications for social work teaching and learning in Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, due to the COVID-19 pandemic: A reflection	Qualitative Social Work	Azlinda et al. (2021)
	Pemahaman dan Halangan Pelajar Program Kerja Sosial terhadap Kurikulum Asas Kerja Sosial: Kepelbagaian Klien (Understanding and Barriers among Student of Social Work Programs on the Basic Curriculum of Social Work: Diversity of Clients)	Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial	Nurzaimah & Haris (2020a)
Social work education (social work students) (11)	Typologies of student experiences and constructed meanings of learning in international placements	Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development	Crabtree et al. (2015)
	Perception of social work students on human trafficking in Malaysia	International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)	Zulaikha et al. (2018)
	Tingkah laku beretika dan keupayaan kepimpinan dalam kalangan mahasiswa tahun akhir program kerja sosial (Ethical behaviour and leadership capability among final year social work students)	e-BANGI	Nazihah et al. (2019)
	Bentuk piawaian pendidikan kerja sosial yang diterapkan dalam program kerja sosial: respon pelajar-pelajar di universiti awam, Malaysia (Forms of social work education standards applied to social work programs: responses of students at public universities, Malaysia)	Sarjana	Nurzaimah & Haris (2019)

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	Perception of youth towards LGBT behavior according to the different races in Malaysia: implications to social workers.	International Journal of Mechanical and Production Engineering Research and Development (IJMPERD)	Mohd Syaiful Nizam & Zulyana (2020)
	Tahap halangan pelajar program kerja sosial di universiti awam Malaysia dalam menguasai kurikulum asas kerja sosial (Level of barriers experienced by social work students in public universities in their effort to master the social work curriculum)	The Malaysian Journal of Social Administration	Nurzaimah & Haris (2020b)
	Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi komunikasi interpersonal dalam kalangan mahasiswa kerja sosial di universiti awam di Malaysia (Factors influencing interpersonal communication among social work students at public universities in Malaysia)	Jurnal Komunikasi	Nazihah et al. (2020)
	Kesediaan Laluan Kerjaya dalam kalangan Pelajar Kerja Sosial di Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (Readiness of Career Path among Social Work Students in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia)	Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia	Nora et al. (2020)
	The influence of ethical behaviour factors among social work students at public universities In Malaysia	International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development	Nazihah et al. (2021)
	Challenges of social work student conducts a practice on family In context of relationship of social worker and client	International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development	Norulhuda et al. (2021a)
Social work and social work Professionalisation (7)	Social work professionalism: conflicting discourse or opportunity to the profession and to the government? The case of Malaysia and its implication to the ASEAN region	ASEAN Social Work Journal	Teoh & Fuziah (2016)

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	Professionalisation of social work in Malaysia through legislation: A literature discussion on concepts, issues and challenges	Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial	Teoh & Fuziah (2017a)
	The role of social work education and profesionalization of social work in Malaysia: the unfinished mission	Conference proceeding	Teoh & Fuziah (2017b)
	Analisa perspektif kepentingan Akta Profesion Kerja Sosial di Malaysia (The perspective of significance of the social work Professionals Act in Malaysia)	Journal of Islamic Social Sciences and Humanities (Al-'Abqari)	Samir Muhazzab et al. (2020).
	A new horizon for institutionalizing the social work profession: Is there a new hope for Malaysia?	Chapter in book	Azlinda & Paramjit Singh (2019)
	Prinsip asas dan perkembangan kerja sosial di Malaysia (Fundamental principles and development of social work in Malaysia)	Book	Norruzeyati (2019)
	Professionalisme kerja sosial di Malaysia dari sudut perundangan (Social work professionalism in Malaysia from the legal perspective)	International Journal of Social Policy and Society	Mohd Azahari (2022)
Social work practice (6)	The development of culturally appropriate social work practice in Sarawak, Malaysia	Chapter in book	Ling (2016)
	Typology of social work assessments: Developing practice in Malaysia, Nepal, United Kingdom and Vietnam	Social Work & Society	Parker et al. (2017)
	A preliminary insight into the nature of street-level bureaucracy amongst front-line workers of the Malaysian Social Welfare Department	Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development	Ahmad Shukri et al. (2018)
	Starting the Indigenisation Process of Social Work Practice in Malaysia	Social Work & Society	Adam Andani et al. (2020)
	Tahap pengamalan praktis kerja sosial dalam kalangan pegawai kebajikan di Malaysia (The level of social work practice among Malaysian Social Welfare Officers)	Jurnal of Nusantara Studies	Siti Hajar et al. (2020)
	Did we do our assessment holistically, thoroughly, and continuously?	Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development	Paul Carlo (2020)
Child welfare/child protection (9)	*Penyertaan sosial dan indeks kesejahteraan sosial subjektif kanak-kanak miskin di Malaysia* (Social	Akademika (Journal of Southeast Asia	Siti Hajar et al. (2017)

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	participation and subjective social wellbeing index of poor children in Malaysia)	Social Sciences and Humanities)	
	Family characteristics and social functioning associated with duration and frequency of child sexual assault.	International Journal of Asian Social Science	Adi Fahrudin et al. (2018)
	Child welfare and social work: The legal, political and social contexts of Malaysia.	Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)	Habibie & Norhamidah (2018)
	Malaysian Child Social Workers' Perceptions of Emotions in Decision-making Processes.	Asian Social Work Journal	Habibie et al. (2018)
	Sexuality and sources of information: A study of unwed teenage mother's in women's shelter in Malaysia	International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences	Zakiyah et al. (2018)
	Children's psychological affect on their daily life in private welfare institutions	Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial	Chan et al. (2020)
	Cabaran pekerja sosial dalam mengendalikan pengurusan kes penderaan kanak-kanak di Taska (Challenges if social workers in conducting case management of child abuse at Taska)	Universiti Malaysia Terengganu Journal of Undergraduate Research	Nanthini & Khadijah (2021)
	Material deprivation status of Malaysian children from low-income families	Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal	Siti Hajar & Noralina (2021)
	The roles of social workers towards the children of divorced parents and recipients of welfare assistance	International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development	Norulhuda et al. (2022a)
	Kepelbagaian sektor dalam jaringan perkhidmatan kebajikan kanak-kanak di Sekolah Tunas Bakti (STB) Marang, Terengganu (Variety of sectors in child welfare network at Sekolah Tunas Bakti (STB) Marang, Terengganu)	Akademika (Journal of Southeast Asia Social Sciences and Humanities)	Haris (2022)
Persons with disabilities (6)	Challenges in case management of persons with mental disabilities in Malaysia	Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities	Mohd Iqbal Haqim et al. (2017)

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	Employability of persons with disabilities: Job coaches' perspectives	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Abdul Razak et al. (2018)
	Is it Right to Blame Employers for not Hiring Persons with Disabilities?	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Abdul Razak et al. (2019a)
	Employment challenges among persons with disabilities in Malaysia	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Abdul Razak et al. (2019b)
	Empowering children with disabilities through communication and social skills	International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development	Zakiyah et al. (2019)
	Improving inclusion of students with disabilities in Malaysian higher education	Disability & Society	Yusmarhaini et al. (2020)
	Physical accessibility in Malaysian higher educational institutions: Voices of students with disabilities	International Social Work	Chan et al. (2022)
Elderly (5)	Keberkesanan Pusat Aktiviti Warga Emas (PAWE) di bawah Dasar Warga Emas Negara	Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial	Noraida et al. (2016)
	Kebolehcapaian khidmat bantu di rumah di luar bandar: Perspektif kerja sosial komuniti	e-BANGI	Khadijah et al. (2017)
	Komunikasi berkesan dengan warga emas: Dari perspektif intervensi kerja sosial.	Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication	Khadijah & Maizatul (2017)
	Pengalaman sokongan sosial intergenerasi dalam kalangan warga emas di institusi kebajikan awam	Akademika	Nurhayati et al. (2017)
	Hubungan intergenerasi, sokongan psikologi dan sosial dalam penjagaan warga emas: satu kajian kes di Kota Kinabalu Sabah (Intergeneration relationship,	Jurnal Kinabalu	Nurul Hudani et al. (2020)

	psychology and social support among eldely care: a case study in Kota Kinabalu Sabah)		
	Interventions and development strategies towards intensive social support among the participants of activity center for older adults in Malaysia	Asian Social Work and Policy Review	Faizah et al. (2022)
Criminal justice (8)	Tough life after prison: An analysis of 19 former prisoners in Malaysia	Journal of Community Development Research (Humanities and Social Sciences)	Mohd Alif et al. (2020b)
	Social support for optimal reintegration of Malaysian parolees into community	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Kausalya Devi et al. (2021)
	The influence of peer pressure on male prisoners' involvement in street crime	International Journal of Academic Research In Business And Social Sciences	Mohd Suhaimi et al. (2021)
	The level of family social support among parolees In Malaysia	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Norulhuda et al. (2021b)
	Restorative justice in Malaysia: Law and social work	Book	Sridevi Thambapillay et al. (2021)
	Cabaran dan keperluan praktis kerja sosial dalam membantu sistem perundangan Malaysia (Challenges and needs of social work practice in helping the Malaysia legal system)	Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities	Mohd Alif (2022a)
	Jenayah dan gelandangan wanita: garis panduan kepada pemulihan sosial, dan keperluan praktis kerja sosial (Crime and female homeless: guidances on social rehabilitation and the need of social work practice)	Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities	Mohd Alif (2022b)
	Kerja sosial pemulihan untuk bekas banduan (Social work rehabilitation for former prisoners)	Book	Mohd Alif et al. (2022a)

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Juvenile Justice/ Delinquency (5)	*Program pencegahan berasas keibubapaan untuk bertindakbalas dengan masalah hamil luar nikah dalam kalangan remaja* (Parenting based preventive programs in responsing to premarital pregnancy among adolences)	Malaysian Journal of Social Administration	Siti Hajar et al. (2015)
	Pemulihan terapeutik remaja hamil luar nikah (Therapeutic rehabilitation for adolences with premarital pregnancy)	Book	Siti Balqis et al. (2018)
	Tahap konsep kendiri, kesedaran komuniti, sokongan sosial Dan pengintegrasian sosial bagi pesalah muda di Malaysia	Akademika	Tharshini et al. (2018)
	Poverty and delinquency: A qualitative study on selected juvenile offenders in Malaysia	International Social Work	Shong et al. (2019)
	Keadilan Restoratif bagi kanak-kanak di Malaysia: Perspektif undang-undang dan kerja sosial (Restorative justice for children in Malaysia: legal and social work perspective)	Book	Jal Zabdi et al. (2020)
	The role of family life and the influence of peer pressure on delinquency: qualitative evidence from Malaysia	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Ezarina et al. (2022)
Substance abuse (9)	Kesejahteraan zgama dalam kalangan bekas pengguna dadah (BPD) bagi mengurangkan risiko pengulangan dadah	Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial	Nurhazlina (2017)
	Faktor-faktor penyumbang kecenderungan situasi berisiko tinggi dalam kalangan penagih dadah berulang di Malaysia	Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia	Hadijah et al. (2018)
	Pemulihan klien dalam konteks kerja sosial: pengalaman penggunaan teknologi di Pusat Rehablitasi Tun Abdul Razak, Bandar Teknologi Hijau Melaka	Human Sustainability Procedia	Shahrol Rozaat (2018)
	Meneroka cabaran majikan dan masalah disiplin mantan penagih dadah: strategi menangani melalui peranan pekerja sosial	Jurnal Wacana Sarjana	Mohammad Shamil et al. (2019)
	Awareness on substance abuse among Universiti Utara Malaysia Students	Journal of Indian Public Health Research & Development	Nurhazlina & Anis Atiqah (2019)

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	Faktor-faktor penagihan semula dalam kalangan belia	Malaysian Journal of Youth Studies	Nurhazlina & Norrzeyati (2019)
	Simptom kemurungan penagih dadah wanita di pusat rawatan dan pemulihan dadah	Journal of Nusantara Studies	Rose Fazilah et al. (2019)
	Inclusivity in drug abuse and HIV/Aids prevention intervention: An exploration on fishermen community engagement	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Ezarina et al. (2022)
	Motivasi pengulangan kesalahan dadah dan ketidakinginan berubah gelandangan bekas banduan di Jalan Chow Kit	e-Bangi	Mohd Alif et al. (2022b)
Psychiatric/ mental health social work (5)	Promoting better health care services for mental health patients in Malaysia.	International Journal of Social Science and Humanity	Low & Lee (2015)
	Pengetahuan dan Skil Pekerja Sosial Kesihatan Mental di Malaysia (Knowledge and Skills of Mental Health Social Workers in Malaysia)	Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial	Fatimah Zaily et al. (2016)
	Circumstances of psychiatric social work services in Malaysia's public hospital	Journal of Social Administration	Aei, S.M. (2018)
	Knowing the self: Attachment and therapeutic alliance for mental health professionals	Book	Yusmarhaini (2019)
	The recovery of depressive patients: A review on the roles of social worker	International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation	Afifah et al. (2020)
Hospital social work (3)	*Keria sosial di hospital: Meneroka pengabaian dalam kalangan pesakit warga emas* (Social work in hospital exploring negligence among elderly patients)	e-Bangi	Siti Zaila & Khadijah (2016)
	Public health services for foreign workers in Malaysia	Social Work in Public Health	Normah et al. (2016)
	Assessment among Advance Cancer Patient Undergoing Palliative Treatment in Malaysia: A Social Work Perspective	International Journal of Social Work and Human Services Practice	Wanda & Adi Fahrudin (2017)
Religion/Islam and social work (6)	Muslim 'social work' activities in Malaysia	Chapter of a research project report	Zarina & Zulkarnain (2016)

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	Aplikasi konsep Ta'awun dalam praktis kerja sosial di Malaysia (Application of the concept of Ta'awun in social work practice in Malaysia)	Akademika	Nur Saadah et al. (2018)
	An emotional intelligence and religious orientation among volunteers and non-volunteers in Malaysia	Asian Social Work Journal	Nurul Hudani & Puteri Hayati (2018)
	"Allah will decide my life and death": Religion and spirituality among populations at risk for HIV in Malaysia	Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought	Shaw et al. (2018)
	A YouTube analysis of Muslim scholar reactions to Trump's electoral outcome: social work implications.	Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought	Yusmarhaini et al. (2020)
	Islamic and local knowledge on social work in Malaysia and Bangladesh.	Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought	Zulkarnain et al. (2021)
Family caregiver (5)	*Cabaran dalam Penjagaan Tidak Formal di Malaysia* (Challenges in Informal Care in Malaysia)	Sarjana	Fatimah et al. (2015)
	Psychological effects on family as the main caregiver of traumatic brain injury	Asian Social Work Journal	Nor Amalina et al. (2015)
	Psychological Wellbeing Among Caregivers of Schizophrenia Patients in Malaysia	International Journal of Psychology	Norhayati Ibrahim et al. (2016)
	Cabaran dalam peniagaan orang kurang upaya daripada perspektif kerja sosial perubatan (The Challenges in caregiving persons with disabilities from the medical social work perspectives)	The Malaysian Journal of Social Administration	Mohd Shariman & Fatimah (2020)
	Caregiver stress in dealing with traumatic brain injury family members	Asian Social Work Journal	Paramjit Singh et al. (2022)
Homelessness (6)	Menelusuri amalan keagamaan dalam kalangan gelandangan Muslim	Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial	Md Zawawi et al. (2017)
	The homeless life: A profile study in Penang	Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development	Md Zawawi et al. (2018)

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	Three major interrelated factors contributing to homelessness issue among former prisoners in Malaysia	International Journal of Criminology and Sociology	Mohd Alif et al. (2020a)
	Makna dalam kehidupan dan makna Jalan Chow Kit berdasarkan Teori Interaksi Simbolik: Kajian ke atas gelandangan bekas banduan	e-Bangi	Mohd Alif et al. (2021a)
	Meneroka faktor peribadi gelandangan bekas banduan berhijrah secara berulang kali ke Kuala Lumpur dari Perspektif Teori Migrasi oleh Everett S. Lee (Exploring the personal factors of homeless ex-prisoners who migrated repeatedly to Kuala Lumpur from the perspective of Migration Theory by Everett S. Lee)	Sains Humanika	Mohd Alif et al. (2021b)
	Gelandangan bekas banduan: Fenomena dan praktis kerja sosial	International Journal of Social Policy and Society	Nazirah et al. (2022)
Poverty (3)	Microcredit for rural poverty alleviation and social well-being: A study of Sabah, Malaysia	Asian Social Work and Policy Review	Haris et al. (2018)
	Poverty eradication through productive welfare approach in Malaysia	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	Zakiyah & Norzalinda (2018)
	Multidimensional poverty and wellbeing of Iban community in East Malaysia	Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development	Peter Aning et al. (2022)
Social welfare, social administration, and social policy (5)	Social welfare in Malaysia: Provision and limitation	Chapter in book	Kartini (2016)
	Fostering knowledge sharing through care culture: a comparison study of membership-oriented and service-oriented NGOs in Malaysia	International Journal of Social Science and Humanity	Nurul Hidayana et al. (2016)
	Social welfare services in Malaysia: The role of government	Conference Proceeding	Farrah Shameen (2018)
	Social policy implementation in Malaysia and its impact on the community	Chapter in book	Mohamad Zahir (2021)
	Pentadbiran Sosial: Penyampaian perkhidmatan sosial di Malaysia	Book	Haris et al. (2021)

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Community work (2)	Community participation for rural poverty alleviation: A case of the Iban community in Malaysia	International Social Work	Kwok et al. (2018)
	Community reconstruction orientation by victims of the disaster of a post-monsoon flood in Malaysia	International Social Work	Amir Zal (2019)
Domestic Violence (2)	The experience of domestic violence on married person in Malaysia	Psychology and Education	Siti Hajar & Nuruaslizawati (2021)
	A qualitative analysis of the coping strategies of female victimisation after separation	Journal of Human Rights and Social Work	Masarah et al. (2022)
Social groupwork (2)	The reflection on social work group practice challenges through online medium during Covid-19 pandemic.	International Journal of Academic Research In Business And Social Sciences	Norulhuda et al. (2022b)
	Self-help group experiences among members recovering from substance use disorder in Kuantan, Malaysia	Social Work with Groups	Azahah & Waller (2022)
School social work (1)	*Keperluan pekerja sosial sekolah untuk menangani masalah sosial pelajar di Malaysia* (The need of school social workers for dealing with student social problems in Malaysia)	The Malaysian Journal of Social Administration	Nurzaimah et al. (2020)
Refugees (1)	Refugee and asylum seeker women's experiences with healthcare and social environment in Malaysia	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Rajaratnam & Azman (2022)
Human Rights (1)	Sustainable development goals and social work: Opportunities and challenges for social work practice in Malaysia	Journal of Human Rights and Social Work	Jayasooria (2016)
Disaster response (1)	Flood disasters in Malaysia: Psychosocial issues and social work intervention	Chapter in book	Noremy Akhir, Azlinda Azman and Taufik Mohammad (2017)
HIV/AIDS (1)	Level of spirituality and demographic factors among people living with HIV/AIDS.	Indian Journal of Public Health Research and Development	Rajwani et al. (2019)

2.6.5 Studies on the Professionalisation of Social Work in Malaysia

Most of the studies reviewed thus far have only touched on the issue of professionalisation sporadically as they mainly focus on social work in general or social work education. The earliest article on this subject matter is by Ismail (1998 & 2000b). His article in 1998, a paper presented at a social work education conference in Sarawak, addresses the concern of social work professionalism from the educational perspective, particularly with the increasing number of new social work programs after 1990 in Malaysia (Ismail, 1998). Nonetheless, he raised two important questions regarding the attributes of a profession: "(1) Do we operate our functions and roles based on the philosophy and systematic knowledge of the social work domain? (2) To what extent do we apply our professional norms when delivering our social work practice?" (1998, p. 19). His other article titled 'Is social work a 'profession?' was published in the bulletin of the MASW (Ismail, 2000b). He used the example of semi-profession by Torens (1972) to describe the situation of social work in Malaysia but without further elaboration. Both papers were written based on his personal experience and observation without the support of empirical data nor a strong theoretical discourse.

At the same social work education conference in Sarawak, Gabriel Chong presented a paper questioning the direction of social work as a profession (Chong, 1998). He argued that social work in Malaysia was at a crossroad mainly challenged by the uncertainty of professional status, employment, standards of social work education, and its relevancy to society.

After a long gap, the subsequent specific studies on the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia, as shown in Table 2.4, came after 2015. Teoh and Fuziah (2016,

2017a, 2017b) started the discussion where these three articles derived from this PhD study. Meanwhile, the articles by Azlinda & Paramjit Singh (2019), Samir Muhazzab et al. (2020) and Mohd Azahari (2022) addressed more on the needs and importance of a legislation for social work in Malaysia but they did not investigate issues of professionalisation of social work in the country. Likewise, the work by Norruzeyati (2019) did not touch on issues of professionalisation of social work as it was written as a text book catered for social work students. It highlighted the historical development of social work in the West and some early development of social work in Malaysia using past literatures. Hence, the three articles by Teoh and Fuziah remain the only study specific relating to professionalisation of social work in Malaysia.

First, Teoh and Fuziah (2016) examined the idea of professionalism by Evetts (2003, 2013) as a discourse of occupational change and control. Using the concept of occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism, they argued that both the social work profession and the government could have a different view of professionalism; therefore, they may differ in their approaches to addressing issues and needs of professionalism. The government will be more responsive and attracted to the notion of raising practice standards (organizational professionalism) than to the call for raising professional status (occupational professionalism) of social work. They suggested the social work profession to understand these differences to strategize their efforts in professionalisation to raise their professional status.

Teoh and Fuziah (2017a) then explored the possibilities and challenges of the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia through legislation. They reviewed examples of a regulatory framework for the profession, starting from credentialing,

certification, registration, and licensing, that the social work profession in Malaysia can consider. They saw potential disputes among existing practitioners without any social work qualification when legislation is put in place. They proposed the use of a sunset clause in the law to include those without paper qualifications into the profession. Using examples from other countries, they also cautioned that the professionalisation of social work should not be seen as complete when the legislation is passed by the government in regulating the profession as issues of practice standards and continuing professional development are crucial aspects that need to be addressed.

The third paper by Teoh and Fuziah (2017b) scrutinized the role of social work education and professionalisation of social work in Malaysia, as social work education is one of the key attributes of the profession. Tracing the historical development of social work education, they identified five phases of development: (1) 1950-1963: the colonial period until the formation of Malaysia; (2) 1965-1974: the impact of the separation of Malaysia and Singapore in 1965; (3) 1975-1994: introduction of the first social work degree program and the next twenty years; (4) 1994-2004: the expansion of social work education; and (5) 2005 until present: the unification of social work education. Despite the expansion of social work education, they noted that social work continues to struggle to gain its deserved professional standing in the country. They suggested four areas to be further enhanced in social work education: (1) standardizing social work education (years of study and length of practicum), (2) improving the quality and availability of social work education and training for working adults, (3) aligning social work education with the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice, and (4) increasing publications of social work textbooks.

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2.6.6 Observations and Critics of the Past Studies on Social Work in Malaysia

The literature review thus far was neither extensive nor exhaustive. Studies on other aspects of social work might have been overlooked if they are not directly linked to the professionalisation of social work. For example, there are a number of studies on social work practice on children (Sopian, 2016), indigenous practice (Ling, 2002, 2007, 2009), mental health (Crabtree & Chong, 2005), school social work (Zulkarnain, 2009), sustainable development goals (Jayasooria, 2016), supervision (Chan, 2019), social work ethics (Fahrudin, 2002; Amna, 2013), and social welfare services (Siti Hajar, 2006; Haris et al., 2021).

The researcher came to the following observations during the literature review process:

(1) The early studies of social welfare and social work (Jones, 1958; Mair, 1944; Robertson, 1980; Yasas, 1974) were more narrative with information of the name of events, dates, and people. The early development of social welfare and social work up to the early 1970s was more descriptive and informative. Subsequent studies after 1990 were more academic or textbook oriented without the background story of events or key people behind those initiatives. Even the studies on social welfare by Fuziah (2003, 2006, 2007) focused on the development until 1957. Hence, the social work development in Malaysia after the formation of the MASW is vague. Social work students in the US can learn about the life of Mary Richmond and Jane Addams up to the debates regarding social work on contemporary social policy (Dulmus & Sowers, 2012) and those in the UK can learn about the work of Octavia Hills and the key people in pushing for the formation of the welfare state to the challenges of new public management (Pierson, 2010). However, social work

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students and the profession have no one to look up to as the historical development of social work after independence is almost non-existent.

(2) There is a big gap between studies on social welfare and social work in Malaysia after 1958. Kathleen Jones was said to be surprised that her publication in1958 was still being used or referred to after almost 20 years as there is no other similar work being published (Department of Social Policy and Social Work, 2010). The next study on social welfare is perhaps by Abdullah (1979 in Fuziah, 2006) but it was not published. It was after 2000 that more publications were out. This gap is something worth looking at in this study.

(3) There is clearly a lack of studies on social work professionalisation in Malaysia. The critics or arguments on the inability of the stakeholders, be it the MASW, DSW or social work education, to raise the professional status of social work are mostly without a strong theoretical discourse or supporting evidence. The contemporary studies of professionalisation of social work in other countries can provide the impetus for local researchers to study the causes and challenges faced by the social work profession through a more rigid, theoretical investigation.

(4) More critically, perhaps for the researcher, is the misconception of social work or a lack of knowledge about that contemporary development of social work that still exists within the academia despite the expansion of social work education. For example, the study by Nur Izzati et al. (2020) misinterpreted social work as charity work or voluntary work when they used the term social work in describing the link between religious practice and voluntary work by students at a religious center. The authors referred to the IFSW global definition of social work, but the social activities undertaken by the students in the study were actually charity work (*kerja amal*). The authors in this study were not from the social work field or discipline,

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but this incident showcased the misconception of the general public, and even among academics, towards social work as charity work. The second example is the study of Muhd Dhamir Audi & Samir Muhazzab (2019) on social work education in Malaysia. This article was written about issues faced by the social work profession without making references to the key documents such as the National Standards for Social Work Education in Malaysia (2009), reports on the NJCCSWE, the Six-Point Memorandum in Enhancing Social Work Practice in Malaysia (2010), and the latest development of recruitment criteria of social development officers for DSW set by the Public Service Deparment (JPA). The authors even suggested that educators establish NJCCSWE without knowing that the network has been established in 2010. The third example is the article by Samir Muhazzab et al. (2019) which claims that Malaysia has no professional body in their study of developing of undergraduate social work program at the public university in Malaysia. It is ironic that they did not see MASW as the professional body for social work in Malaysia but what they should have highlighted is lack of a regulatory body on social work education which has been identified by Teoh (2014) and Teoh & Fuziah (2017a & 2017b). The fourth example is the article by Siti Nur Edlyn Nadia & Noralina (2020) which contained errors of the dates social work programs were offered by the related universities without making reference to other earlier studies.

In sum, the literature review exposes the gaps and the need to investigate the professionalisation of social work from both historical development and a suitable professionalisation theoretical perspective. This leads to the next question: how to approach this type of study? The technical issues on research methodology will be addressed in detail in the next chapter.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the definitions of social work and professionalisation and deliberated the concepts of profession and professionalism. The frameworks of trait model and power model, and of occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism were elucidated. Past studies on the professionalisation of social work were reviewed, and issues were discussed before focusing on the development of social work, social work education, and the studies on the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia. Lastly, observation and critics of past studies were presented.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research method used in this study. More specifically, it details the research perspective and design, sampling, data collection and analysis, issues relating to reliability and validity, limitations, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Perspective

Qualitative research was used in this study because its main objective is to identify and make sense of how the professionalisation of social work has taken place in Malaysia based on the recollections of relevant persons involved in this development. Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social and human problem (Creswell, 2009), and it relies primarily on human perceptions and understanding (Stake, 2010). It is characterised by its aims and methods – the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things (Berg, 2009; Berg & Lune, 2012).

In this study, qualitative research was used as it fits what Creswell (2012) has noted as an inquiry approach: a central phenomenon or one key concept (the professionalisation of social work); the exploration and presentation of different perspectives and multiple realities (stakeholders from different organisations and views from different periods) by getting close to the participants and their experience as close as possible to get detailed views in the form of words; the analyses of the codes in the data for description

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and themes; and the interpretation of the meaning of the information by drawing on personal reflections and past research.

Therefore, this research is in line with the interpretivism perspective or paradigm in qualitative research (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020; Chowdhury, 2014; Pulla & Carter, 2018) where researchers are more concerned with in depth variables and factors related a context (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020), to investigate meaning behind the understanding of human behaviour, interactions and society (Pulla & Carter, 2018), or to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and its complexity in its unique context instead of trying to generalise the base of understanding for the whole population (Cohen, Manion & Marison, 2011; Creswell, 2009). The interpretivist researchers can probe an interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007).

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3.3 Research Design

A research design is defined as a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem (Mouton as cited in Klopper, 2008). This study is a combination of exploratory, descriptive, and contextual investigations. It is exploratory because it identifies the key events and initiatives that connect to the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia. It is descriptive because it explains the rationale and reasons behind the initiatives or decisions made, and lastly, the events and reasons are discussed from the context of professionalisation theories or models.

The study is similar to the studies and writings of professionalisation of social work in other countries that mostly used qualitative research to identify the factors that have

affected the development of the profession and the specific traits of its current professional status, and the social, political, and economic situations that provide the country's context to the social work profession (Chytill, 2006; Koukouli et al., 2007; Pierson, 2011; Wang, 2011; Weiss et al., 2004; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008).

This study utilizes historical method which include oral history where it collects memories and personal commentaries of historical significance through recorded interview (Ritchie, 2014), and written testimony of eyewitnesses and these may include documents, letter, observational notes, photographs, recordings, diaries, journals, life histories, drawings, mementos and other relics (Berg, 2009; Lundy; 2008). Historical research is chosen as it can help, among other things, (i) to reveal or uncover the unkown; (ii) to answer questions which have yet been answered; (iii) to search and identity the relationship of past happenings and their links with the present; and (iv) to record and assess past activities and achievements of individuals, agencies and institutions (Berg, 2009).

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The data come from two sources: (a) semi-structured interview with social work leaders involved in the professionalisation process, and (b) official publications and documents, government policies, and minutes of meetings related to the key events or initiatives that could have impacted the development of social work. Semi-structured is selected as it is successful in enabling interchange between the interviewer and participant, enabling the interviewer to improvise follow-up questions based on participant´s responses, and providng rooms for participants' individual verbal expressions (Kallio et al., 2016). Three processes were blended throughout the study, namely data

collection, coding, and data analysis (Berg & Lune, 2012; Creswell, 2009 & 2012; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

According to Busetto et al. (2020), the steps of data collection and analysis are not as separate and consecutive as compared to quantitative research, where "sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation are related to each other in a cyclical (interactive) manner, rather than following on after another in a stepwise approach" (Fossey et al. quoted in Busetto et al., 2020, p. 2). Hence, the process "can involve several back-and-forth steps between data collection and analysis where new insights and experiences can lead to adaption and expansion of the original plan" (Busetto et al., 2020, p. 2).

Data collected are then transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis to identify emerging themes. These themes or findings are then discussed according to the research questions and objectives and presented in the final report. The outline of the research design for this study is shown in Figure 3.1.

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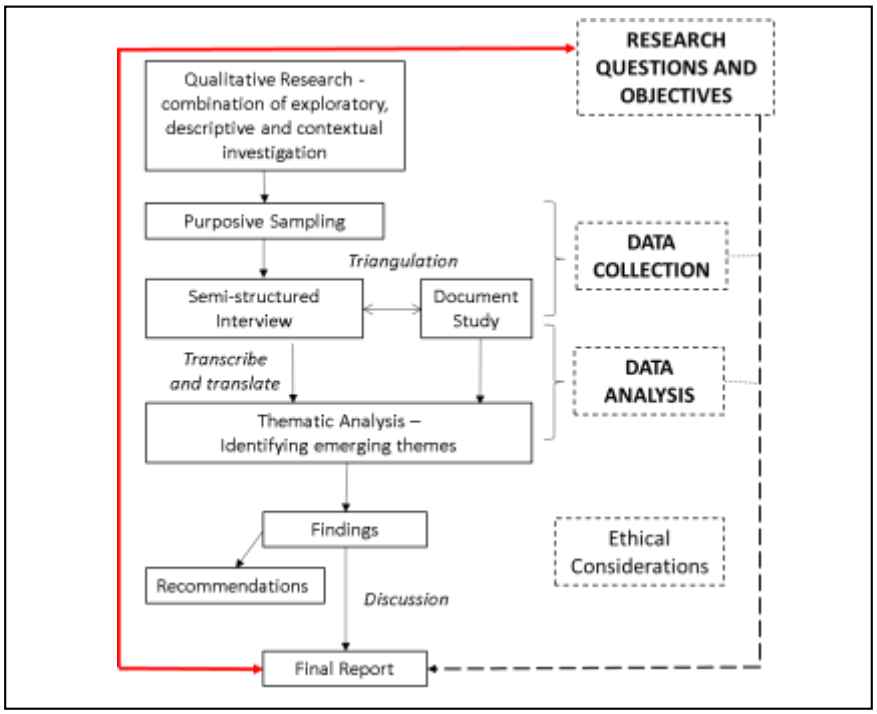

Figure 3.1. Outline of the Research Design

3.4 Sampling

This study used purposive sampling to generate insight and an in-depth understanding of the topic (Patton, 2002, p. 230), where participants were selected based on their ability to provide 'information-rich' data (Patton, 2002, p. 230). In this regard, this study targets social work practitioners who were actively involved in the social work profession and the professionalisation process at the leadership level between 1970 to 2010. The criteria of selection include those who have held or are holding key positions at the professional body like the MASW, social services agencies (DSW), and social work education programmes at the Malaysian public universities. The guiding criteria and the suggested participants are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Guiding Criteria for Sampling

Organizations	**Criteria**
Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW)	Present and past President/Vice President/Honorary Secretary/Honorary Treasurer/Executive Committee Members
Department of Social Welfare Malaysia (DSW)	Present and former Director General (DG) of Social Welfare Malaysia
Social work programs at local universities and the Joint Consultative Committee of Social Work Education (NJCCSWE)	Heads of Department/Unit of social work program or pioneer lecturers in social work

3.4.1 Selecting the Participants

First, the researcher compiled the list of the DG of Social Welfare Malaysia has served in the DSW from 1969 to 2010, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

List of Director General of Social Welfare Malaysia (1969-2010)

No	Year as DG	Name
1	1969-1976	Mr. S. Sockhanathan *
2	1976-1981	Dato' Adnan Abdullah *
3	1981-1982	Datuk Ann A. Majeed
4	1982-1987	Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda
5	1987-1993	Tuan Mohamed Hassan Ngah Mahmud *
6	1993-1997	Dato' Mohamad Hussain
7	1997-1999	Dato' Jaafar Abdul Wahid
8	1999-2003	Datuk Sayed A. Rahman Sayed Mohd
9	2003-2006	Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman
10	2006-2007	Dato' Rafek Reshidullah
11	2007-2010	Dato' Meme Zainal Rashid

* Deceased before the start of the study

Of those former DGs who are still alive, the researcher approached five of them (no. 4, 6, 8, 9 and 11). Four agreed, while one (no. 11) declined. The researcher did not approach Datuk Ann A. Majeed, Dato' Jaafar Abdul Wahid, and Dato' Rafek Reshidullah because of their shorter tenure as DG and the topic on social work professionalisation at DSW from 1970 to 2010 could be covered by the other four participants. Furthermore, Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman could articulate the development from 2006 to 2010, as she was serving as an advisor to the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development upon her retirement as DG. The researcher also approached Dato' Norani Hashim, who served as DG from 2013 to 2016, the deputy DG from 2009 until 2013, and served in the executive committee of MASW. In the end, five former DGs became the participants of this study. Both Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda and Dato' Mohamad Hussain were also former presidents of the MASW.

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Next, the researcher identified the participants from among the former Presidents of the MASW, as shown in Table 2.3 in Chapter Two. Three persons had served as President for more than one term, namely Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda (three terms), Mr Anthony Tan (two terms) and Ms Elsie Lee (three terms). Sadly, Mr Anthony Tan passed away in 2013. Out of the 13 Presidents of the MASW from 1973 until 2009, the researcher identified six of them, namely Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, Dato' Mohamad Hussain, Tuan Haji Hitam Chik, Mr K.N. Singham, Ms Elsie Lee, and Mrs Amy Bala. Unfortunately, Tuan Haji Hitam Chik passed away in 2015, leaving five potential candidates for an interview. However, Mr K. N. Singham declined, resulting in four people agreed to be interviewed. Of the four, Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda could cover the period of 1973 until 1991 and Dato' Muhamad Hussain some parts of the 1980s. Both Ms Elsie Lee and Mrs Amy Bala have been active in the executive committee of the MASW since the late 1970s and 1980s until 2010. Therefore, both of them could cover some parts of the 1990s until 2010.

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Lastly, the researcher identified social work educators who had served as head of the social work program in their respective institutions from 1969 to 2010. The researcher made reference to a working paper by Maniam Sinnasamy, who studied human resource development in social work in Malaysia (Sinnasamy, 2006). Sinnasamy conducted a survey on seven public universities that offer some form of social work education program. Of the seven, only USM and UNIMAS have social work educators holding leadership positions during that period. Of the two, USM had six social work educators with a PhD. On the other hand, UNIMAS had one social work educator with a PhD while five with a master's degree. UUM had ten social work educators with a master's degree, while UMS, UKM, UPM, and UM did not have any educators with a social

work qualification. All the heads of the social work program at UUM, UMS, UKM, UPM, and UM were educators from other disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, social policy, and human development. In the end, the researcher identified two social work educators, Prof. Dr Ismail Baba (USM) and Associate Professor Dr Ling How Kee (UNIMAS), who fit the criterion.

Eventually, 12 people participated in the study. Three participants who initially did not meet the criteria were later selected due to their unique position and contributions towards the professionalisation of social work during the study period. Mrs Gill Raja, recommended by Associate Professor Dr Ling, is a qualified social worker from the UK. She is married to a Sarawakian and was appointed as the first social work educator at UNIMAS since the beginning of the program (Dr Ling joined UNIMAS as a tutor) and an active member of the MASW. She brought a practitioner perspective into the beginning of social work education, particularly at UNIMAS.

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Madam Vijayakumari facilitated the interview with Dato' Mohamad Hussain by helping the researcher contact and secure Dato' Mohamad Hussain's agreement for the interview. She came along and guided the researcher to Dato' Mohamad Hussain's house on the interview day. During the interview, she also helped reconfirm and validate some of the dates and events brought up by Dato' Mohamad Hussain and shared her thoughts on those events from a former social welfare officer perspective.

The third participant was Dato' Dr Denison Jayasooria. He was a social work advocate since the late 1980s. He also pushed for a Diploma in Social Work in the 1990s for unskilled welfare workers in the NGO setting. Coming from the NGO social service

and social policy background, he brought the NGO perspective and broad policy views on social work education and training. Both Mrs Vijayakumari and Dato' Dr Denison Jayasooria also served in the Executive Committee member of the MASW in the past.

The names, affiliated organisations, and brief backgrounds of those agreed to be interviewed are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

List of Participants and Their Background

	Name	Affiliated Organizations	Brief background on social work profession involvement
1	Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda	MASW and DSW	• Founding member and 1st President of MASW. President for 3 terms (1973-74, 1982-1985, 1989-1991). • Director General of DSW (1982-1986) • Life Member of MASW • Graduate of the Diploma in Social Studies from University Malaya in the 1959; MSc (Social Planning), London School of Economics, 1974.
2	Ms Elsie Lee	MASW	• President for 3 terms (2001-2003, 2003-2005, 2007-2009) • Life member of MASW • Retired medical social worker at the University Malaya Medical Centre (UUMC) • Graduate of the Diploma in Social Studies from University of Singapore in 1975; MSW from USM, 2011.
3	Mdm Amy T.K. Jones @ Amy Bala	MASW	• President (2005-2007) • Life member of MASW • Retired social welfare officer • Graduate of the Social Development and Administration (SDA) program from USM (1982)

4	Prof. Dr. Ismail Baba	Educator & MASW	• Former Dean and Head of Social Work Program at USM • 1st social work educator with PhD in Malaysia • 1st Chair of the NJCCSWE (2002) • President of MASW (2017-2019) • BSW from McGill University, Canada, 1976; MSc (Social Work) Columbia University, 1983, PhD (Social Work), Barry University, 1995.
5	Dato' Mohamad Hussain	DSW & MASW	• Director General of DSW (1995-1997) • President of MASW (1985-1986) • Graduate of the Diploma in Social Studies from University of Malaya in 1967; MSW (University College of Wales) 1979
6	Datuk Sayed A. Rahman Syed Mohd	DSW	• Director General of DSW (2002-2005) • Adjunct Professor for social work program UUM (2001-2003) • BA (History) University of Malaya, 1971; Diploma in Social Policy and Administration, and Msc Economic and Social Planning, University of Wales at Swansea, 1979.
7	Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman	DSW	• Director General of DSW (2006-2009) • Vice President of MASW (2011-2013, 2013-2015) • Life member of MASW • BA (Social Work) Singapore 1973; MSc (Social Work Education), UK, 1980.
8	Dato' Norani Mohd Hashim	DSW	• Director General of DSW (2013-2015) • Former Assistant Secretary of MASW • Life member of MASW • Graduate of the Social Development and Administration (SDA) program from USM (1984); Master in Advance Social Work Policies and Practice, University of Sheffield, UK, 1998.
9	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ling How Kee	Educator	• Former Dean and Head of social work program at UNIMAS • 2nd Chair of the NJCCSWE • Life member of MASW

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			• BSW (La Trobe) 1981; PhD (Social Work and Social Policy), University of Queensland, 2001.
10	Mrs Gill Raja	Educator	• Pioneer social work lecturer at UNIMAS • Life member of MASW • BSc (Psychology), University of Reading, 1974; MSc (Masters in Social Administration & Social Work Studies), London School of Economics, 1976
11	Madam Vijayakumari Pillai	DSW	• Retired social welfare officer and child protection specialist • Former Executive Committee member of MASW • Life member of MASW • BA (Sociology & Anthropology), University of Malaya, 1974; Master in Socio-legal Studies, University of Brunel, UK, 1988.
12	Dato' Dr Denison Jayasooria	MASW & social work advocator	• Social work advocate and researcher in social development since 1990 • Initiated the Diploma in Social Work at Universiti Malaya (1998) and prime mover of the Diploma in Social Work at Methodist College Kuala Lumpur • Executive Committee member of MASW (2011-2013, 2013-2015) • Life member of MASW • Bachelor of Theology (India) 1981; Diploma in Advanced Study (Social Policy), Oxford Polytechnic 1990; PhD (Sociology), Oxford Brooks University, 1996.

The interview in this study could be considered 'acquaintance interviews' (Blichfeldt, 2007; Garton & Copland, 2010) because the researcher had already known all the participants quite closely for many years through the MASW, except Dato' Mohamad Hussain whom the researcher met for the first time during the interview. The concern over the 'dual relationship' will be addressed in the ethical consideration of this chapter.

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3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure is an essential stage in any study (Busetto et al., 2020; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). In this study, the researcher collected the data through two methods: semi-structured interviews and document study (also called document analysis) (Busetto et al., 2020) for triangulation purposes. Triangulation of data ensures data accuracy and enhances the validity and reliability of the data collected (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3.5.1 Semi-structured Interviews

The primary data were gathered through interviews with selected participants. Interviews are an ideal data collection technique to understand the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience and 'provides access to the context of people's behaviour and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behaviour' (Seidman, 2013, p. 9-10). Interviews are also used to gain insights into a person's subjective experiences, opinions, and motivations (Busetto et al., 2020).

A semi-structured interview utilises a mix of closed-ended (structured) and open-ended (unstructured) questions, accompanied by an interview guide, and the conversation can stroll around the topics of the agenda where additional follow-up or different questions may be asked, unforeseen issues explored, or some questions may be skipped without sticking to the verbatim questions in sequence (Adams, 2015; Busetto et al., 2020; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). In this regard, a semi-structured interview was particularly useful for the participants who were experienced practitioners and leaders in the social

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work profession to express their views freely (Galleta & Cross, 2013) and independently (Adams, 2015).

3.5.1.1 Designing the interview guide

An interview guide was developed to give a general focus without too narrowly defining the evolution of the interviews themselves (Ames & Diepstra, 2010). This is especially useful for a semi-structured interview so that the participant does not have to adhere too rigidly to the exact wordings or sequence of the questions asked (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Therefore, instead of coming up with the complete verbatim questions, the researcher prepared a list of questions based on the research questions and the research framework in Chapter One. The scope of questions covered the participants' involvements in social work (in terms of their education and training, positions, and roles), their views on social work as a profession, their initiatives in advancing the profession, the key incidents they perceived as important in social work, and issues and challenges encountered in the process. The questions were formulated semi-structured so that the participants could add or raise issues the researcher might not have anticipated. The semi-structured interview also allowed the researcher to probe and ask unplanned questions along the way (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Table 3.4 in the following page summarises the interview guide to whom and what questions to be asked.

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Table 3.4

Interview Guide and Scope of Questions

Purpose of the questions	For whom	Scope of Questions
(1) Introduction, ice-breaking , personal details and background information on involvement in social work	All respondents	• Can you share briefly on how you come into the profession of social work? Education, job description • What drove you into this profession? • When did you join the organization (DSW, MASW, university)? • What was the public perception on social work when you first came into the field?
(2) Research Objective One: Analyse the professionalisation of social work of Malaysia from 1969 to 2010.	MASW	• Who mooted the idea to establish MASW? • How was the response from other stakeholders towards setting up MASW? • Who were involved in the establishing of MASW? • What was/were the reasons behind the change of name of MASW from its original MAPSW? • How was MASW like when you first joined? • Has the public perception towards social work changed over the years? What are your observations? • What are the challenges for MASW for social work to be recognized as a profession? • How were your working relationships with the other stakeholders in enhancing the profession?
	DSW	• Were there any differences between the nature of work at DSW and social work? • How do you differentiate the functions of officers with social work with non-social work qualifications? • How have professional social workers contributed to the social welfare service in the country? Examples? • DSW has gone through changes and under different ministries over the years. Did you encounter any issues of this organizational change on DSW and also social work? • What were the ups and downs in terms of professional work that you had encountered during your time at DSW? • How was the reaction of the DSW towards the establishment and membership of MASW?

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		• In what manner MASW has benefited the DSW in terms of professionalism and professional identity?
	SW Academics	• When/how did your program started? Who initiated? • How do you ensure quality and standards of faculty and teaching? • How's the support from the leadership of the university (staffing, syllabus, practicum)? • How were your working relationships with the other stakeholders in enhancing the profession? • Please share your ideas and objectives for the Joint Consultative Committee on Social Work Education (NJCCSWE), and how is the response from social work educators from other universities towards the work of NJCCSWE?
(3) Research Objective Two: Identify the efforts of stakeholders in advancing professionalisation of social work.	MASW	• What were your priorities/focuses when you were the President? • What were your efforts in promoting the profession? Events, campaigns, publications? Who were the key people involved? • How do you encourage social workers to join/be active? • How do you influence the other stakeholders in improving the professional status of the profession? • What is your view of the achievements of MASW?

Before the interview started, the researcher had prepared a consent form (Appendix 1) and the interview protocol. Acquiring consent from participants is essential in any research (Ames & Diepstra, 2010; Pedroni & Pimple, 2001) and is part of the interview protocol (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). The consent form briefly explains, among other things, the objectives of the study, the purpose of the interview, the rights of the participants, the confidentiality and usage of the data, and the responsibility of the researcher to ensure the safekeeping of the recordings.

The flow of the semi-structured interview guide, encompassing the preparation of the interview guide and the interviewing process, is encapsulated in Figure 3.2.

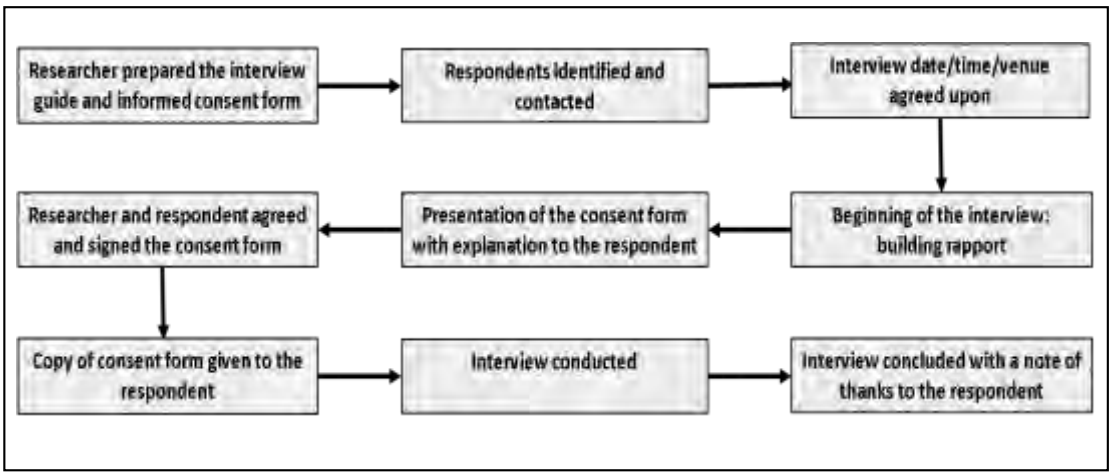

Figure 3.2. The Flow of the Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

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3.5.1.2 Conducting the semi-structured interview

The interviews were conducted face to face and audio recorded with a dedicated digital voice recorder, which also recorded the metadata (date and time of the interview). The researcher made an appointment with the participants on the agreed date, time, and venue. Before the interview, the researcher briefed the participant about the objectives of the study, followed by the presentation of the consent form. The interview and recording only started after the participant had agreed and signed the consent form. Before the interview began, the researcher also checked the recorder to ensure no problem with the recording, and the recording was again checked at the end of the interview. Each session started with the researcher mentioning the name of the participant, date, and venue. The interview guide was referred in each interview to ensure no topics were left out. All semi-structured interviews were conducted in a casual and friendly manner without much disruption and ended with a note of thanks

from the researcher. Table 3.5 summarises the name of the participants, the interview date, time, venue, and the length of the interview.

Table 3.5

Summary of Interview Date, Time, Venue, and Length of Interviews

	Name	Interview date & time	Venue	Length of interview
1	Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda	2 June 2016, 11.00am	Café at PJ Hilton, Petaling Jaya, Selangor	140 minutes
2	Dato' Mohamad Hussain	7 August 2016, 10.00am	Dato' Mohamad Hussain's house, Seremban, Negeri Sembilan	58 minutes
3	Madam Vijayakumari Pillai	7 August 2016, 10.00am	Dato' Mohamad Hussain's house, Seremban, Negeri Sembilan	58 minutes
4	Datuk Sayed A. Rahman Syed Mohd	10 August 2016, 10.30am	Malaysian Red Crescent office, Kuala Lumpur	167 minutes
5	Mrs. Gill Raja	13 December 2016, 10.00am	Gill's house in Kuching, Sarawak	30 minutes
6	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ling How Kee	15 March 2017, 5.30pm	Pullman Hotel, Kuala Lumpur	55 minutes
7	Ms. Elsie Lee	7 August 2017, 10.00am	Ms. Elsie's house, Selangor	97 minutes
8	Prof. Dr. Ismail Baba	8 August 2017, 1.00pm	MASW office, Petaling Jaya, Selangor	139 minutes
9	Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman	28 August 2017, 12.00pm	MASW Office, Petaling Jaya, Selangor	122 minutes
10	Mdm Amy T.K. Jones @ Amy Bala	15 November 2017, 1.00pm	MASW office, Petaling Jaya, Selangor	135 minutes
11	Dato' Dr Denison Jayasooria	20 December 2017, 5.00pm	Methodist College Kuala Lumpur	25 minutes
12	Dato' Norani Mohd Hashim	7 February 2018, 10.30am	Café at SOGO Complex, Kuala Lumpur	100 minutes

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3.5.2 Document Study

The secondary data were extracted from documents and minutes of meetings. These include annual reports of the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia and the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development, annual reports and minutes of annual general meetings and executive committee meetings of the MASW, and other documents like newsletters and leaflets that the researcher came across, personally possess or provided by the participants. The secondary data are helpful in answering 'experience, understandings and perceptions, an account of practice and influencing factors type research questions' (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In this study, secondary data were used to describe the objectives, dates, location, and the processes of events and decisions. The researcher also used the data in the interview to solicit insights or clarification from the participants. Searching for these documents involved the researcher making several trips, from April 2015 to March 2016, to the library of the MWFCD in Putrajaya, the resource centre at ISM in Kuala Lumpur, and the office of the MASW. Approval was given by the MASW to access the minutes of meetings and annual reports during office hour. All the reports and publications (Appendix 2) were not confidential documents.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data analysis phase of qualitative research is described as the "most intellectually challenging phase" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 114), and the active role of the researcher in identifying and communicating themes is critical (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Edwards & Skinner, 2009; Silverman, 2017). Qualitative content analysis is defined as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through

the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1278).

This study used thematic analysis on both text-based interview transcripts and secondary data where themes can be identified through inductive, theoretical, experiential, and constructionist approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thematic analysis is 'much more than simply summarising the data; a good thematic analysis interprets and makes sense of it' (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

All the interview recordings were firstly transferred by the researcher into a laptop and then played back using licenced software, Expressed Scribe, where bookmarks can be added, and which allowed the researcher to move easily to a certain time to listen to specific words or sentences. The software also enables easier tracing as most of the recordings were quite long, and each transcription took an average of two to three days to complete. Hence, the recordings were transcribed into text form by typing verbatim in Microsoft Word 2016.

After each interview recording had been transcribed, it was transferred into a table format to separate the verbatim between the researcher and the participants. A blank column was created at the end of each section of the dialogue to allow the researcher to insert coding or comments (Appendix 3). The researcher then followed the six stages of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) in analysing the transcript systematically.

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(i) Stage 1: Become familiar with the data – The researcher familiarised with all transcripts through two stages: (1) during the transcription where the researcher listened and re-listened to the recordings through Express Scribe while looking at the transcript, and (2) after the formatted transcripts were printed out, the researcher would read through several times until he did not doubt any words or sentences. Some names and events were cross-checked with materials from the secondary data to ensure correct spelling, dates, and context.

(ii) Stage 2: Generate initial codes – After familiarising with the data, the researcher manually identified words and terms raised repetitively. This study used selective coding (Braun & Clarke, 2013) to identify instances and themes based on the earlier mentioned keywords in the theoretical framework in Chapter 1. The researcher coded the data by writing notes on the texts and used coloured highlighters to show the patterns. Those words or terms were then categorised into a coding scheme before analysing the data, and the scheme was revised and refined as the analysis progressed.

(iii) Stage 3: Search for themes - This stage focused on the broader themes and involved sorting the different codes into potential themes and sub-themes. Each theme, event or issue identified were then analysed to see how the participants viewed those incidents in influencing the development of the social work profession in Malaysia. Shared or opposite views were also compared and analysed. Participants' real viewpoints were also considered by including the dialogue or verbatim in the analysis and discussions. This is necessary as it reflects the actual words or opinions of the participants themselves. It also reflects the feelings and emotions

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of the participants towards certain issues where the researcher could further interpret and explain.

(iv) Stage 4: Review themes –The analysis was further interpreted across the data to see which themes could be combined or linked with each other. This process only stopped when it reached the saturation of categories where no other new categories could be established.

(v) Stage 5: Define themes – This step was to capture the essence of what each theme was about and what aspect of the data each theme captured. The researcher renamed some of the themes so that the related sub-themes and data generated a more precise picture to answer the research question. When constructing the names for the themes and related sub-themes, the researcher used concise names to enable readers to understand the contents of the themes more easily.

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(vi) Stage 6: Write-up – The writing stage actually started as soon as the researcher had identified some of the key themes, especially of the historical development of the professionalisation of social work, from the transcripts of the first four interviews. The analysis was written in a narrative form to show the excerpts from the actual data, whether they were from the interview or secondary sources. The writing of the chapters evolved as more and more transcripts were further analysed until a complete set of themes was identified and defined in addressing the research question and objectives.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the Study

The criteria of validity, reliability and generalizability is always being raised in evaluating the quality of a research study. While demonstrating the validity, reliability and generalizability of a research is commonly used in quantitative research, addressing the trustworthiness of the study is the norm in qualitative research (Cresswell, 2009; Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Loh, 2013; Maxwell, 2009; Shenton, 2004).

Trustworthiness or rigor of a study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot & Beck, 2014). In each study, researchers should establish the protocols and procedures necessary for a study to be considered worthy of consideration by readers (Amankwaa, 2016). In this regard, the four criteria outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), namely credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability are accepted by many qualitative researchers (e.g. Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Loh, 2013; Seale, 1999; Shenton, 2004) as alternative term to replace validity, reliability and generalizability in ensuring trustworthiness.

Table 3.6 lists the trustworthiness criteria (Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and selected techniques used in achieving the trustworthiness for this study This study does not use all the techniques prescribed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as the techniques are meant as a guide and not all being used by other qualitative researchers (e.g. Cresswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2009; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2011), and "not all are appropriate to every qualitative study" (Krefting, 1991: p.222).

Table 3.6

Summary of Trustworthiness Criteria and Techniques Used

Criteria	Techniques
Credibility (internal validity)	• Prolonged engagement • Triangulation (sources, methods, investigation) • Peer debriefing
Transferability (external validity)	• Thick or dense description
Dependability (reliability)	• Overlaps methods (triangulation of methods) • Dependability audit (examining the process of the inquiry – data collection, how data was kept; accuracy of data)
Confirmability (objectivity)	• Confirmability audit (audit trails) • Reflexivity

Source: Adapted from the trustworthiness criteria from Lincoln & Gruba (1985) and Krefting (1991).

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3.7.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the confident that can be placed in the truth (Korstjens & Moser, 2018) or authenticity (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014) of the research findings where Lincoln and Guba (1985) see as an alternative to internal validity in research. Credibility aims to established that research findings represent the accurate identification, description and interpretation of the information provided by the participants. In this study, the researcher utilized the techniques of prolonged engagement, triangulation, and peer debriefing in demonstrating the credibility of the findings.

First, the researcher spent a substantial time in conducting the interview with all the respondents although the researcher has known almost all of them for a long time. That included the time spent for pre-engagement through WhatsApp informing them about the research topic and scope of questions. Before the interview, the researcher also spent some time talking and explaining to the respondents about the research. As shown in

Table 3.5, the length of interviews conducted was ranged from, except two that lasted 25-30 minutes, approximately one hour to nearly three hours. The pro-longed engagement helped the respondents to become familiar with the setting and context, to build trust, and cross-checking facts for misinformation, and to get to know the data to get richer data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Korstjens & Moser, 2018) through the flexibility use of semi-structured interview protocol.

Secondly, the researcher employs data and method triangulation to improve the probability of credibility of the findings and interpretations. For data triangulation, the researcher interviewed respondents representing three different settings i.e. the DSW, MASW and the universities and representing different era within the forty years. For method triangulation, the researcher uses interviews and documents as elaborated earlier in section 3.5 Data Collection in collecting and cross-checking the credibility of the data, especially on the dates of events and incidents, names, statistics and policies.

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Lastly, the researcher approached three colleagues on a few occasions for peer debriefing where the process 'exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and for the purpose of exploring aspect of inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: pp.308). Dr. Chan Cheong Chong and Dr. Yusmarihaini Yusof, both social work educators at SAPSP, UUM who have completed their PhD using qualitative methods, have played the devil's advocate in questioning the research questions, designs and methodology, as well as challenging the researcher's assumptions and biases in determining that the study was moving along the right path. Professor Dr. Razamin Ramli from the quantitative science discipline was engaged by the researcher to read

two chapters on data analysis. She assisted by questioning the researcher on the of interpretation and presentation of data to ensure they fit appropriately with the research questions and objectives.

3.7.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to how the qualitative researcher demonstrates that the research study's findings are applicable to similar situations, populations, and phenomena. It is seen as technic in demonstrating external validity in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) where the researcher provides thick description or detailed description to show that the research study's findings can be applicable to other contexts, circumstances, and situations.

Throughout this study, the researcher has taken steps in describing and discussing the context of the study, presenting the significant and up to date literature, outlining the methodology and identifying the limitations of the current study (Patton, 2015). A rich and thick description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Loh, 2013) of the findings was provided along with the respondent's verbatim as presented in chapter four, five and six so that the readers could determine the validity of this study.

3.7.3 Dependability

Dependability is seen as an alternative replacement for reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and refers to the consistency of the findings and that study could be repeated or replicated by other researchers (Cresswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In another words, if another person wants to replicate the study, they should have enough information from the report to do so and obtain similar findings although the purpose

of a qualitative study is to understand a phenomenon in depth and not to seek generalisation of such phenomenon (Flick, 2019). In this regard, both overlaps methods and dependability audit require the researcher to detail out, among other things, the research design and its implementation, the operational detail of data gathering, and the reflective appraisal of the project (Shenton, 2004).

The triangulation of methods has been discussed earlier in the credibility section as Lincoln and Gupa (1985) attest that a demonstration of validity is sufficient to establish the reliability of the study. In this study, the researcher has made specific references to the work of Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2007 & 2008) and Pierson (2011) in constructing the research framework (chapter one) and research design (chapter three). In addition, the researcher also reported the specific criteria to determine the right candidates as respondents, as well as using an interview guide in conducting all the interviews in the similar manner. The data collection process has also been detailed out in chapter three. For the reflective appraisal of the project, the researcher received guidance and assistance from his supervisor to review the data (interview transcripts) and related documents to ensure the quality and accuracy of the findings.

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3.7.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree of neutrality in the research study's findings. Confirmability can be attained when the findings are based on data, i.e. respondents' or participants' responses, and not any possible imagination, bias, personal motivations or self-interest of the researcher (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). In achieving this, researchers can provide an audit trail, could be physical or intellectual (Carcary, 2009), which highlights every step of data management and analysis that was

made in order to provide a rationale for the decisions made, as well as how conclusions were arrived at by researchers (Carcary, 2009 & 2020). This enables the reader or auditor to investigate the transparency of the research path (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

By using the audit trail (Appendix 4), the researcher can trace initial ideas and thoughts, considerations and predictions throughout the process of the study from the beginning of the research problem identification until concluding research findings. In addition, the systematically safekeeping of the raw data such as the interview recordings, transcript, letter of informed consent, analytical memos, reflective notes can facilitate retrieval and tracking of events that ensue in the field.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

One of the factors directly affecting social work research is ethics, as most of the social work research revolves around human beings. Williams, Tutty, and Grinnell Jr. (1995) suggested three precautionary ethical measures to consider before beginning a study: (1) obtaining the participant's informed consent, (2) designing the study in an ethical manner, and (3) ensuring that others will be properly told about the study's findings.

In addition, since this study also generated some form of oral history of social work development in Malaysia, it was essential for the researcher to be aware of his relationship with the subjects (Ames & Diepstra, 2010). This study required a close involvement of the researcher with the subjects, the revelation of personal information, and extended relationships over some time. The researcher might also have prior or ongoing relationships with his subjects. In this regard, the researcher's position as the President of the MASW during the interview offered both opportunities and restrictions.

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The researcher was fully aware of the 'dual relationship' that being the President of MASW and having a personal friendship with many of the participants could influence the responses of the participants. Nonetheless, the negative impact of that position was reduced due to the seniority (in terms of age and positions) and experiences of the participants.

Moreover, additional ethical measures and protocols were developed to address the issues of maintaining boundaries, managing dual relationships, confidentiality, and protecting the participants from harm or distress (Ames & Diepstra, 2010). Measures were put in place to address the sensitivity and confidentiality due to the position of the participants:

(i) Written consent was obtained before the start of the interview. The participants were informed of their rights, the purpose of the interview, and the usage of the data.

(ii) The participants were informed that they could ask to be anonymous when they want to talk about something sensitive or private. The researcher noted the sentences to conceal the identity of the participants during the analysis.

(iii) The comfortability of the participants on the topics or questions was monitored from time to time. Their decisions not to answer certain questions were respected and not forced.

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3.9 Overview of the Research Methodology

There are three research questions in this study. To answer each of these questions, appropriate methods of data collection and data analysis were used. The following Table 3.7 summarizes the methodology matrix used in this study.

Table 3.7

Methodology Matrix of the Study

Research question	Methods of data collection	Analysis of data
1. How has social work developed as a profession in Malaysia since independence, particularly after the forming of Malaysia until 2010 when the Cabinet agreed to endorse the Six Point Memorandum to enhance social work professionalism?	- Semi-structured interviews - Document study	The six stages of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006)
2. How have the relevant stakeholders contributed to the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia during that period spanning 40 years?	- Semi-structured interviews - Document study	The six stages of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006)
3. What strategies have been taken towards the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia?	- Semi-structured interviews - Document study	The six stages of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006)

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3.10 Chapter Summary

The researcher explained the research design and justified using a combination of exploratory, descriptive, and contextual investigative approaches for this study. Next, the details of the criterion of sampling and selection of participants were presented, followed by the explanation of the data collection procedure that utilised semi-structured interviews and a document study. The process of data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and the limitations of the methodology were also discussed. Lastly, the methodology matrix of the study was presented to summarize the link between research questions, method of data collection and analysis of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BEGINNING: THE COLONIAL ERA UNTIL 1998

4.1 Introduction

Although the main focus of the period in this study is the span of 40 years from 1969 to 2010, understanding the early development of social welfare services, social work education, and the professional movement is also essential as it provides the foundation and historical reference to the subsequent professionalisation of social work. Furthermore, two of the participants in this study joined the DSW in the 1950s and 1960s, and some other participants made references to events, legislations, and key social work personalities of the earlier period, although they only came into the service in the 1970s. Hence, the deliberation of the first part of this chapter is mainly on the colonial period until 1968, based on the past literature with additional supporting statements from some of the participants.

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The second part of this chapter looks into issues related to the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from 1969 until 1989, which had taken place in the DSW, the MASW, and social work education. For the DSW, the emphasis is on the efforts taken by its social workers in promoting the profession through programmes, services, and initiatives. For the MASW, the focus is on its formation and efforts to promote social work's professional status through its objectives, leadership, and membership. For social work education, the discussion focuses on introducing a social work programme at USM and efforts to ensure professional standards are adhered to. Issues and challenges that the DSW, the MASW and social work programme at USM encountered are then identified and discussed, corresponding to the objectives of this study.

4.2 The Beginning of Social Welfare Services in Malaya

Although Malaysia only became an independent nation in 1957, it is important to acknowledge what has been recorded on the early development of social work and social welfare in this country, especially during colonial times, as some of the key developments and issues still remain relevant until today. As Malaysia was a former colony of Britain and the modern days' social work started to emerge in the United Kingdom during the 19th century (Pierson, 2011, Horner, 2012), it would be reasonable to trace the development of social work in this country from the British Colonial era. Nonetheless, as the British ruled different states in Malaya, Borneo, and Singapore in different times, creating what Tilman (1961) summarised as the seven-fold fragmentation of administration, 'only brought to a dramatic close by the Japanese invasion of Malaya (Tilman, 1961, p.182), the discussion of the development can be further divided in two periods: (1) British Colonial Era before World War II, and (2) after World War II until the independent of Malaya.

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4.2.1 British Colonial Era before World War II

Several studies have associated the beginning of social welfare service in Malaysia and Singapore with the establishment of the Protectorate of Chinese by the British Colonial Office to manage newly arrived coolie labourers, regulate secret societies, rescue female victims of prostitution, and contain venereal diseases (Fuziah, 2006; Lim, 2008; Robertson, 1980). The appointment of W. A. Pickering as the first Protectorate of Chinese in Singapore in 1877 was seen to become 'the arm of the government in later decades to promote and administer an increasing number of welfare measures in Singapore' (Robertson, 1980, p. 12). One of the protective measures taken by the Protectorate was to mobilise the Chinese community to establish Poh Leung Kuk or

"office to protect virtue" to offer protection to girls who had been sold or unwillingly lured into prostitution (Lim, 2008). Managed by the Protectorate with the advice of a committee made up of prominent Chinese in the local community, Poh Leung Kuk was established in Singapore and later in Penang and Melaka (Lim, 2008; Robertson, 1980; Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014).

This was followed by the establishment of the Labour Department in 1912 (Fuziah, 2006; Mair, 1944;). The creation of the Labour Department was also recognised as the beginning of social welfare in Malaya (Doling & Omar, 2000; Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000; Ismail, 1990; Sushama, 1985) where a formalised social welfare program was introduced to 'help improve the wellbeing of migrants, community labours and social development of the local indigenous community" (Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000). However, the Labour Department was abolished during the Great Depression (the 1930s) due to financial difficulties. In 1937, the Department of Social Services was formed under the administration of the British Colonial Office to handle social services in more detail and orderly (Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000; Fuziah, 2006; Mair, 1944). Structurally, the Department of Social Services "was created to centralise social policy, which had been handled by each colony separately" (Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000, p. 112).

However, before World War II, the Chinese Protectorate and Labour Department provided some protection to the immigrant workers from China and Tamil labourers and as immigrant women and girls from exploitation (Turnball, 1981). He wrote that "The care of the old, poor, destitute, orphans and handicapped - indigenous or immigrant was left entirely to the private charity" (p. 237). It was also noted that the welfare programs initiated during that time was to ensure the constant supply of

labourers to continue operating the colonial estates and mines to fulfil the raw material needs of the British Empire (Manderson, 2002, quoted in Zulkarnain & Zarina, 2014).

Meanwhile, the work of Mair (1944, quoted in Fuziah & Ismail, 2013) summed up the situation of social welfare services and social work development during the colonial period succinctly:

> "The type of social services introduced at that time include issues related to education, labour, and health. Apart from providing welfare services to migrant workers, the department also helped solving social problems faced by local communities and indigenous people as well. Community work carried out by village committees, non-government organisations (NGOs), youth, prisons, were all under the jurisdiction of this department…There were three main areas in social work highlighted during this period – public assistance, service to youth and welfare work for the rural population" (Fuziah & Ismial, 2013, p. 86).

Quoting Mair (1944) again, Fuziah and Ismail (2013) wrote that during the British Colonial Administration, all social workers were made up of expatriates from the United Kingdom who were professionally trained in social work from the London School of Economics (LSE). Nonetheless, the Japanese occupation ended the limited services managed by a very small number of social workers.

Social work was expanding and gaining momentum in terms of education, practice, and social services in the UK during the 1920s leading to the 1940s before World War II

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(Pierson, 2011). At the global level, it also became known as a discipline that requires specific skills and knowledge (Mair, 1944, quoted in Fuziah & Ismail, 2013). Fuziah and Ismail (2013) noted that this period was also when Malaya began to pay close attention to improving the standard and quality of social service to its clients. What was waiting in the pipeline was the paradigm change in social welfare policy in the UK after World War II and its subsequent impacts on the social welfare service in its colonial territories.

4.2.2 After World War II until the Independence of Malaya (1946-1957)

After World War II, the British returned to rule Malaya through the British Military Administration (BMA), which continued until the creation of the Malayan Union by Order in Council of 1946 (Tilman, 1961). The Department of Social Welfare of Malaysia was established in April 1946 by the BMA (Department of Social Welfare Malaysia, 2016). However, Wan Azmi (1992) noted that the BMA started a small office named the Citizens Advice Bureau headed by a military officer, Lt. F. M. Smith, assisted by a few staff members to deal with the forced labour community during the Japanese occupation. Not long after, the Citizens Advice Bureau changed its name to the Relief Department, headed by Mr Awang b. Omar, an administrative officer from the Johor Civil Service. Its name was later changed to the Welfare Department. In the State of Johor, there was also a position of the State Rural Welfare Officer where a trained officer named Miss Enid M. L. Fernandes travelled into the interior to visit villages and the aborigines (Wan Azmi, 1992).

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4.2.2.1 The establishment of the Department of Social Welfare of Malaya in 1946

In Malaya, the BMA established the head office of the DSW on 10th June 1946 at Batu Road (now Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman), Kuala Lumpur. Mr J. A. Harvey, a British administrator, was appointed to head the office. He was assisted by Capt. Mohamed Salleh (the first local to be appointed) (Wan Azmi, 1992). The Japanese occupation left behind a residue of human problems and human distress in Malaya. The immediate response of the Department was to set up public restaurants, the Burma/Siam relief scheme, and the public assistance to provide food and assistance to many who were starving and were victims of forced labour sent to build the Burma/Siam railway by the Japanese (Jones, 1958).

Interestingly, Fuziah (2006), citing the 1946 Annual Report of DSW, discovered that Mr Harvey was only appointed as Acting Head of the Department. She could not trace the reason behind the British Administration's decision not to appoint Mr. Harvey as the Chief Social Welfare Officer even though the latter who had served in the Federal Malay States since 1925 had vast experiences as District Officer in a few districts and was the British Advisor to the State of Pahang. After a year, Mr Harvey was replaced by Dr C. P. Rawson on 18th June 1947 (Fuziah, 2006) although DSW reported that Dr C. P. Rawson was appointed on 18th June 1946 as the Chief Social Welfare Officer in Malaya (JKM, 2016). Even though an exhaustive search of the archival documents for the fact is beyond the scope of this research, it would be good for DSW to seriously look into this matter and make the necessary steps to rectify this error.

After the war, two historical events made a lasting impact on the development of social welfare services in many of the British colonies, including Malaysia. The first was the

election of the Labour government in July 1945 due to its categorical support for the Beveridge Report (1942). The Labour government promised, among other things, to establish a 'welfare state' after the war (Pierson, 2011). The Labour government subsequently established a public welfare system in the UK that was relatively centralised to replace a largely ad-hoc system of welfare. The Labour government was also said to favour a more liberal and positive colonial administration in education and social welfare, and the post-war Colonial regime also determined to play a more active role in providing a better standard of life (Turnball, 1981, pp. 236-237). The British Colonial government also issued a White Paper in 1946 on "The Organisation of the Colonies Service", also known as Command Paper No. 197, to emphasise the need to localise and adopt their public services to the local conditions as a pre-requisite for attaining self-government. It also recommended the establishment of the Public Service Commissions (PSCs) in the colonies to ensure that qualified local candidates would be recruited into the public service (Quah, 1996; Tilman, 1961).

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Second, the Malayan Union was strongly opposed by the local community led by the United Malay National Organisation (UMNO) with the support of the Malay rulers. In the end, after extensive talks with the leaders of UMNO and after belated talks with the other communities, the British established the Federation of Malaya on 1st February 1948 through the Federation of Malaya Agreement (FMA). The FMA laid down the guiding principles of the Federal Constitution and Malaya political development, and then and since, a strong central government (Rudner, 1976). This explains that the provision of social welfare, services, and related legislation in Malaysia, while in the concurrent list under the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitutions is very much in

the hands of the DSW. Table 4.1 illustrates the different services and legislations introduced by DSW from 1946 to 1956.

Table 4.1

Services Introduced and Chief Social Welfare Officer of DSW (1946-1956)

Year	Chief Social Welfare Officer	Service/program/law introduced/changed
1946	Dr C.P. Rawson	• Public restaurants • Burma/Siam relief scheme • Public assistance • Set up Serendah Boys' Home (funded by Save the Children Fund of Great Britain) • Established the Central Welfare Council of Malaya
1947		• Probation service • Women and girls' protection • Welfare of the aborigines • Welfare of the aged • Juvenile Court Ordinance 1947 • Children and Young Persons Ordinance 1947 • Women and Girls Protection Ordinance 1947
1948		• Welfare of the blind • Public restaurants ceased operation
1949		• Welfare of the aborigines stopped • The Central Welfare Council of Malaya became an independent body
1950		• Staff training • Social and Welfare Services Lotteries Board Act 1950
1951		• Repatriation of Detainees (to country of origin)
1952	Mr. J.C. McDoull	• Children welfare Plan • Child Assistance Scheme • Assistance to dependants of Detained Persons • Adoption Act 1952 • Adoption Registration Act 1952
1953		• Youth services • 1st reform school for girls (Sg Lereh House Girls' School
1954-1956		-

Source: Wan Azmi (1992), JKM (2016)

As stated earlier, the first Chief Social Welfare Officer who headed the DSW was Dr C. P. Rawson, who held the position from 1946 until 1952 (JKM, 2016). A graduate of

the London School of Economics, Dr Rawson introduced social welfare casework management and focused on the training aspect of social work to welfare officers (JKM, 2016). Due to the lack of trained local social workers and no training facilities of such discipline at that time, local officers were selected to do a two-year course in Social Welfare in the UK annually until 1950s (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013), in line with the recommendation by the Command Paper No. 197 of the Colonial Office to localise the service (Tilman, 1961).

The first group of social welfare officers sent for training in the United Kingdom in 1946 were Che Fatimah bt Musa, Che Saleha bt Mohd Ali, Mrs Then Chien Nyean, and Mr. F. C. Arulanandam (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; JKM, 2016;). In 1947, two officers, namely Che Mokhtar bin Yassin and Mr Cheong Weng Choong, were sent for further studies in the UK. The third group, sent to the UK in 1948, consisted of five officers, namely Raja Abdul Jalil Raja Badiozaman, Che Rahmah bt Hamzah, Mr Khoo Onn Soo, Mrs R. Niyogi, and Mr S. Sockhanathan (JKM, 2016). In the immediate post-war year, Malayan students formed the largest group of overseas students taking colonial social work courses at the LSE (Robertson, 1980).

It is also important to note that Mr S. Sockhanathan eventually became the first social welfare officer and the first professional ranking to be appointed as DG of Social Welfare. Prior to his appointment, the highest post at the Department of Social Welfare had always been held by the Malay Civil Service (MCS) officers (Wan Azmi, 1992; JKM, 2016). Several social welfare officers were sent for an orientation course at the UNICEF office in Geneva, Switzerland in 1949 under the funding of UNICEF (Fuziah, 2007; JKM, 2016; Wan Azmi, 1992).

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By 1952, a small number of local social workers were largely trained in Britain and mostly employed by the government to form the backbone of the DSW. However, the policymaking and administrative posts in the Federation were still largely held by expatriate members of the colonial Civil Service, including several professional social workers (Robertson, 1980).

To generate funding for social welfare programs, a social welfare lottery system was established by the government through the Social and Welfare Services Lotteries Board Act 1950. The money generated through the sale of lottery tickets were used to fund specific social welfare programs, as well as to support other charity and welfare organisations. The first issuance of the lottery in 1951, for instance, was to fund (a) the prevention and cure of Tuberculosis and (b) the training of under-previledged children (SS 886/1951). Among the welfare organizations who benefited from this fund were St. Nicholas Home in Penang (St. Nicholas Home, 2014), the Assunta Hospital, which received RM750,000 for its construction (Ness, 1962), and the Central Welfare Council of Malaya (MPKSM, 2013). Nonetheless, the fund was terminated in 1991 when it was repealed by the Social and Welfare Services Lotteries Board (Dissolution) Act 1991 (Loo & Phua, 2016).

Mr J. C. McDouall succeeded Dr Rawson as the second Chief Social Welfare Officer from 1952 until April 1957. He was Social Welfare Officer in Hong Kong prior to his appointment at DSW in Malaya (Robertson, 1980). The name of the department was also changed in 1952 to the Department of Industries and Social Relations, although Mr McDouall's title of position remained as Chief Social Welfare Officer. During his

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tenure, besides continuing with the programs introduced by Dr Rawson, Mr McDouall also introduced welfare services in institutions and initiated youth services (JKM, 2016).

In 1955, the Department of Industries and Social Relations was changed to the Department of Health and Social Welfare and was elevated as the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare following the Alliance's victory in the 1955 general election. Mr Leong Yew Koh (conferred Tun in 1958) was appointed as its first minister until the country attained independence in 1957 (JKM, 2016).

(i) The practice of social work in the Department of Social Welfare

The most prominent area of work at DSW, besides welfare relief related work, was probation service and children services with the element of social control. This can be seen with the enactment of the first three laws by DSW: Juvenile Court Ordinance 1947, Children and Young Persons Ordinance 1947, and Women and Girls Protection Ordinance 1947. The orientation of welfare services, especially in institutions, were more of imposing discipline and regimented in the early days, as many British Administrators were from the army. These two characteristics were evident in the interview with Dato' Shamsiah Abd Rahman and Dato' Sayed A. Rahman.

> "1947 Act, Juvenile Court Act. That's how. In fact, most of our very senior officers who started the department were all trained as probation officers. Even our former KP, the late Dato' Adnan. A few of them went to the UK for probation services. After that, they went in for children services". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

> "...at that time, we were taken over by BMA (British Military Administration), and most of the welfare staffs (in institutions) were called Attendant, Supt Intendent, housemaster that kind of thing, very disciplined. I think that's a reflection of psychological either by design or by situation kind of requirement because most of these administrators are from the British Army…I think that will affect in a way the program we were running them". (Sayed A. Rahman)

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Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, who joined the service as a probation officer in 1955, claimed that a probation officer was considered a higher position within DSW during that time.

> "It was the elite service. We are complete. We cover everything, well there were gaps in one or two, but as far as probation service, every state was covered. All courts are covered, and we were given the privilege of having a car". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

The higher position of probation service within DSW was in line with the social work development in the UK when probation service was among the priority in social work services, education, and training (Pierson, 2011).

(ii) Staff training and further studies

As Malaya then still did not have many university graduates, DSW would employ two approaches to equip its staff members with the relevant skills in the social welfare services through in-service training and sending them for further studies. The interview with Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda (2016), who joined the DSW with a high school certificate, revealed that new recruits into the probation service of the DSW had to go through in-service training and were later sent for further studies.

> "Anyway, I got into probation service. In probation service, we have in-service training. This is one way to introduce you to the job so that you become competent in the job. You know what you are expected to do. You got to know all the laws, everything about the court, the penal code, CPC, everything". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

> "Nobody told me it was training; it was a transfer (from Penang to Kuala Lumpur), but it turned out to be training. I only got to know about it when the chief probation officer, who is an Englishman, told me that he was making arrangements for my training in Melaka for a few days. It was actually training and exposure to different services". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

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The DSW also had the policy to send their non-graduate officers and social welfare cadets to further their studies in social work. Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda shared his experience of being given an opportunity to go to Singapore to study social work.

> "So, first as a probation officer with in-house training, then it was a policy to send the probation officer or social welfare cadets at that time for further studies...and then I heard that I could go to a university…Here's my opportunity for tertiary education, and it is to do social work. So, I got it. At the time, 100% of the students at the social work school in Singapore were either from Malaysia or Singapore, all government, social welfare department. I went to Singapore in 1957. I came back in 1959…The government was encouraging, and there's already a social work school in Singapore, and there must have been some arrangement between the school and the department to send officers there. I think I was the third or second badge from social welfare, maybe the second badge if not mistaken…There were a few others. Leslie Lee Chin Seng, Lau San Leong, Leong Wan Kai, Nurzan, Wahi, and Minora Sabki (Mima). All from the social welfare department. There's one Jalil Ibrahim who was a probation officer, but after a while, he left to join the civil service. There were a few of us at that time". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

All the above developments show that the DSW was not only expanding its social welfare services to meet the needs of the country but was also looking into ways of recruiting and training more of its staff members, especially in social work.

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4.2.2.2 The Beginning of Social Work Education in Malaya (1952)

In 1949, the University of Malaya was established in Singapore with the merger of the Raffles College and the King Edward VII Medical College (Robertson, 1980). The University also served the Federation of Malaya and the Borneo Territories. A School of Applied Social Studies was established in 1952, where the University started to train local social workers through a diploma program (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Lee, 2011; Robertson, 1980). There were two diploma courses in social studies. Part One of the Diploma in Social Studies is a two-year course opened to people with a university degree and those serving in the welfare service and hospital with a special qualifying examination. Part Two of the Diploma, which began in 1957, is a separate qualification

of a more advanced nature that focused on medico-social work, mainly to train medical social workers (Jones, 1958).

Miss Jean M. Robertson, who was appointed as the first head of the School of Social Studies of the University, recorded the historical development of social work education for both Singapore and Malaysia in her address in 1972 to the Singapore Association of Social Workers. Her speech was later published in 1980 (Robertson, 1980). Although geographically, social work education started in Singapore, Miss Robertson highlighted that "one could not speak of social work education without reference to the training section of the Social Welfare Department of Singapore and Malaya" (Robertson, 1980, p. 71). She noted that social work education came from two directions: one was created as a result of the 'felt need' recognised by the Government of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore and the almoner group at one end, and the thought of the University to set up 'social training' at its inception. However, she was uncertain if they mutually influenced each other.

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More importantly, Ms Robertson recorded the names of the personalities involved in the committee in setting up the program. She mentioned Prof Silcock, who came up with a proposal for the school after visiting several departments of social studies in Great Britain; Dr C.P. Rawson, the Chief Social Welfare Officer of Malaya; Dr T. Earness Hughes, Chief Social Welfare Officer of Singapore; Mrs Jean Marshall, Director of Social Welfare Singapore, and the Medical Department for both Singapore and Malaya. Interestingly, although the group that set up the social work program then were all expatriates, Miss Robertson raised the importance of indigenising and stressed that the social work course in the UM was not modelled on any overseas curriculum,

neither British nor American. “From the start, we were determined to make the course, as far as we could, meet the needs of this country” (Robertson, 1980, p. 74).

Another important observation by Miss Robertson was the synergy between social work education and the DSW. “While the University took the leading role in training, the Department of Social Welfare complemented the training, both through providing in-service training for different levels of their own staff and by seconding staff for training at the University” (p. 71). She also mentioned the Rees Report[5] , which introduced a plan for cadet training, leading to a ‘staircase’ system in which the cadets could move through to the University and making the in-service training in the Federation of Malaya more systematic. Miss Robertson saw that as “a general professionalisation of the service” (p.71).

Robertson (1980) also reported that professional social workers in the field were ready and took it up as their professional responsibility to assist in the development of the course through sharing of knowledge and supervising students. She saw the synergy of the government, university, and the professionals as the crucial factor for the success of the program and an essential and distinguishing feature of social work training. “These three factors - involvement of the government, the interest of the university, and the response of the professionals – were, perhaps, taken too much for granted by us at that time. The experience elsewhere has shown that without these, a new department may well flounder”. (p.73)

[5] Rees Report refers to the report by Ms Helen Rees, a World Health Organisation consultant on social work who visited Singapore in 1956. Based on her study of the social work situation, she suggested the training of social welfare officers and the almoners at the University of Malaya. Reference: Lee, G.L. & Goh, S.N. (eds) (2021). *Medical social work in Singapore: Context and practice*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, p.6.

Another interesting point that Robertson (1980) highlighted was that the social work courses in most British universities during that time were not intended to be a professional qualification into social work. "They were not professional courses; they were largely courses on social services and social structures" (p. 74). The fragmentation approach of social work education and the inability to meet the need of social workers required for health and welfare services throughout the UK during that time was only addressed later through the Younghusband Report 1959 (Askeland & Payne, 2017). Therefore, she was more determined to see the Diploma in Social Studies as a professional course in social work, "that is to say, one which would qualify people to practice" (p. 74).

Although the Diploma in Social Studies was designed as a professional qualification for social workers in Malaya and Singapore and was led by a qualified social worker in Ms Robertson, it did not get professional recognition by the British Colonial Establishment because it saw that the qualification was irrelevant in the civil service as compared to the degree from renowned universities in the UK. Ms Robertson wrote about the difficulty in convincing the British Colonial Establishment to give a degree equivalent salary for the diploma holders in the following excerpt.

> "The doubt about professional recognition in salary between a degree holder and a Diploma in Social Studies was very founded…and the argument with the Establishment Officer on this issue was long and seldom satisfactory resolved. Mr Wells and Ms Robertson went to see the Colonial Establishment Officer in the Federation to argue this point about

salary recognition of professional qualification. Armed with a letter from acting VC of the University clarifying that the Diploma in Social Work was not simply an equal qualification to a degree but superior to it in terms of professional work. The Colonial Establishment Officer held his view that any social work qualification, and in particular a Diploma, was irrelevant in the Civil Service. He said that a good degree from Oxford or Cambridge, preferably in Classics, was what was required for any post whatsoever in the Civil Service" (Robertson, 1980).

From that encounter, Ms Robertson foresaw that social work would face difficulty in the future in obtaining its deserved professional status, although the salary for social workers had improved eventually.

"However, the Rees Report did eventually improve the position. I have no doubt that these problems are still with us and something which we have a great deal of difficulty with". (Robertson, 1980)

The Diploma of Social Studies, nonetheless, was designed as a postgraduate diploma with two type of intake qualifications: for those with a general degree and those who have certain years of working experience in social welfare. Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda explained how he was accepted into the program despite not having a general degree.

"If you look at the record, that was actually supposed to be a Postgraduate Diploma. Miss Robertson was the head of department at that time. They developed it, they wanted it to be a Postgraduate Diploma, but because we didn't have the first degree, service counts, so x number of years. At that time, it was not just about experience; you had to sit for entry examination plus interview. So, that was one thing I still remember". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Besides providing social work education at the university, Ms Robertson was also looking into the needs for training in community work and community development. In 1952, Ms Robertson visited New Villages in the Federation and discussed with District Officers and Assistant District Officers on the need for training community development officers and the content of such courses. Nevertheless, she recalled that the courses did not materialise.

Hence, it can be concluded that the early education of social work in Malaya was driven by the need for skilled manpower in the social welfare department and hospitals, where students were mainly made up of staff members sent by both agencies. While the idea of a social work profession had yet to emerge, the design of the Diploma in Social Studies had already been considered into making it a professional qualification for social workers.

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4.2.2.3 The Formation of Social Work Professional Organisations in Malaya (1954)

The almoners started the first professional organisation for social work in the country when they established the Malayan Association of Almoners (MAA) in 1954 that comprised a group from the Federation of Malaya and another group from Singapore (Sushama, 1964). Following the registration of MAA in November 1954, the School of Social Studies Association was formed in January 1956 with the help of the Alumni of Social Studies Department of the then the University of Malaya. The MAA also used the Rees Report to lobby Ms Robertson for a specialised social work training scheme for the almoners (Lee & Goh, 2021; Robertson, 1980), and the Diploma in Social Work Part II was developed and offered in 1957.

Despite having its own professional body, the number of almoners in Malaya was very small. Sushama (1964) wrote that the almoner service in Malaya started in Ipoh Hospital in 1952, and by 1955 there were nine establishments in the Hospitals of Penang, Alor Setar, Taiping, Ipoh, Batu Gajah, Kuala Lumpur (2 persons), Malacca, and Johor Bharu. She also noted that the seven almoners employed in Malaya then were all women.

4.2.3 Summary of social work development in Malaya (1946-1956)

Social work was introduced as a practice with the establishment of the DSW in 1946 and the hospital in 1952. Social work education was offered in 1952 at the University of Malaya in line with the increase in the workforce that requires specific skills in the field. This was followed by the formation of a social work association by the almoners in 1954.

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The development of social work in Malaya and Singapore during this era was much linked to the synergy between the DSW, the medical departments, and the University of Malaya as the sole provider of social work education. The question of whether social work is a profession during this period did not arise, although social work education already positioned itself as a professional qualification but not recognised by the British Administration. Acknowledging the important connection between social welfare and social work in the formation of the DSW, JKM has named the period of 1946-1957 as the "social work pioneers in Malaya" (JKM, 2016). A chronology of significant events or timelines impacting the social welfare and social work development in Malaya during that period is shown in Figure 4.1 in the following page.

Figure 4.1. Timeline of Social Work Development in Malaya (1946-1957)

4.3 The Development of Social Work in Malaysia (1957-1968)

The independence of Malaya in 1957, the formation of Malaysia in 1963, and the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965 had brought some changes in the DSW, social work education, and social work associations in Malaysia and Singapore, the impacts of which will be discussed in the following sections.

4.3.1 The Leadership Change in the DSW

The most immediate change when Malaya achieved independence was that most senior positions in the government administration were being replaced by the locals. The post of Chief Social Welfare Officer, for example, was being replaced by an officer from the Malaya Civil Service (MCS), Tan Sri Dato' Zainal Abidin Abbas, who became the first local person to be appointed as the Chief Social Welfare Officer in 1957, a post he held until 1961. The title of Chief Social Welfare Officer was later changed to the DG of Social Welfare in 1961 during the tenure of Tuan Mohamad Sanusi Baki (JKM, 2016). The title of the DG of Social Welfare was gazetted as early as 1948[6] but was only used in 1961. Another interesting fact is that the number one post in the DSW was changed from a professional social worker (both Dr Rawson & Mr McDouall were trained social workers) to MCS administrator. It was not until 1969 when Mr S. Sockanathan, a trained social worker and social welfare officer, was appointed as the DG of Social Welfare.

As mentioned in the earlier section, the DSW was placed under the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in 1955. It remained under the same ministry after independence

[6] The title of Director-General of Social Welfare was gazetted in Director General of Social Welfare (Incorporation) Act 1948 (Revised 1994) and Titles of Office Act 1949 (Revised 1989).

but was later placed under the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in 1958. Table 4.2 illustrates the names of the Ministry and Ministers, Director General of Social Welfare, and their service background from 1957 until 1969.

Table 4.2

Names of Ministry, Ministers and Director General of Social Welfare (1957-1969)

Year	Ministry	Name of Minister	Name and service background of the Director General of Social Welfare
1957	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare	Tan Sri Ong Yoke Ling	Tan Sri Dato' Zainal Abidin Abbas (M.C.S.)
1958	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Tan Sri Ong Yoke Ling	Tan Sri Dato' Zainal Abidin Abbas (M.C.S.)
1959	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Tan Sri Ong Yoke Ling	Tan Sri Dato' Zainal Abidin Abbas (M.C.S.)
1960	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare	Tan Sri Ong Yoke Ling	Tan Sri Dato' Zainal Abidin Abbas (M.C.S.)
1961	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare	Tan Sri Ong Yoke Ling	Tuan Mohamad Sanusi Baki (M.C.S.)
1962	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Bahaman Samsudin	Dato' Mohamad Yusof Ahmad (M.C.S.) / Tuan Baharuddin Alang Ahmad (M.C.S.)
1963	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Bahaman Samsudin	Tuan Baharuddin Alang Ahmad (M.S.C.)
1964	Ministry of Welfare Services	Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Khan Sakhamat Aki Khan	Tuan Baharuddin Alang Ahmad (M.S.C.)
1965	Ministry of Welfare Services	Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Khan Sakhamat Aki Khan	Dato' Ajang Saith Abbas (M.C.S.)
1966	Ministry of Welfare Services	Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Khan Sakhamat Aki Khan	Dato' Ajang Saith Abbas (M.C.S.)
1967	Ministry of Welfare Services	Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Khan Sakhamat Aki Khan	Dato' Ajang Saith Abbas (M.C.S.)
1968	Ministry of Welfare Services	Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Khan Sakhamat Aki Khan	Dato' Ajang Saith Abbas (M.C.S.)
1969	Ministry of Welfare Services	Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Khan Sakhamat Aki Khan	Dato' Ajang Saith Abbas (M.C.S.)

Sources: Wan Azmi (1992); JKM (2016)

Table 4.2 shows that the DSW was placed under two different ministries twice from 1957 until 1964. It was with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (1957-1958, 1960-1962) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (1958-1959, 1963-1964)

before becoming the Ministry of Welfare Service in 1964. While on the surface, it seems that the DSW was being pushed around, Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda did not see that as disrespect of social welfare because the change did not stop the expansion of DSW at that time. According to him, the change of ministry was more of a financial consideration from the Federal Government's perspective, as shown in the following verbatim.

> "Because it was small. It started small. Every agency was small. So, I think it was not worth setting up different ministries as much; so we combined with Labour, we combined with Health. These are related, as they say. But they use one Minister to cover two portfolios. I think for economic reasons, but as we expand, we have a bit more money and also more staff on the ground. That's the only reason I can see. But it's a contingency situation". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

As indicated by Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, the DSW continued to expand its services. Among the notable expansions, apart from the addition of three more children's homes, included the expansion of public assistance from only for the blind to the handicapped in 1960, services for the destitute in 1965, and welfare assistance for the chronologically ill patients in 1967. The youth services, introduced by DSW in 1953, however, was transferred to the newly established Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports in 1964. Table 4.3 summarises the services offered at DSW from 1957 until 1969.

Table 4.3

Services Introduced and Changed in DSW (1957-1969)

Year	Service/program/law introduced/changed
1957-1959	-
1960	• Public Assistance for the Handicapped replacing Public Assistance for the Blind
1961	-
1962	-
1963	• Social welfare services extended to Sabah & Sarawak

	• Launching Grant Scheme launched
	• Welfare Council of Malaya registered as NGO on 18 May
1964	• 2nd Children's Home built - Tengku Budriah Children's Home, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur
	• Youth service transferred to the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
1965	• Services for Destitute Scheme
	• 3rd Children's Home built - Tengku Ampuan Fatimah Childrens' Home, Pahang
1966	• 1st West Malaysia Senior Social Welfare Officers Conference was held.
	• National Welfare Council of Malaysia was officiated
1967	• Welfare scheme for chronically ill patients
	• Marketing Board established for the Blind
	• Paya Terubong Probation Hostel, Penang officiated
1968	-
1969	• 4th Children's Home built - Kepala Batas, Penang

Sources: Wan Azmi (1992); JKM (2016))

As a newly established ministry, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports recruited a few existing officers from the DSW on secondment. Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda was one of the social welfare officers being seconded to the ministry due to his active involvement with the youth movement. He also managed to get a few other social welfare officers trained in social work at the University of Malaya to move to the new ministry.

> "...1965, I was seconded to the new Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports. I became Assistant Director of Youth because the youth was under social welfare previously, and I had been very active in youth movement…so I supposed they recognised my aptitude towards that, so they pulled me into Culture, Youth and Sports. About eight years I was there…and I brought in, initially, six trained workers officers. They were trained at the Singapore University". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Earlier in 1963 saw the participation of Singapore, Sabah, and Sarawak in the formation of Malaysia. Subsequently, social welfare services expanded in Sabah and Sarawak with some alterations. For example, the Cobbold Commission Report – the Report which was accepted by the Sarawak Legislature in 1962 as the basis for Sarawak to participate in Project Malaysia – was clear on welfare funds. A proportionate sum of

money allocated for funding Muslim schools in Peninsular Malaysia by the federal government would be channelled for welfare purposes in North Borneo (Sabah) and Sarawak. The funding from the Social and Welfare Services Lotteries Board was also raised. "Any grants paid out by the Malaysian Government from the proceeds of lotteries conducted by the Social and Welfare Services Lotteries Board would not be regarded as payment made from Federal revenue in this respect" (Malaysia Report of the Inter-Governmental Committee, 1962, quoted in Wong, 2008). Another difference is the structure of the State Social Welfare Department, as both Sabah and Sarawak have their own Cabinet and State Minister in charge of Social Welfare.

Meanwhile, Robertson (1980) highlighted the contribution of social work in community work. However, she highlighted that the DSW had been quiet in claiming that it was doing community work compared to other government departments. As a matter of fact, according to Robertson (1980), in 1967, Tun Abdul Razak, who was then DPM and Minister of National and Rural Development, requested the assistance of the officers of the Ministry of Welfare Services to set up a special section to deal with the community work in the Ministry of National and Rural Development.

The secondment of social welfare officers to the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, assisting the Ministry of National and Rural Development in setting up community section, and organising First West Malaysia Senior Social Welfare Officers Conference in 1966 demonstrated the increasing workforce strength at the DSW and indirectly revealed the value of social work education and training that the department has strongly devoted to since its inception.

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4.3.2 Social work Education in Malaysia (1957-1968)

As mentioned earlier, the Diploma in Social Studies Part II at the University of Malaya was introduced in 1957 (Jones, 1958) after the lobbying by the Singapore group of almoners as a specialist training scheme for qualified social workers hoping to become medical social workers (Robertson, 1980). However, specialisation was seen as not feasible for Malaya at that time due to the small number of qualified social workers employed. "The number of qualified social workers is too small to allow for much specialisation" (Jones, 1958, p. 18). All social welfare officers who were sent for social work education in Singapore were mainly for Part I of the Diploma.

Meanwhile, the University of Malaya has been growing rapidly since its establishment. This has led to the setting up of two autonomous divisions, one in Singapore and one in Kuala Lumpur in 1959[7]. The University of Malaya Act was enacted in 1961 after the government of the two territories wanted to convert the status of the division into that of a national university. Hence, the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur was established on 1st January 1962 while the campus in Singapore was renamed the University of Singapore[8] in the restructuring exercise. The Diploma of Social Studies remained at the University of Singapore.

Although social work education was only offered in Singapore, it did not affect the training of professional social workers for Malaysia, even after Singapore and Malaysia separated in 1965. A special arrangement was made to ensure the staff members from the DSW would be sent to Singapore for their social work education (Wee, 2002). For

[7] https://www.um.edu.my/our-history
[8] https://www.nus.edu.sg/about/founded-by-the-community

example, Dato' Mohamad Hussain, who was interviewed in this study, went for his Diploma in Social Studies at the University of Singapore in 1965. Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman, who studied social work at the University of Singapore in 1969, also mentioned the number of staff members sent by the DSW to Singapore for the Diploma Part I in the late 60s and early 70s.

> "I was appointed as Cadet Social Welfare Officer in 1962. I went for my Diploma in Social Work at the University of Singapore from 1965 to 1967. Among my batch were Wong Swee Leong, Hitam bin Chik, Kandiah, and Mohd Khalil". (Mohamad Hussain)

> "I got Bachelor of Arts (Social Work). That's why I joined people like Laili and Sayed Baharin. Because of the connection there, that's how the Department of Social Welfare had a discussion with the University at Singapore to send our people. I think every year they would send...in my class, about 10 or 15 of them". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

In 1968, the University of Singapore offered a Bachelor of Arts (Social Work) as its preparation to phase out the Diploma in Social Studies. The Diploma in Social Studies was eventually offered for the last time in 1973. At the same time, the idea of having social work education in Malaysia was mooted from a United Nations Conference of Social Welfare Ministers in 1968 in Bangkok, Thailand (Ismail, 2011).

The development of social work education in Malaysia after 1957 mainly took place in Singapore. The offering of Part II of the Diploma in 1957 and the offering of the Bachelor of Arts (Social Work) one decade later had shown the increasing importance of social work as an academic discipline at the tertiary level besides training existing practitioners in the social welfare service and hospitals.

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4.3.3 Social Work Professional Organisation (1957-1968)

In August 1960, the School of Social Studies Association was renamed the Association of Professional Social Workers (APSW) (Lee, 2011). Soon, after Malaysia and Singapore separated in 1965, the Singapore group of the MAA registered itself as the 'Singapore Association of Medical Social Workers' (SAMSW) in 1967, while the Malaysian chapter changed its name to the Malaysian Association of Medical Social Workers (MAMSW) in 1968 and was officially recognised by the Public Service Commission (PSC) where members enjoyed privileges of official leave for meeting and conference (Lee, 2011). In Singapore, APSW and SAMSW eventually merged to become the Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW) in 1970[9].

4.3.4 Summary of Social Work Development in Malaysia 1957-1968

The development of social work during this period, especially in the early stage, was not significant as the DSW underwent leadership change from the British to local administrators and was placed under a ministry structure, which either combined with the Labour Department or the Health Department from 1957 until 1963. It mainly focused on continuing the existing services. Only after the forming of Malaysia in 1963, it stood as its own as the Ministry of Welfare Services in 1964 that newer schemes were being introduced, especially relating to the management of children and institutions and other social issues. This can be seen in the organisation of First West Malaysia Senior Social Welfare Officers Conference in 1966 that created a platform for social welfare officers, many of whom had been trained in social work to highlight social issues to the government. Meanwhile, Part II of the Diploma of Social Studies at UM was introduced in 1957 to train medical social workers, and an undergraduate degree BA (Social Work)

[9] https://sasw.org.sg/milestone/

was introduced in 1968 to phase out the Diploma. The separation of Malaysia and Singapore in 1965 did not stop the DSW to continue sending their staff for social work education in Singapore but did leave a vacuum of social work education in the newly formed Malaysia. The separation also drove the Malaysian chapter of MAA to rename the Malaysian Association of Medical Social Workers (MAMSW) in 1968. The chronology of significant events impacting the social welfare and social work development from 1957 until 1968 is shown in Figure 4.2.

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Figure 4.2. Timeline of Social Work Development in Malaysia (1957-1968)

This section discussed the historical development of social work in Malaysia from the colonial period until 1968, mainly based on literature reviews with some supportive remarks from the interview with three participants who studied social work in Singapore in the 1950s and 1960s. It is clear that social work in Malaysia has its roots strongly linked with the DSW and to the hospital to a certain extent. It was also the leadership of these two agencies in both Singapore and Malaya that pushed for social work education to be introduced at the University of Malaya to cater to the training of manpower. The graduates of the Diploma in Social Studies eventually formed the associations that represent their affiliation. It is also quite apparent that the quest for a profession or professional standing was not strong at this stage, with the exception of the academic aim in making the Diploma a professional qualification. The development of social work was also more aggressive in Singapore than in Malaya, where Malaysia did not have any social work education program after the separation of Singapore from Malaysia nor the urge to set up a social work association except the almoners who were strongly linked with the counterpart in Singapore. The writing of this section is not the main finding for this study. Its purpose is to provide the background and context of the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia, which took shape after 1969 and will be further deliberated and discussed in the next section and the following two chapters.

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4.4 The Professionalisation of Social Work at the DSW (1969-1989)

By 1969, it has come approximately 20 years since the first batch of social welfare officers were sent for social work education and training in the UK. It also indicated that the early batches of officers would have been promoted to senior positions in the DSW. As discussed in the previous chapter, the separation of Malaysia and Singapore did not derail the education and training of social welfare officers as the DSW continued

to send their staff members to Singapore to do the Diploma in Social Studies. With the increasing number of trained social workers employed in the department, this section investigates the professionalisation efforts taken place at the DSW.

4.4.1 Social workers taking the helm of the DSW

Social work had a promising start in 1969 when Mr Sockanathan a/l Sinnandurai, better known as Mr S. Sockanathan, was appointed as the DG of Social Welfare. He received his social work education at the London School of Economics in 1950. He was the first social welfare officer from the Management and Professional group (*Kumpulan Pengurusan dan Profesional, P&P*)[10] and the first trained local social worker to be appointed as the DG of Social Welfare. As mentioned in Chapter Four, MCS officers, not professional social workers, were appointed as the DG from 1957 until 1968. It was recorded that Mr S. Sockanathan's appointment was the effort and lobbying by the Social Workers Union to the government (JKM, 2016). Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda confirmed the existing Union during the interview.

> "...at that time, we had a Union of Social Workers. It was based in KL (Kuala Lumpur) but was throughout (the country). Social welfare officers and I think welfare assistants also are part of it. (It was established) before I joined the service". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Incidentally, it was also a historical and significant event for social welfare in 1969 when Tun Fatima Hashim was appointed the Welfare Minister and thus became the nation's first woman minister. Tun Fatima, a politician and a women-rights activist, was also the Founder of the National Council of Women's Organisations (NCWO), for

[10] Malaysian civil service has two main groups of graduate officers – (1) Administrative and Diplomatic officer or *Pegawai Tadbir dan Diplomatik* (PTD) and (2) Management and Professional or *Pengurusan dan Professional* (P&P). PTD was formerly known as Malaysian Civil Services (MCS) before being renamed as PTD in 1972. As written in Chapter Four, all the Director Generals of Social Welfare from 1957 to 1968 were headed by MCS officers, whereas social welfare officers like Mr S. Sockanathan were under the Management and Professional group.

which she held the position of President for 24 years. Despite only serving the ministry for four years, she was accredited as the minister who fought for the ministry's professional staff to receive the recognition they deserved[11]. That probably refers to, among other things, the appointment of Mr S. Sockanathan as the DG of Social Welfare during her tenure as the minister. The Ministry of Welfare Services maintained its name until it was renamed the Ministry of Social Welfare in 1982. Table 4.4 shows the names of the ministry and the Minister of Social Welfare from 1969 to 1990.

Table 4.4

Name of Ministry and Ministers of Social Welfare 1969-1990

Year	Name of Ministry	Name of Minister
1969-1973	Ministry of Welfare Services	Tun Fatima Hashim
1973-1982	Ministry of Welfare Services	Tan Sri Dr Aishah Ghani
1982-1984	Ministry of Social Welfare	Tan Sri Dr Aishah Ghani
1984-1986	Ministry of Social Welfare	Dato' Abu Hassan Omar
1986-1987	Ministry of Social Welfare	Dato' Shahrir Abdul Samad
1987-1990	Ministry of Social Welfare	Dato' Mustaffa Mohammad

Source: JKM (2007)

Mr Sockanathan's appointment marked the beginning of professional social workers taking the lead position at the DSW for the next 30 years. Table 4.5 shows the Director Generals of Social Welfare of Malaysia and their social work education from 1969 to 1999.

[11] The Merdeka Award, 2009

Table 4.5

Names and Social Work Qualifications of Director General of Social Welfare Malaysia (1969-1999)

Year	Name	Social Work qualification
1969-1976	Mr. S. Sockanathan	Certificate in Social Science, LSE, UK, 1950
1976-1981	Dato' Adnan Abdullah	Diploma in Social Studies, University College of Swansea, UK, 1954
1981-1982	Datuk Ann A. Majeed	Diploma in Social Science and Administration, UK, 1952
1982-1987	Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda	Diploma in Social Studies, Part I, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1959
1987-1993	Tuan Mohamed Hassan Ngah Mahmud	Diploma in Social Studies, Part I, University of Malaya, Singapore
1993-1997	Dato' Mohamad Hussain	Diploma in Social Studies, Part I, University of Malaya, Singapore, 1967
1997-1999	Dato' Jaafar Abdul Wahid	Bachelor of Arts (Social Work), National University of Singapore, 1969

Source: JKM (2016)

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After Mr Sockanathan, the two succeeding Director Generals of Social Welfare, Dato' Adnan Abdullah and Datuk Ann A. Majeed, also got their social work education from the UK. In 1982, Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda became the first trained social worker from the Diploma of Social Studies at the University of Malaya in Singapore to be appointed as the DG of Social Welfare. The following two Director Generals, Tuan Mohamed Hassan Ngah Mahmud and Dato' Mohamad Hussain, were also graduates from the Diploma in Social Studies in Singapore, while Dato' Jaafar Abdul Wahid graduated with a degree in social work in Singapore. The entry qualification in social work among these Director Generals also reflects the development of social work

education and criteria in recruiting social welfare officers at the DSW after 1969, which will be discussed later.

4.4.2 New Services and Programmes Introduced at the DSW

Compared to the period before, the period of 1969-1989 shows remarkably more happenings at the DSW in terms of services, programmes, and legislation introduced. Table 4.6 shows some of the main services/programmes/legislations introduced within the two decades. For the purpose of this chapter, this section will highlight and discuss some of the notable services or initiatives related to social work.

Table 4.6

Service/Programmes/Legislation Introduced at the DSW (1969-1990)

Year	Director General of Social Welfare	Service/program/legislation introduced/changed
1969-1970	Mr. S. Sockanathan	-
1971		• Disaster management (MKN20) • Burma/Siam relief scheme abolished
1972		-
1973		• Employee welfare Scheme • Research, Planning and Evaluation Division set up • Women and Girls Protection Act 1973
1974		• Welfare services at hospitals
1975		• Drug rehabilitation services • First Legal Aid Service Course for Welfare Officers
1976	En. S. Sockanathan / Dato' Adnan Hj Abdullah	• Family Welfare Assistance Scheme or the Legal Aid Assistance introduced • Rules and Regulations of Juvenile Welfare Committee (Constitution and Responsibilities) 1976 gazetted • Sekolah Tunas Bakti Jerantut, Pahang
1977	Dato' Adnan Haji Abdullah	• Destitute Persons Act (Akta Orang-Orang Papa 1977 (Akta 183)) • School Welfare Assistance • Foster Parents Scheme for Female Factory Workers implemented • Women & Girls Refuge Centre, Rembau, NS

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		officiated (after Penang Poh Leong Kok closed in 1976)
1978		• Community Services at the Flats • First 'Berita Kebajikan' published Jan 1978 • Rules for the Management of Homes for the Chronically Ill 1978 came into operation
1979		• Sheltered Workshop Rules 1979 enforced
1980		• First Journal of Social Welfare published • Collaborate with Statistic Department to include disabilities in the Population Census Questionnaire Form 1980 • Women in Development Project established funded by the Australian government • Welfare of the chronically ill abolished • Personnel welfare abolished
1981	Dato' Adnan Hj Abdulllah / Datin Ann Majid	• National Welfare Foundation (YKN) established
1982	Datin Ann Majid / En. Abdullah Malim Baginda	• The Handicapped Person Services expanded • The Destitute Person Rules and Regulations 1981 was approved • Social Development Services established • Probation Hostel Regulations 1982 approved • Women & Girls Protection Rules (Place of Refuge) 1982 approved
1983	Abdullah Malim Baginda	• Child Care Centre (Preschool for children below 4 years old) introduced • Social Development Division established • Rules for the Management of Old Folks Home 1983 approved • The concept of Community Service Order for short sentenced prisoners was introduced • District Social Welfare Officers Conference, 28-29 October, Selangor. 130 DSWO attended the conference • Drugs rehabilitation reassigned to Ministry of Home Affairs
1984		• The National Welfare Service Council established • The Child Care Centre Act 1984 (Akta Taman Asuhan Kanak-kanak (TASKA) 1984) • First Community-Based Rehabilitation Program implemented at Bukit Rakit, Terengganu

		• Staff training overseas - to Japan (JICA) & South Australia (Study in Social Welfare)
1985		• Child Care Centre Act 1984 and Child Care Centre Regulations 1985 enforced • 1st National Social Welfare Week held 14-20 Oct, includes registration campaign for PWDs.
1986		• Pilot project - welfare assistance scheme through post office KL • 1st State Directors of Social Welfare Conference held in JB, 4-5 Feb. • Rebranding of welfare institutions: Rumah Orang Tua to RSK; Sekolah Budak Laki-laki to STB; Rumah Perlindungan Wanita & Gadis to TSP • Placement of two SWOs with Tabung Haji in Saudi Arablia during Haj season • Placement of SWO at the hospital SCAN team • Economic empowerment program for the transvestites • Centre for Rehabilitation for victims of accidents • Establish Social Welfare Training Institute (ILK) in Kuala Kubu Baru • Welfare Cooperative for social workers at DSW • The Central Welfare Council changed name to the National Welfare Service Council (Majlis Pusat Kebajikan SeMalaysia, 21.08.1986)
1987	En. Abdullah Malim Baginda / En. Mohd Hassan Ngah Mahmud	• Community Service Organization introduced • Social Welfare Jogathon
1988		• Pilot project of cottage system of children home (Rumah Tunas Harapan), smart partnership with AMMAY Malaysia
1989	En. Mohd Hassan Ngah Mahmud	• Pilot project of welfare assistance scheme through Giro-BSN • ASEAN Social Welfare Ministerial Meeting reintroduced in KL • Launching of 'Rumah Orang Tua Islam Tidak Berwaris' project with Ministry of Rural Development

Source: JKM (2007, 2016)

Some of the notable services or initiatives identified of having a connection with social work or professionalisation of social work at the DSW are:

(i) The establishment of the Research, Planning and Evaluation Division in 1973 and the Social Development Division in 1983.

(ii) The expansion of social welfare services that utilises social work knowledge and skills

(iii) The publication of the Journal of Social Welfare in 1980.

(iv) The establishment of the Social Welfare Training Institute (*Institut Latihan Kemahiran*, ILK) in 1986.

4.4.2.1 The establishment of the Research, Planning and Evaluation Division (1973) and Social Development Division (1983) – Emergence of macro social work practice

From its inception until 1968, the social welfare services at the DSW has been focusing on financial aids and residential services that cater for the immediate needs of those who need assistance or protection (refer to Chapter Four). These services mainly utilise a direct or micro social work practice (Scourfield, 2017; Suppes & Wells, 2013; Walsh, 2013; Zastrow, 2003), encompassing individual casework and family work. Eventually, DSW set up its Research, Planning and Evaluation Division in 1973. Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda who went for his postgraduate study in social planning, revealed the reason for setting up this division.

> "….you know around that time 1972 or 1971, there was a mission from UN to Welfare that the Department lacks research and planning positions. So, they already have in mind to have that (positions) when I told them about my plan to go for social planning (postgraduate study), they, Sockanathan supported me". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Hence, it marked the beginning of indirect practice or macro practice of social work (Brueggemann, 2014; Burghardt, 2014; Netting et al., 2004) in the DSW, and eventually, many social welfare officers were sent to further study in the field of policy and planning at the postgraduate level, especially to UK universities, as shared by some of the participants.

> "I went to the University of Wales in Swansea…at first was Diploma in Social Policy and Administration…the courses I took was Development, Economics and Policy…I took one or two papers on social work and social administration…and eventually Master of Science in Economics and Social Planning…One group like the late Haji Hitam, four of them went to Cardiff doing social work…social work education or something like that". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "…when I went to do my master's I did it in Social Work Education…Actually is more like doing policy and all that but you get it from social work education they called it". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "In end of 1997, I went to do my Master in Advanced Social Work Policies and Practice at University of Sheffield". (Norani Hashim)

A decade later, DSW set up the Social Development Division in 1983. The concept of social development started at the United Nations back in the late 1960s (Midgley, 2014) and formed part of the macro practice of social work (Hugman, 2016). Social development became popular among public policymakers on social welfare, as Dato' Sayed A. Rahman revealed in the following excerpt. The person who introduced social development in the DSW was Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda.

> "See, on social development we were way ahead of the country, started with the 1978 Social Welfare Ministers' meeting, I'm not sure whether in Geneva or New York, on issues on welfare, and they focused on social development. They are not talking about social welfare per se. Then Pak Lah (Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda) came back, he was then Head of Planning. He came back and introduced social development. I was first few to be appointed in social development area". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda explained that he introduced social development to reduce the occurrences of social problems instead of only responding to them when things got out of hand.

> "I felt that social work is at that hand (pointing to left hand). The problem starts here while we are trying to solve it here, at this end (right hand). So as a planner, I looked at this end. If you do it right, there will be less of this. There will be, no doubt, but will be less… and you intervene all these (root causes) before they get there. That's why I introduced this (social development)". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

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Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda also expressed his view that social development is a bigger picture than community development.

> "For example, our friend Hassan[12] uses community development because he's looking more at the community. Whereas in my case, it's not the community as a collection of people, but I'm looking more at a national thing. You have to improve in this, in that, education, every part as you go. That was my concern". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Nonetheless, the Social Development Division changed its names several times, and today it is known as the Community Division, according to Dato' Norani Hashim, who had served under that Division.

> "*Bahagian Pembangunan Sosial* (Social Development Division) has changed names several times. First, it was *Pembangunan Sosial* (Social Development), then *Pembangunan Komuniti* (Community Development), and now is *Bahagian Komuniti* (Community Division). It is the same *Bahagian* (Division), the name just changed several times, but the community is always there. I was there for quite some time". (Norani Hashim)

Therefore, the establishment of the Research, Planning and Evaluation Division, known as the Planning and Development Division (*Bahagian Perancangan dan Pembangunan*)[13], and the Community Division represents the move from micro to macro social work practice in the DSW.

4.4.2.2 Expansion of Social Welfare Services that Utilise Social Work Knowledge and Skills

It was also during the 1970s that the DSW expanded its welfare services into many other fields or settings like managing disaster (1971), hospitals (1974), drug

[12] Refers to Mr Hassan Ngah Mohamad, who succeeded Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda as DG of Social Welfare.

[13] Refer to the organizational structure of the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia in https://www.jkm.gov.my/jkm/index.php?r=portal/contentmenu&id=bktCR3lMaW5md3k5aWsySGJsSnd6UT09

rehabilitations (1975), legal aid assistance (1975), schools (1977), community services in selected flats (1978), and the Foster Parents Scheme for female factory workers (1978). Dato' Mohamad Hussain and Mrs Vijayakumari Pillai shared their insights into two of these services.

> "I offered my officers in flats, San Peng flats when I was in Kuala Lumpur (as) Director of Federal Territory. It was done by me, just Kuala Lumpur, not other states because the mayor is very close to me". (Mohamad Hussain)

> "This was when one welfare officer went to the school and sorted out the problem…The first batch (officers) was like Zaiton. She was in Petaling with me in 1980s. It was like '80 or '81 in social welfare service. Issues like *buang sekolah* (expel from school), suspend them. When I was posted to Petaling, Zaiton was doing the school welfare…I think they had 28 officers or what in school welfare…Then they took it away when the school introduced counsellors". (Vijayakumari Pillai)

Nonetheless, both social welfare services in flats and schools ended not long after as both settings were under different ministries. Furthermore, some of these services did not last long because they were not affiliated with any provision of legislation. It means that these services were more of the DSW's initiative to cater to the needs where no other services were available at the time. These services ceased operations when the initiators were posted elsewhere or taken over by other agencies. They were not within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Welfare or DSW.

On the other hand, these new services, except drug rehabilitations in the institutions, were mainly non-institutional based services that catered to the needs that arose, particularly those related to urbanisation and industrialisation. These fields of service can be found and taught in the social work curriculum in Malaysia (NJCCSWE, 2009).

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Meanwhile, the DSW continued to expand its services in the 1980s, which had considered social development, for example, in women development (1980), introduction to community-based rehabilitation (CBR) in the area of disabilities (1984), childcare (1984), and economic empowerment programme for the transvestites (1986). Dato' Sayed A. Rahman shared his insights into how the CBR programme was introduced by the DSW instead of by the Ministry of Health during the interview.

> "I was sent to Manila for the WHO programme. Among the experts there to talk about CBR…So, I went there, myself and one medical doctor from the Ministry of Health. So, I came back, since the representative from the Ministry of Health (MOH) says we are not going to do this because we are already urban. "No", I said, "We are going to do it". Irrespective of urban or not urban, disability covers everything. You said we are already developed, fine. That's why we did the CBR under the programme of "Health for Everyone by 2000". So, we really took the programme away from the Health Ministry. Now they realised, what happened? I said, "You don't want, I do it lah!" We did, and it became history now". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Incidentally, it was also Dato' Sayed A. Rahman who was asked by his superior at the DSW to work on the CBR.

> "The late Tuan Haji Hitam Chik came to me, "Eh! Can you have a look at this CBR?" I was then supposed to be posted to Terengganu. I said I go to Terengganu I will start. That's why it was started in Batu Rakit. The CBR started in Batu Rakit, 1982[14]". (Sayed A. Rahman)

What was shared by Dato' Sayed A. Rahman indicates that the DSW during the period was very dynamic and willing to explore new initiatives.

4.4.2.3 First Professional Social Work Publication

As shown in Table 4.6, the DSW first published 'Berita Kebajikan' in January 1978 as a departmental newsletter for its officers. Subsequently, it published the *Journal of Social Welfare* in 1980. To the researcher, it marks the beginning of professional

[14] JKM (2016) recorded CBR started in 1984 in Batu Rakit.

publications in social welfare and social work in Malaysia. The *Journal of Social Welfare* continues its publication to date. One of the key initiators was Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, who served as the Deputy Director General at that time. He expressed his passion as a professional in subscribing to journals and magazines to deepen his understanding of issues.

> "Like always, when I invest into something, I look deeper into it. So, I subscribed to journals and weekly magazines". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

4.4.2.4 The Establishment of a Social Welfare Training Institute

While in-house training was a crucial element in providing skills and technical know-how to the staff members at the DSW since its inception, its intention to set up its own training centre had not been smooth sailing. The training until the early 70s was not structured for new recruits. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman recalled his experience when he joined the DSW in 1972.

> "I don't have the basic then…In welfare, my experience, no training! Nobody teach except, ya, I have to qualify that - I was attached to one officer, I think Ms Choo Mei (who) introduced me how to *bawa kes* (handle cases), *pergi sana* (went there). She became a supervisor for one month, and then training came later". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Eventually, a one-month training was designed and administered by the Training Division to provide training for new recruits.

> "We always have one-month training on social work for those fresh officers that came in". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "There was training provided by JKM. At that time, JKM had no institute for training. We had *Bahagian Latihan* (Training Division). All new officers would have to undergo training. The training then was held in INTAN Jalan Elmu. We were there for a month". (Norani Hashim)

In the 1970s, the DSW had its training placed at the National Institute of Public Administration (*Institut Tadbiran Awam Negara*, INTAN) established in 1972 at Jalan Elmu, Kuala Lumpur.

> "Later, we were sent for training at INTAN's building". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "(Our training was at) INTAN, Jalan Elmu. Basically, (the training was) on the services and social work". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "The training then was held in INTAN Jalan Elmu. We were there for a month. At that time, all JKM training were at INTAN because no place. We had *Bahagian Latihian* (Training Division) but no centre. So, all the training was done in INTAN". (Norani Hashim)

There are, however, two versions of the story regarding the ownership of the INTAN building. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman claimed that the building belongs to the DSW but Dato' Shamsiah explained that INTAN owned the building.

> "INTAN, you know the story? Did anybody tell you the story that INTAN building *sebelah* (next to) UM? That belongs to the Welfare. The building was given by the Commissioner of New Zealand to the Welfare Ministry. Somehow INTAN took over the whole thing. *Dulu dia sewa sebelah sahaja, pinjam* (Before, they were renting only the other half, borrowing), then took over. Now INTAN becomes better than we are". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "Actually, INTAN gave space for JKM to conduct our training, not only the rooms for training but also the accommodation. This is the story I got. At that time, JKM got some money to put up their training institute, but they couldn't find a place where to put the institute. Then somehow INTAN says, why don't you park your money there, then we give you the facilities. So that's how it happened. Then they calculated the amount of money, so every time you send people, they start deducting the fund. So, after a while, they said you don't have any more money so you cannot continue any more. That's what I was told". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

Regardless of which version of the story is true, the fact remains that the DSW did not have its own training centre. Dato' Shamsiah highlighted the awkwardness faced by the DSW for not having a proper training institute.

> "I think we were the only department that didn't have a training institute then. You mention any other departments; they always have a training institute". (Shamsiah Abduil Rahman)

Nevertheless, the quest for the DSW to secure a training institute continued. A group of social welfare officers, including Dato' Sayed A. Rahman, Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda and Dato' Mohamad Hussain, were determined to establish a training institute for social welfare.

> "I wanted to have...that myself, Jaafar (Wahid) and the group, Mohamad Hussain, also Pak Lah, to have *institut sosial kita untuk kebajikan* (our own social institute for welfare). *Kita buat* (We do it)". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Eventually, the Training Institute of Social Welfare (*Institut Latihan Kebajikan,* ILK) was set up in 1985 but only started operation in 1986. The opportunity came when the government decided to reassign the drug rehabilitation services, which started at the DSW in 1975, to the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1983. One of the drug rehabilitation facilities at Kuala Kubu Baru (KKB) that belongs to the DSW had ceased operation. Hence, the DSW converted the place into its training centre, according to Dato' Shamsiah and Mrs Vijayakumari.

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> "During my time at *Bahagian Latihan* (Training Division), that's when we started to open *Insitut Latihan Kebajikan* at Kuala Kubu Baru. We took over the building supposed to be the detox centre for AADK[15] then. So, we took over that building when *dadah* (drugs) was put under the Home Ministry because *dadah* (drugs) was initially in JKM, so we took over the building". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "(The building) closed down...drugs rehabilitation was taken away. The training was there, so we moved the training there". (Vijayakumari Pillai)

At that time, the Director of ILK was also the Director of Training, and it was a senior position at the DSW.

> "My first *Pengarah Latihan* (Director of Training) was Mohamad Hussain, (followed by) Sayed Baharin and then Dato' Jaafar (Wahid). I went through three *Pengarah Latihan* when I was in *Latihan*. The last one was Dato' Jaafar…

[15] AADK stands for *Agensi Anti Dadah Kebangsaan* or The National Anti-Drugs Agency which is placed under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

> Very senior. After that, they became TKP. Tok Mad (Mohamad Hussain) became KP". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

Despite having the ILK, people like Dato' Mohamad Hussain, who was Director of Training then, said he also travelled all over Malaysia to conduct training.

> "I went all over the country to conduct my training course, even in *Rumah Panjang* (Long Houses) in Sarawak…I conducted all over the states…normally (for) the social welfare officers and the welfare assistants". (Mohamad Hussain)

However, it was noted that the ILK was not designed for training purposes in the first place.

> "ILK is not a custom-made institute. Not proper structure, staffing, and of course the building not conducive for training". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

Besides having its own trainers, the social work academics at USM like Zulkarnain Hatta, Siti Hayati, Siti Hawa, and Angeline Cheah were also called by DSW to provide training at ILK, according to Prof Dr Ismail Baba who was teaching at USM at the time.

> "I was involved with KKB. En Desa, and *kawan-kawan sebelumnya* (friends before him). *Ada yang sudah meninggal* (Some have passed away). In the early 80s. They always called us. If I'm not mistaken, Zulkarnain, Siti Hayati, Siti Hawa, Angeline (were also invited). I've been to KKB many times those days to provide social work training. They have their own trainers. Desa was one of them". (Ismail Baba)

The sharing by the participants above has demonstrated the importance of proper job training at DSW besides sending their staff for social work education at the university. This is evident in DSW placing senior officers to lead their training division, as well as pushing for the establishment of its own training centre.

4.4.3 Summary of Professionalisation of Social Work at the DSW

As discussed in the earlier section, the number of social welfare officers trained in social work had increased and came of age to take the lead in the DSW. This has enabled the

DSW to play a pivotal role in showcasing the importance of professional social work through the expansion of new services and initiatives to tackle social issues and needs of the community, as well as spreading social work practice from micro practice to macro practice with the creation of research, planning, evaluation, and social development functions in the department. The publication of the Journal of Social Welfare also marks the desire of social workers at the DSW to promote their professional identity in social welfare. Lastly, they pushed to set up a training institute on social welfare to ensure new recruits are equipped with systematic training in social work. One thing worth investigating is that the official and common term used at the DSW is social welfare and not social work. The usage of the terminology and its impact on the identity of social work will be further discussed in Chapter Six.

4.5 Forming of Social Work Professional Association

It was noted in the previous chapter that the DSW and hospitals employed the earliest group of social workers in Malaysia, and the medical social workers were the first to establish their own association in the form of the Malayan Association of Almoners (MAA). After the separation of Malaysia and Singapore, the Malaysian Chapter of the MAA changed its name to the Malaysian Association of Medical Social Workers (MAMSW) in 1968 (Lee, 2011). Nonetheless, no similar associations were representing social workers working in the DSW or other agencies when their Singapore counterpart set up the Association of Professional Social Workers in 1960, which eventually became the Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW) in 1970.

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As the number of social welfare officers with social work qualifications increases, Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda saw the need to have a professional body that could represent the profession and give the profession a distinctive identity.

> "I felt that there should be something. We have our in-service training, but in-service training is for functional purposes. But to be recognised as a profession, and at the same time we are competing, more or less, with anybody and everybody who call themselves social workers - ladies of leisure and all those people". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

At the same time, the role of the Union of Social Workers as a champion of workers' rights also diminished with the revision of the salary structure by the government.

> "As the number increased, I thought, and the Union, it is related to Union because the Union was no longer functional. People were no longer interested in the Union. The government has revised the salary structure and so on, so there was no need to go on strike to get a higher salary". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

4.5.1 Forming of the Malaysian Professional Association of Social Workers

Therefore, Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, who was seconded to the Ministry of Youth at that time, shared the idea of establishing an association with Mr Sockanathan, the then DG of Social Welfare, and got the latter's blessing.

> "I talked to Sockanathan. He was the DG. He said, 'Why not? You have been organising people, you organise this'. I said, 'Thank you very much for your support". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda decided to start talking to the medical social workers since they already have their association. However, the medical social workers were apprehensive about Abdullah's proposal as they felt they might be marginalised since their numbers were much smaller than the social welfare officers.

> "So, the next thing was I looked around what have we got - the Almoners Association. The Almoners are, after all, social workers. The only thing is that they are doing the medical side. Why don't we get together? My first thought was we joined them, but then they were small in number, and we are big in

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> number. So, never mind, I said let's talk with them - Sushama, Zaharah, Grace[16]. Sushama and Zaharah were the main. I went to see them. Zaharah said we are small, and at that time there was no likelihood that the number of almoners will increase, and your social welfare officers are more and will swallow us…I think to be fair, they were still not sure. Only later when they have seen proof we want them to be with us, but it was during my time". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Nevertheless, Dato' Abdullah did not give up and continue to pursue the agenda. Although he received support from his colleagues who graduated from Singapore in the DSW and hospitals, particularly Ms P.C. Sushama and Ms Grace Ng, he was the lone mover in setting up the association.

> "Yes, same people who went with me to Singapore. They all in support. They (P.C. Sushama and Grace Ng) were waiting, but I was the one who mobilised". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Using his experiences at the Ministry of Youth to help others set up youth organisations, Dato' Abdullah began setting up the association in 1972. Eventually, the Malaysian Association of Professional Social Workers (MAPSW) was formed and inaugurated by the then Minister of Welfare, Aishah Gani, on 3rd March 1973 and registered on 28th March 1974 (The MASW, 2003).

> "I think about more than six months. I started to work on it in 1972 while I was still in KL. Today not too bad. In those days, it took a long time to register...I think you know why we used the Professional (Social Workers) because this is particularly Sushama who used the word Professional". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda became the inaugural President of the MAPSW while waiting for its registration with the Registrar of Society (ROS). Table 4.7 shows the names of the inaugural committee of the MAPSW.

[16] Ms. P.C. Sushama, Puan Zaharah Awang and Ms. Grace Ng were all medical social workers at the University Malaya Hospital.

Table 4.7

The Inaugural Committee of MAPSW (1973)

Position	**Name**
President	Abdullah Malim Baginda
Deputy President	Mohd Mohamad Nor
Honorary Secretary	P.C. Sushsama
Committee Members	Norshidah H.M. Amin
	Leslie C.S. Lee
	J. Ross
	Ong Tian Lai
	Lim Meng Ah
	Mohd Shukor Ali

Source: MASW (2003)

When the Association was finally registered in 1974 (Appendix 5) and held its first AGM, Mohd Mohamad Noor was elected as the President as Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda was pursuing his postgraduate study abroad.

> "Yes, (I was the inaugural President) before I left (for further study), and I was away also because once it was registered, they had AGM (in 1974). So, because I was away, so it was replaced (by Mohd Mohamad Noor)". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

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As a show of support and sign of solidarity of all social workers being represented by one national association, the MAMSW was dissolved in 1975, and its members joined the MAPSW (Lee, 2011; MASW, 2003). Eventually, The MAPSW changed its name to the MASW in 1988 by dropping the word 'professional'. Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda revealed the reason and debate behind the usage of 'professional' at the beginning, where some founding members were adamant about having that word in the name of the association.

> "I think you know why we used the Professional (Social Workers) because this is particularly Sushama who used the word Professional. I was free because I knew there is this BASW (British Association of Social Workers) and all those who didn't use the word Professional. What's the point to add, you know, why do you want to project you as professional? You are not professional? I was against it, but Sushama was very strong. We don't want to be in competition.

> We lose out to all these people. They have all the context, anything like that. Anyway, I gave in that why we put it there, but thank goodness after a while, the thing was removed because I think there was no more feeling of threat. No threat at all". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

The push to include the word 'professional' into the name of the association back in the days clearly demonstrate the concern over the lower public image or understanding of social work. This issue will be further discussed in Chapter Six.

4.5.2 Moving for Professional Recognition

Soon after being registered, the MAPSW became a member of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) in 1974, and Ms P.C. Sushama, who represented MAPSW to the AGM of IFSW in Nairobi from 8-12 July 1974, was elected as a member of the Executive Committee (Tinjauan, 1975; The MASW, 2003). The affiliation with the IFSW paved the way for the MASWand social workers in Malaysia to be involved with social work regionally and internationally in years to come.

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When Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda came back from his postgraduate study, he got MAPSW to become a member of the Malaysia Professional Centre (Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia [BIM]), an umbrella body representing professional organisations in Malaysia[17].

> "In my time I promoted, in many ways, as soon as I came back I joined BIM, the reason was I wanted to push social work to be recognised as a profession…Firstly was to make it known. To make it known to the people that there is such a thing as an association (of social workers)". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

[17] Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia was set up with the assistance of the Commonwealth Foundation in 1973 to serve as the umbrella body for all professions recognised by the legislative Acts of Parliament in Malaysia. Membership has since been extended to include all other professional groups and disciplines where the recognition by the government authorities is still in progress (www.bim.org.my, at 10 August 2021).

One of the key actions taken by the Association from the 1970s up to the 1980s was to fight for the recognition for the profession by presenting its credential as a degree equivalent qualification. For years the Diploma in Social Studies from Singapore was not perceived as a degree, and the social welfare officers and medical social workers' positions were perceived as only a Diploma. That is, these positions were not the graduate level.

Dato' Sayed A. Rahman, who was one of the first three officers who joined the DSW as a university graduate in 1972, revealed that he had to take a pay cut to join the DSW to honour his parents' wishes as his father was working at the DSW. He explained that the pay was lower because the position of a social welfare officer then was considered a non-graduate position.

> "…because they (the government) considered this diploma holder kind of position. That was then. They didn't look at graduate kind of pay". (Sayed A. Rahman)

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Ms Elsie Lee, who was a graduate of the last batch of the Diploma in Social Work from Singapore and worked as a medical social worker at the University Malaya Hospital in 1974, gave credit to both the MAMSW and the MAPSW in fighting for the graduate salary scheme for medical social workers.

> "...at that time, the Medical Social Workers Association was fighting very hard to get professional recognition, to get that degree salary. I remember there were many reviews of salary at that time, and many groups were fighting to put on the degree's scale…Ms Sushama really put up strong advocacy boasting the image of medical social workers especially. She went to all the hearings, putting up papers after papers. So, it was important for us to get to that status even though we came out with a diploma equivalent to a degree ... that was the time actually they (medical social workers) were fighting for the salary, but it went into the 70s, even when the MASWwas formed in 1973, welfare officers started getting degree's pays. So, that was the time we said why can't medical social workers in University Hospital and other teaching hospitals also be recognised as degree holders. So, in the 70s and 80s, they were fighting for that. Eventually, it was given to us". (Elsie Lee)

4.5.3 The Leadership of the MASW

The number of qualified social workers in Malaysia during the formation years of the MASW was estimated at around 120 (Tinjauan, 1975). As mentioned in the previous section, most qualified social workers were social welfare officers compared to medical social workers. Hence, the leadership of the MAPSW during the period was led by those working at the DSW. That situation only changed in 1987 when Mr Anthony Tan, a social worker from the Montfort Boys School, was elected President. Prof Dr Ismail Baba recalled that the leadership of the MASW was mainly dominated by the DSW that had a good relationship with medical social workers.

> "I joined when I was a medical social worker. In fact, we have our own association, medical social work. Then we joined the MASW. We thought we might as well become one organisation. At that time, the MASW was very much controlled by JKM because all their Presidents had been their *Ketua Pengarah* (Director General). But the good thing is that they had the resources and facilities for us to have our meetings, etc. I think there's a good relationship between medical social workers and JKM at that time". (Ismail Baba)

The name of the Presidents of the MASW from 1973 to 1991 and their work affiliation are listed in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

Presidents of the MASW (1973-1991)

	Tenure	Name	Work Affiliation
1	1973-1974	Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda	DSW
2	1974-1975	En. Muhammad Mohd Nor	DSW
3	1975-1978	Puan Sri Chong Eu Ngoh	DSW
4	1978-1981	Dato' Adnan Hj Abdullah	DSW
5	1981-1982	En. Mohd Hassan Hj Ngah Mahmud	DSW
6	1982-1985	Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda	DSW
7	1985-1987	Dato' Mohamad Hussain	DSW
8	1987-1989	Mr. Anthony Tan	NGO
9	1989-1991	Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda	DSW

Source: Adapated from MASW (2003)

4.5.4 Summary of the Professionalisation of Social Work by the MASW

The story of the efforts by the MASW in the professionalisation of social work is rather patchy as many of the early documents like minutes of meetings and annual reports could not be found in the MASW. The earliest document traced was *Tinjauan*[18], the first issue of the newsletter published by the MASW in 1975 and the second issue published in 1976 (Appendix 6). The intention of promoting the social work profession was evident in the first issue of Tinjauan where it was printed by the DSW in colours with good quality paper, stating the desire to eventually upgrade the newsletter to become a journal for the profession. However, the researcher could not trace the second issue. The next issue traced was *Berita Ahli* in 1984. *Berita Ahli* or News for Members was more like an information dissemination medium to members, and the print quality was nowhere near *Tinjauan*, indicating a lack of progress in the association. The inactiveness of the association was identified and will be discussed in the issues section later. The major events in the MAPSW/ MASW 1973 until 1989 are summarised in Table 4.9.

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Table 4.9

Summary of Major Events in MAPSW/ MASW (1973-1989)

Year	Major MAPSW/MASW Events
1973	• 3 March - The Malaysian Association of Professional Social Workers (MAPSW) was formed and inaugurated by the Minister of Welfare, Y.B. Aishah Ghani. • Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda - Chair of the Inaugural Committee
1974	• 28 March - Registration of the MAPSW with the ROS with registration number 1387 (Sel) • First Annual General Meeting (AGM) - En. Muhammad Mohd Nor elected as President replacing Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda who was further studying abroad. • MAPSW accepted into the Membership to IFSW • P.C. Sushama attended IFSW meeting in Nairobi (8-12 July) and was appointed

[18] Meaning Observation or Review in English.

	into the Executive Committee of IFSW-AP
	• MAPSW accepted into the Membership to BIM
1975	• First newsletter 'Tinjauan' Jilid 1(1) published in June 1975
	• Puan Sri Chong Eu Ngoh elected as President
	• MAMSW was dissolved
1976	• Tinjauan Jilid 2 made announcement of the retirement of Mr S.Sockanathan as DG and Y.M. Raja Abdul Jalil bin Raja Badiozaman as Deputy DG; and appointment of En. Adnan bin Haji Abdullah as DG. All are members of MAPSW.
1977	-
1978	• Dato' Adnan Hj Abdullah elected as President
1979	-
1980	-
1981	• En. Mohd Hassan Hj Ngah Mahmud elected as President
1982	• Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda elected as President
1983	-
1984	• Newsletter re-emerged with temporary new name 'Berita Ahli'.
	• MASW Annual Dinner with Minister of Welfare Services Dato' Abu Hassan bin Haji Omar and wife at Hotel Subang View, KL
1985	• Co-sponsored the APASWE Seminar at USM, Penang
	• Dato' Mohamad Hussain elected as President
1986	-
1987	• Mr. Anthony Tan elected as President
	• Berita PPSIM – November
1988	• Change from MAPSW to MASW at the AGM & created Life Membership, and expanded MASW's Objectives – from 3 to 9.
	• 22 Oct – organized Social Work Forum 'Social Work Training – Unlimited Possibilities' at Pusat Bahasa, UM. (Note: The objective of the forum is to raise awareness that social work is a professional practice in both government and private sector, MAPSW Annual Report 1988/89)
	• Grant Fund Seminar – attended by Anthony Tan & Abdul Shukor (MAPSW), Denison Jayasooria (CARE).
	• Anthony Tan elected as Exco of IFSW-AP.
	• Berita PPSIM – September and December. December issue highlighted IFSW definition of social work profession and draft code of ethics
1989	• Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda became the first person to be elected as President for three times.

(Source: *Berita Ahli*, 1984; *Berita PPSIM*, 1987; MASW, 2003; *Tinjauan*, 1975, 1976)

As shown in Table 4.9, the major events of the MASW in the 1970s were becoming a member organisation of the IFSW and BIM in 1974 and the publication of *Tinjauan* in 1975 and 1976. The membership with the IFSW enabled active social work leaders like Ms P.C. Sushama and Mr Anthony Tan to contribute to the profession internationally.

Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda was elected as President for the second time in 1982. During his tenure, the MASW re-activated the publication of the newsletter in 1984, organised annual dinners with the attendance of the Minister of Social Welfare, and supported USM in organising the Asia Pacific Association of Social Work Educators (APASWE) Seminar in 1985. He was the first person to be elected as President of the MASW for the third time in 1989.

The MASW was active during the tenure of Mr Anthony Tan as President from 1987-1988 with the organising of a Social Work Forum 'Social Work Training – Unlimited Possibilities' at *Pusat Bahasa*, UM, on 22nd October 1988 to raise awareness that social work is a professional practice. The newsletter *Berita PPSIM* was published more regularly and highlighted the new definition of social work and code of ethics by the IFSW,

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In 1988, MASW amended its constitution to change its name from MAPSW to MASW, and created a life membership category. It also expanded the association's objectives from three to nine, indicating the readiness of the association to take up more responsibilities in promoting the profession. In 1989, the constitutional change was passed by ROS (Appendix 7).

In short, the MASW was not very active as a professional association in the early years of its formation. It became active in promoting the profession in the 1980s, which could be attributed to the activeness of social work leaders like Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda and Mr Anthony Tan.

4.6 Social Work Education 1969-1989

This period witnessed the major changes and development in social work education in both Singapore and Malaysia. Firstly, as indicated in the previous chapter, the University of Singapore phased out the Diploma in Social Studies with the introduction of the BA (Social Work) in 1968. The diploma programme took in its last batch of students in 1972 (Robertson, 1980; Lee, 2011). Secondly, almost at the same period, discussions were under way to establish a first-degree programme for social work in a university in Malaysia.

4.6.1 Diploma in Social Studies at the University of Singapore (1969-1974)

With both the Diploma in Social Studies and BA (Social Work) being offered concurrently, the running of social work education at the University of Singapore was an interesting combination of degree and diploma students. Dato' Shamsiah, who enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts (Social Work) at the University of Singapore in 1969, recalled that she had to complete the three-year BA first before going for the Diploma Part II to be trained as medical social worker.

> "For you to do the Almoner, you need to have a basic degree in social work. You cannot sort of go straight. I have to do my degree first. Degree says: First year, I have to do the general subjects…sociology, anthropology; 2nd year, I have to focus on social work, so it was two years. My second year, my third year I have to join the Department of Social Work. That's why I joined the diploma students from here. That's why I joined people like Laili, Sayed Baharin...They were all diploma students who came from the Department of Social Welfare in Malaysia, who went there to do Diploma Part 1. When I completed the third year, I finished my degree. Diploma Part II. So, I was doing Postgraduate Diploma they called it, and I did my medical social work…I went there in 1969. I remember in the class there were diploma students and degree students". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

Ms Elsie Lee, who enrolled for the Diploma in Social Studies in 1972, recalled what had taken place in the last batch of intake.

> "I went in 1972, and I was supposed to do three years actually because if I wanted to specialise in medical social work, I should do three years. Unfortunately, when in our first year, the Singapore government wanted to abolish the diploma because they had already started a degree course. They didn't want to support the diploma anymore, also because they were subsidising for Malaysians going there. So, in our first year, we were told that we would not be going to the third year, but whatever we were supposed to specialise in medical social work or social administration, which was the other choice, they would cramp into the second year. That's why when I graduated, it became like Diploma Social Studies Part I, didn't get into the Part II, but they considered it equivalent (to Diploma Part II) because they cramped it into two years". (Elsie Lee)

With its last intake in 1972, the twenty-year-old Diploma in Social Studies at the University of Singapore came to a closure in 1974 after serving its purpose in providing professional social work training for the early group of social workers in both Malaysia and Singapore. While this training arrangement came ended between the two countries, Malaysia was already in the midst of launching its own social work education.

4.6.2 First Social Work Education Programme in Malaysia

Although social work education started at the University of Malaya in Singapore, a similar programme was never offered at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. Therefore, after the separation of Malaysia and Singapore in 1965 and as the DSW continues to send their officers to Singapore for the Diploma programme, there was a vacuum of social work education in Malaysia (Teoh, 2014). It took more than a decade before the first social work education in Malaysia was introduced at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in 1975 (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Sinnasamy, 2006). The call for Malaysia to have its own social work education came from a United Nations Conference of Social Welfare Ministers in 1968 in Bangkok, Thailand (Ismail, 2011).

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USM, a newly established university in Penang in 1969 and first known as Universiti Pulau Pinang, was seen as the ideal place to offer social work education through its Faculty of Social Sciences. The establishment of social work education at the degree level at USM was a joint effort between the Ministry of Social Welfare and USM (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Tinjauan, 1975). Some of the key people involved in the formation of the social work programme at USM were Mr S. Sockanathan, the Director of Social Welfare Malaysia; Miss Frances Maria Yasas, the Regional Advisor on Training in Social Work and Community Development of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (UNECAFE); Dr Blake, Dean of the Faculty of Social Science of USM; Miss P.C. Sushama, executive committee member of the Malaysian Association of Professional Social Workers (MAPSW); as well as a group of deputy directors from the Ministry of Social Welfare (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013). Except for Dr Blake of USM, the rest who were involved were social workers.

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The social work programme at USM was called the Social Development and Administration (SDA) in the beginning. It was put under the Faculty of Social Sciences; therefore, the name of the degree is officially known as Bachelor of Social Science (SDA). The name SDA, according to Dr Ismail Baba, was not in the original proposal by UNECAFE.

> "I have looked at the report before they set up the social work programme at USM. The name that was proposed was social work from the report by the UNECAFE, ...and I know the lady (Ms Yasas) who was involved in drawing up for social work was really a trained social worker from the USA…So in the end, they compromised with SDA, Social Development and Administration". (Ismail Baba)

Even the MAPSW referred to USM's social work degree as the 'Social Work and Social Development Course' in its first newsletter (Tinjauan, 1975). The same newsletter also

reported that the Public Service Department (JPA) was ready to provide the Ministry of Welfare Services with ten scholarships for the next five consecutive years, indicating that the Ministry had detached itself from the Diploma in Social Studies at the University of Singapore. Therefore, the students enrolled for the programme at USM were mainly from the DSW in the beginning, as revealed by some of the participants.

> "When I was there (JKM Wilayah), there was my offer for USM. At that time, it was four years…It was a JPA scholarship…I was the 1978 batch, 3rd batch…Usually they send 10, got 10, they send 10…So I was there (USM) from 1978 until 1982.". (Amy Bala)

> "That time quite a number, 20 of them we sent. Every year we sent one batch". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "The first four years we only took in people from JKM, and later on we opened it up…So for four, five years it was just to train welfare officers". (Ismail Baba)

> "(JKM staff members in my batch of 1980 were) Norbayah, Normah, Shariff Kamarudin, Mad Nor Chik, Zainab Yusof, Maznah. These were the few. At that time, SDA catered ten from JKM, 11 from JPN and another half fresh students". (Norani Hashim)

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From the information gathered above, it can be concluded that social work education in Malaysia was established in 1975 at USM even though social work education had started at UM since 1952. However, the Diploma in Social Studies had always been based in Singapore. Incidentally, the push for social work education programmes in both Singapore and Malaysia came externally, showing that social work was an unfamiliar discipline for the locals and was strongly linked to the manpower needs in the social welfare services.

4.6.3 Social Work Educators at USM

Ms P.C. Sushama, who retired as the Head of the Medical Social Work Unit at University Hospital, joined USM and was appointed as the head of the social work programme at USM. Social work academics from overseas were employed as local

lecturers in the field were not available then, as shared by Mrs Amy Bala and Dato' Norani Hashim, who were among the early batches of students sent by the DSW.

> "My coordinator was Ms Sushama. She also lectured many of our subjects. Then we had Mr Loki from the UK, and a lecturer from America, forgot her name. Mr Loki was already 70 years old at that time. There were expatriates. In the first year, we did common subjects in social sciences. We had Kamal Salih, Colin Abraham - who was also a trained social worker. Those two [19] I remember". (Amy Bala)

> "We had at that time lecturers from overseas, Dr Hana, and Dugald McDonald from New Zealand, and one from the US. These were all social work lecturers". (Norani Hashim)

Besides employing full-time academics, USM also utilised senior social workers at the DSW, like Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda and Dato' Mohamad Hussain, to help teach at the university.

> "I was at USM 1976-78 doing the teaching there, very closely associated with Sushsama". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

> "I was teaching in USM for three years, lecturer…82-85. Part-time, 2-3 times a week" (Mohamad Hussain)

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Eventually, USM saw an increase in local social work academics at the SDA programme after the 1980s. At the same time, USM also had social workers attached and teaching behavioural subjects at the Medical School, according to Prof Dr Ismail Baba.

> "There were Angeline Cheah, Chan Lean Heng, Dr Amir Baharuddin, Datuk Wan Halim, but social work per se was Angeline Cheah and Chan Lean Heng…I remember Angeline Cheah and Chan Lean Heng very well". (Norani Hashim)

> "I joined the Medical School of USM in 1981 as a tutor. Angeline was already with the social work programme. Medical school just started then. So, they sent me to Colombia for two years…When I did my masters at Colombia, Sushama retired from the social work programme and then joined medical school. I worked with her for a while under community medicine. I got to work with

[19] Tan Sri Prof Dr Kamal Salih was a professor in economics, and Dr Collin Abraham, who held a Post-Graduate Diploma in Social Service Administration from India, was a lecturer in sociology.

> Sushama at the Medical School. We were in charge of the Community and Family Case Study. I was placed under community medicine teaching behavioural sciences to medical students". (Ismail Baba)

After completing his masters in Colombia, Prof Dr Ismail Baba decided to switch schools when USM moved the medical school from their Penang campus to Kubang Kerian. By then, a few people were employed as lecturers in the SDA programme.

> "(I decided) to switch school. I mean, of course, they (medical school) didn't like, it but the school (SDA) welcomed me very much because they never had a male lecturer. Others in the programme were Siti Hawa, Angeline Cheah, and Siti Hayati". (Ismail Baba)

Nevertheless, USM continued the tradition of having expatriates coming into the programme since the programme started.

> "Some of them came in… Fattahipour (from Iran) was brought in by Siti Hayati. Of course, there's a need to have international input. John Spores came under the American exchange programme, so we don't have to pay him. We also had a psychologist from the UK, placed under social work to teach psychology to our social work students". (Ismail Baba)

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The social work educators at USM supported the MASW by publishing bulletins starting in 1984 and organising regional social work programmes like hosting an APASWE meeting in 1985 (MASW, 1985 & 1986).

4.7 Issues and Challenges for Social Work in Malaysia (1969-1989)

While things looked positive for the development of social work in Malaysia with qualified social workers taking the helm at the DSW, the establishment of the Ministry of Social Welfare, the formation of a professional body in the MASW, and the introduction of social work degree at USM by the middle of 1970s. However, the progress of social work as a profession had not gone without challenges and setbacks faced by the DSW, the MASW, and USM in the 1980s. This section explores and

discusses the contributing factors that impacted the progress of social work at the DSW, including the measures taken by the government in combating economic recession in the1980s, the inactive nature of the MASW and the membership eligibility criteria, and the ambiguous identity of social work with the social work programme at USM.

4.7.1 Issues and Challenges Faced by the DSW

Three major issues or challenges could be identified that had impacted the DSW in the 1980s. Two challenges were caused by the economic recession that hit Malaysia and forced the then government to take cost-cutting measures in its administration.

4.7.1.1 Impact of Economic Recession in the 1980s

The global economic recession hit Malaysia in the 1980s, and one of the measures taken by the government was imposing a freeze on personnel intake (Ismail & H. Osman, 1991). The government, through JPA, issued a directive dated 6th August 1982 (Surat Pekeliling Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam (JPA) Bilangan JPA. SULIT 355/1/PERJ/(15)) to spell out the steps to control the expansion and replacement in the public service. In 1987, another directive Surat Pekeliling Perkhidmatan Bil. 5 came out to replace the 1982 directive by prescribing measures, among others, redeployment and privatisation, to achieve the optimum size of the public service. Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda pointed that the DSW was one of the agencies affected by the freeze in the public services in the 1980s.

> "Not just the welfare officers but across the board because of the financial situation". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

DSW, which introduced social development services in 1982 and set up a Social Development Division in 1983, was affected by the freeze to the point that Datuk

Abdullah Malim Baginda, the person who introduced it, put the blame onto himself for the inability to move social development forward.

> "...that's when I introduced it (social development), and that's when the freeze came in, so I had an additional service, I had no manpower…On top of that, I introduced social development segment at that point. That's why I am sorry to say I failed". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

> "Pak Lah (Abdullah Malim Baginda) wrote once that during his time as DG, he started social development but there's no funding coming down". (Sayed A. Rahman)

The freeze directive stayed for ten years, and DSW had to make use of its available workforce and resources to meet the expansion of new services and divisions.

> "Yes, I know. I was there. I was *Pegawai Kanak-Kanak* (Children Officer), going down there (to Social Development), but the payment was still from *Kanak-Kanak* (Children Division)". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "The freeze was ten years, Imagine! When the *taska* came in, the Child Protection Act came in, it didn't come with officers. Meaning that we had these several Acts coming, like Akta Taska, Akta Perlindungan Kanak-kanak, by right it should come with a package, but positions, no! There were several new staff, but the officers are still the same". (Norani Hashim)

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As a rapidly expanding organisation in terms of service provision, the DSW was relentlessly affected by the freeze of new intakes in the public sector from the 1980s until the 1990s where the existing staff and allocated resources covered newly introduced units or programmes. Not only that, but the freeze also hampered the growth of newly qualified social workers in the department, eventually decreasing social welfare officers as positions were left vacant due to the retirement or transfer of officers to other departments.

4.7.1.2 Dwindling of Manpower

In addition to the freeze of personnel intake, quite several social welfare officers and assistant social welfare officers decided to move to the Home Ministry when the drug

rehabilitation service was taken out from the DSW and placed under the Home Ministry in 1983, as revealed by two of the participants.

> "Quite a number went to AADK, like Muniandy and all moved to AADK. Their job opportunities there were better, faster somehow". (Amy Bala)

> "The loss of the trained social workers to the Home Ministry...a lot of them trained counselling staff, counsellors then, of course, they were social workers...They were all taken out from JKM and put in the drug unit". (Gill Raja)

While the immediate impact was on the lack of manpower to run the services, the downsizing of DSW in the middle of the 1980s had a longer impact on the development of professional social work in the country. The analysis of the number of staff members employed at DSW from 1982 to 1986 in Table 4.10 shows that the impact of the global economic recession was hurting DSW in that not only there were no additional staff members, but their numbers decreased. The number of staff members for all categories at DSW increased from 1982 to 1983 but dropped drastically in 1984 with those in Group A went down by 42 people (17.9%), Group B went down more by 179 people (42.6%), while Group C went down by 99 people (13.6%). The numbers for these three categories remained almost constant for the following two years. As of 1986, the total workforce at DSW dropped by 22.6%, where the numbers in Group A dropped by 14.1%, Group B by 44.7%, and Group C by 12.6%.

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Table 4.10

Number of the DSW Staff Members Employed (1982-1986 vs 1992)

Year / Category	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1992	Difference between 1983 & 1986	Difference between 1986 & 1992
Group A	200	234	192	194	201	180	-14.1%	-10.4%
Group B	410	420	241	240	232	591	-44.7%	+154%
Group C	703	734	635	635	641	417	-12.6%	-34.9%
Total	1313	1388	1068	1073	1074	1903	-22.6%	+77%

Source: Annual Report of DSW 1982-1986, 1992

Graduate officers made up group A with a degree or those promoted after getting their Diploma in Social Studies from Singapore. Group B was non-graduate officers with a High School Certificate (HSC) who were mainly appointed as assistant social welfare officers, while Group C was social welfare assistants with secondary school qualifications. Both Group A and Group B were the main caseworkers or social workers on the ground.

The study by Ismail and H. Osman (1991) on the employment trend in the public sector in Malaysia from 1971 to 1985 revealed that the employment rates that was on the rise from 1971 (11.9%) to 1981 (15%) suddenly dropped to 1.1% in 1982. The employment rates remained low at 0.9%, 1.1%, 1.1%, and 0.8% from 1984 until 1987. The government exercised stringent control of all new intakes except the essential service. Besides, the reduced numbers of Group B could have been caused by a number of them being promoted to Group A or left due to the waiting time to be promoted. Mrs Amy Bala, who joined the DSW with an HSC and later sent to USM for her degree in social

work, explained what transpired in the 1980s for social welfare officers who returned to the DSW after completing their degree at USM.

> "I think they promoted, not recruited. Yes. I remember two and half years I waited (after graduated in 1982). Many of them didn't wait; they left. They got other jobs from the private sector…I got promoted in 1985. Norani, Norma who came back later (from USM) all promoted at the same time as us but not everyone". (Amy Bala)

The drastic drop in numbers would have put a greater burden on their workload, which Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda could only say,

> "Well, you have to work harder. You have to work harder". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Another impact that might have gone unnoticed before this was that USM started taking in fresh students and staff members from other departments in the late 70s, as Prof Dr Ismail Baba and Mrs Amy Bala shared.

> "So, actually not really closed in the late 70s; we only opened it to fresh students to do social work". (Ismail Baba)

> "I was among those who got the offer, and I went to USM, 1980. I graduated in 1984 in SDA…At that time SDA catered ten from JKM, 11 from JPN[20] and another half fresh students". (Amy Bala)

By not recruiting new officers with a degree from the mid-1980s until the 1990s, all social work graduates produced by USM had very limited opportunity to get into the DSW to pursue their profession as social workers. For example, Dato' Norani Hashim was the first USM social work graduate to become the DG of Social Welfare. However, she did not enter the university as a fresh student because she was already in the service before being sent to do her degree at USM.

[20] JPN is the acronym for Jabatan Perpaduan Negara or the National Unity Department.

4.7.1.3 Shrinking Opportunity for Further Study at USM

The DSW's policy to send their staff for social work education at USM did not last very long. There are two different views on the policy change. One view attributed that to the financial constrain, as Dato' Shamsiah and Mrs Amy Bala shared when asked about the matter.

> "After that, we stopped. Must be a financial constraint. I can't remember when it stopped. I do not know because after that, there are people who still go, but they are on their own. They got a scholarship but not through JKM, the whole batch that sent a group of them. I can't remember who the last badge was". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "It didn't (last long) because apparently JPA insisted that the other 'S' [21] departments should have access to this, so we started to get people from KEMAS and Perpaduan applied so the cake became divided for other people as well, so we lost out anyway. Then later they couldn't give that because of financial or budget issues. They could not give the scholarship. So those who wanted to go have to pay themselves". (Amy Bala)

Another view attributed it to the governance change in JKM, which did not appreciate the value of social work education as Prof Dr Ismail Baba shared.

> "Mostly it was supposedly for JKM, but JKM stopped. I think when the governance changed and people don't understand how USM (social work programme) was set up, so people are beginning to...I mean whoever is the Ketua Pengarah slowly running away from the social work programme". (Ismail Baba)

With the cut in scholarships in sending staff members to do social work at USM, there was not much room for the improvement of social work in the DSW except to turn to its existing qualified staff members to train their personnel, which could have eventually led to the push for the ILK at KKB in 1985.

[21] S refers to social in the scheme of service in the public service. S scheme officers are placed at various departments like the DSW, Youth and Sports, National Unity, Rural Development, Information, etc.

4.7.2 Social Work Education: The ambiguity of Social Development and Administration (SDA) at USM

The use of SDA for the social work programme at USM has generated debates on its suitability in reflecting the real identity of social work. In one of his reports, Ahmad Fattahipour from Iran, who was attached as USM as a visiting lecturer in the late 1980s until early 1990s, wrote "...because the SDA programme did not clearly and strongly give them a sense of identity as professional social workers. Many simply saw themselves as 'personnel officers', 'administrators', 'social developers', or just 'jack of all trades' (Fattahipour, 1988).

As a matter of fact, the SDA was indeed attractive to some students who perceived the programme to be similar to management, and upon graduation, they managed to secure employment in the private sector, especially when the DSW was facing the employment freeze. Two participants gave their reasoning in the following excerpts.

> "...then we get a lot of non-Malay students interested in doing SDA, but they have no idea what SDA is. We got a lot of non-Malay students. They said Social Development and Administration sound so much like management. So, we got a lot of non-Malay students, very interesting to have that". (Ismail Baba)

> "That time because there was a freeze, but a lot of them were high on jobs like personnel managers. They don't call PR, corporate comms, etc. That time it was called personnel managers, so SDA was attractive for that. Later came human resource and all that". (Amy Bala)

Despite the debate of the suitability of the name, there was resistance in changing the name from SDA to Social Work, especially from the staffers who graduated from the programme as, indicated by Prof Dr Ismail Baba.

> "There were many problems in trying to change the name. Even among my colleagues, especially Siti Hawa at that time, even Siti Hayati, but I don't blame them because they graduated from that programme". (Ismail Baba)

USM continued to use SDA for its social work programme for twenty years until the 1990s, the development of which is discussed in the next chapter.

4.7.3 Professional Organization: Inactive Leadership and Membership Eligibility Criteria

The MAPSW faced two major challenges during this period namely (i) inactive leadership and (ii) criteria for eligible membership.

4.7.3.1 The Inactive Leadership

Not long after establishing the MAPSW, some members had already started lamenting the lack of activeness of the association. It was claimed that the MAPSW was nearly de-registered because it did not submit the annual reports to the Registrar of Society as required by the law.

> "I was at USM 1976-78 doing the teaching there, very closely associated with Sushsama. They were also making noise about this thing. Nothing's happening, no progress. The MASW was nearly de-registered, neglected. There were no activities. No report. Didn't submit anything to ROS". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

When cross-checking Datuk Abdullah's claim with the major events of the Association in the earlier Table 4.9, there were no major event reported from 1977-81 except for the election of new President in 1978 and 1981. Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, who is also the founding President of the association, feels obliged to rescue the situation by making a comeback into the leadership role.

> "...before 82, that was why I took over. Yes, I came in because it took a long time to get it going, I don't want it to go under because I think all the trouble to create it, to get it going and after that because of negligence, because of disinterest the whole thing was going under. I quickly saved it". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

The MASW did not have many programmes in the early days until the middle of the 1980s, as Mrs. Amy Bala and Ms. Elsie recalled.

> "We had annual dinners; I remember that. The rest was mainly routine, meeting, maybe there's some training going on somewhere they would tell us". (Amy Bala)

> "…subsequently I think it sort of less active. I remember we were more into national activities. We had like national seminars, conference that kind things although…(Mohd) Hussain did go on some international conference overseas but we didn't have much money. They did raise some money from one conference in the 80s and that money was practically used up. So we were struggling to find ways to earn money but there wasn't so active in that sense that we didn't have big conferences. Just national seminars". (Elsie Lee)

Perhaps one of the reasons behind the inactive nature of the leadership of the MASW during this period was that the leaders were mainly key people holding leadership positions at the DSW. Their priority might be more on the DSW as the department was expanding. The other reason could be that since the leaders of the MASW were all government officers, they did not run the association as a non-government entity.

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4.7.3.2 The Eligibility of MAPSW membership

One key issue that came out from forming the professional association is the eligibility of membership. That is, what is the qualification for membership? Even the use of the word 'Professional' in the Association was not a unanimous decision.

> "I think you know why we used professional (social workers) because this is particularly Sushama who used the word professional. I was free because I knew there is this BASW and all those who didn't use the word Professional. I was against it, but Sushama was very strong. We don't want to be in competition. We lose out to all these people. They have all the context, anything like that. Anyway, I gave in that we put it there, but thank goodness after a while, the thing was removed because I think there was no more threat. No threat at all". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

The eligibility of MAPSW membership did not have much dispute during its formation years because the number of qualified social workers were small, and they were either

holder of the Diploma in Social Studies from Singapore or those pioneers who had been sent to do their certificate training in the UK. In addition, as an association registered under the Registrar of Society (ROS), its membership is voluntary.

However, the strict criteria set by the MAPSW on membership eligibility, which only recognises tertiary social work qualification, had restricted the number of members. The restriction created friction and unhappiness among new social welfare officers with a university undergraduate degree in other disciplines after the DSW started recruiting those graduates into the Department against those promoted to become social welfare officers after completing their Diploma in Social Studies in Singapore. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman argued his case as a non-social work graduate being employed as social welfare officers at the DSW.

> "I'm a pure graduate, and a few of us got that background. We have no problem with that. So, I joined the Welfare just to do welfare work. Then you have that Social Work Association. They have very strict requirements. If you are not social worker bla bla bla, we cannot join you. Then they put us as an affiliate only. Eh! I'm doing the same job, in the same building, we are affiliated members! What? Come on lah! You ask my colleagues, I said, "Might as well we are not part of you!" You are in my room. Suddenly, "Eh! You are just an associate. Next day you can go out" …True, they don't treat us like that, but the issue...that's a kind of guideline…Later on they changed. They changed that those with bla bla bla *boleh masuk* (can join) … *baru buka sikit* (only then some) opening. Then they become very tight". (Sayed A. Rahman)

The dispute became greater in the 1980s with the increasing number of social welfare officers who were employed with a degree from other disciplines, and the top management of the DSW came out with a directive for social welfare officers to apply for the MASW membership. Mrs Amy Bala gave her insights into the matter and how the anger of some colleagues was vented at her at the time.

> "Actually, they did not feel it until the MASW thing came up…because our Pengarah (Director) was then the President, and then they wanted everyone to sign up and all that. (Before that) everybody was opened; they will come for

> meetings. I remember people like Chong Phaik Kee will come. We have meetings and sessions and all that, they will come because we are all friends. But when this ruling came out that we only wanted social work trained to be a full member, "What you are so great ah?" They really got annoyed, and I don't think they have forgotten it until today. They were really annoyed because they were convinced they were doing social work, and at that time there's no disclaimer that social work means these. Social work means helping people with the values, full stop, which all of us do. Why suddenly now must have a degree, no degree, and you can't blame them for going into the service for being recruited. So, finally, they were very upset. They didn't think very kindly of the MASW…That's where we have some problem. At that time, I was there, and some of them were angry with me, scolded me". (Amy Bala)

Eventually, in order to increase the number of members in view of more non-social work graduates being employed as social workers, the MAPSW was renamed the MASW in 1988, with its membership eligibility extended to applicants with a social science-related degree and social work experiences more than five years to be accepted as a full member, as revealed by Dato' Shamsiah and Dato' Norani respectively.

> "At one stage, there was quite an issue about membership of the MASW…That was quite a lot of unhappiness so in the end, we made it a five-years' experience because they said, "They don't recognise us, why should we be a member?" … One can be a member; one cannot be a member. They get very angry. They do the same job". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "The other one at that time was membership. There was serious...because at that time we were very professional. We said no (to those without social work qualifications). I would vouch for that. This and the MASW is only for those with qualifications. So, there was unhappiness. But those who have worked in JKM for more than five years can be full member. But we still stick with it; we said those with right qualifications must be members…Ya. So, there was a bit of huha then, but the majority of those who were graduates of social work wanted the Association only for members with qualifications, but we were open, must worked in JKM for more than five years. That's our only request…You asked me about membership, who should be the members because at that time we were already talking about professionalisation. So, we say if you want to make the Association professional, the members must be professionals" (Norani Hashim).

> "I know there was some unhappiness, but to me, it was not that serious. To us, it is very clear. We specified we want them to be members after serving JKM for five years. We said that. Of course, people were not happy but we didn't throw them out. We said, "You want it to be professional, you must maintain". (Norani Hashim)

The dispute of membership eligibility of the MASW mainly happened at the DSW due to the existence of two groups of social welfare officers – one group with a social work qualification and another one without a social work education. Although the MASW wanted to keep its membership only to those who have the required qualification as proof of being in a profession, it had to loosen the membership criteria due to the unique circumstances of the recruitment of social welfare officers at the DSW, although non-social work graduates were also being recruited as medical social workers in the 1980s (Lee, 2011).

4.8 Summary of Social Work Development (1969-1989)

This period started promisingly for social work in Malaysia with social workers taking over the leadership at the DSW, the establishment of the MAPSW, and the introduction of the social work degree at USM, all of which happened in six years from 1969 to 1975. The increasing number of social workers in the DSW and hospitals and the establishment of the MAPSW had further enhanced the position of qualified social workers, particularly those graduated with the Diploma in Social Studies from Singapore to fight for salary scheme equivalent to an undergraduate degree. The DSW, in particular, expanded macro practices in their services, notably through the setting up of the planning and social development divisions. The department also published the first Journal of Social Welfare and established a training centre on social welfare.

However, the subsequent development was not smooth sailing as the DSW was badly affected by the global economic recession in the 80s and the measures taken by the government in downsizing the public sector. The newly formed MAPSW and SDA programme at USM were still in search of their directions and footing. The MAPSW

was faced with the non-activeness of leadership made up of senior social workers at the DSW, who might be paying more focus on the expansion of the DSW than the running of the MAPSW as a non-governmental entity. The disputes over membership eligibility also created hostility between social welfare officers with a social work qualification and those without. Meanwhile, the use of social development and administration for the name of the social work programme at USM was seen by some as not providing a clear identity for professional social work when social work was still struggling to establish itself as a profession in Malaysia. Some of these issues continued in the next decade, which is discussed in Chapter Six.

The patterns of development of the social work profession in Malaysia match Wilensky's (1966) analysis of new professions like social work in the US: it begins with social work services, setting up a professional body, and finally introducing a social work education. Therefore, based on the findings and uneven development of social work at the DSW, the MASW and USM, it is apt to conclude that 1969 to 1989 can be seen as the infancy stage for social work in Malaysia as a profession and as an academic discipline. While some of the key features of a profession emerged, they were at the beginning stage of professionalisation, especially for the MAPSW and the SDA programme in USM. The chronology of significant events impacting the social welfare and social work development from 1969 until 1989 is shown in Figure 4.3 (page 211-212).

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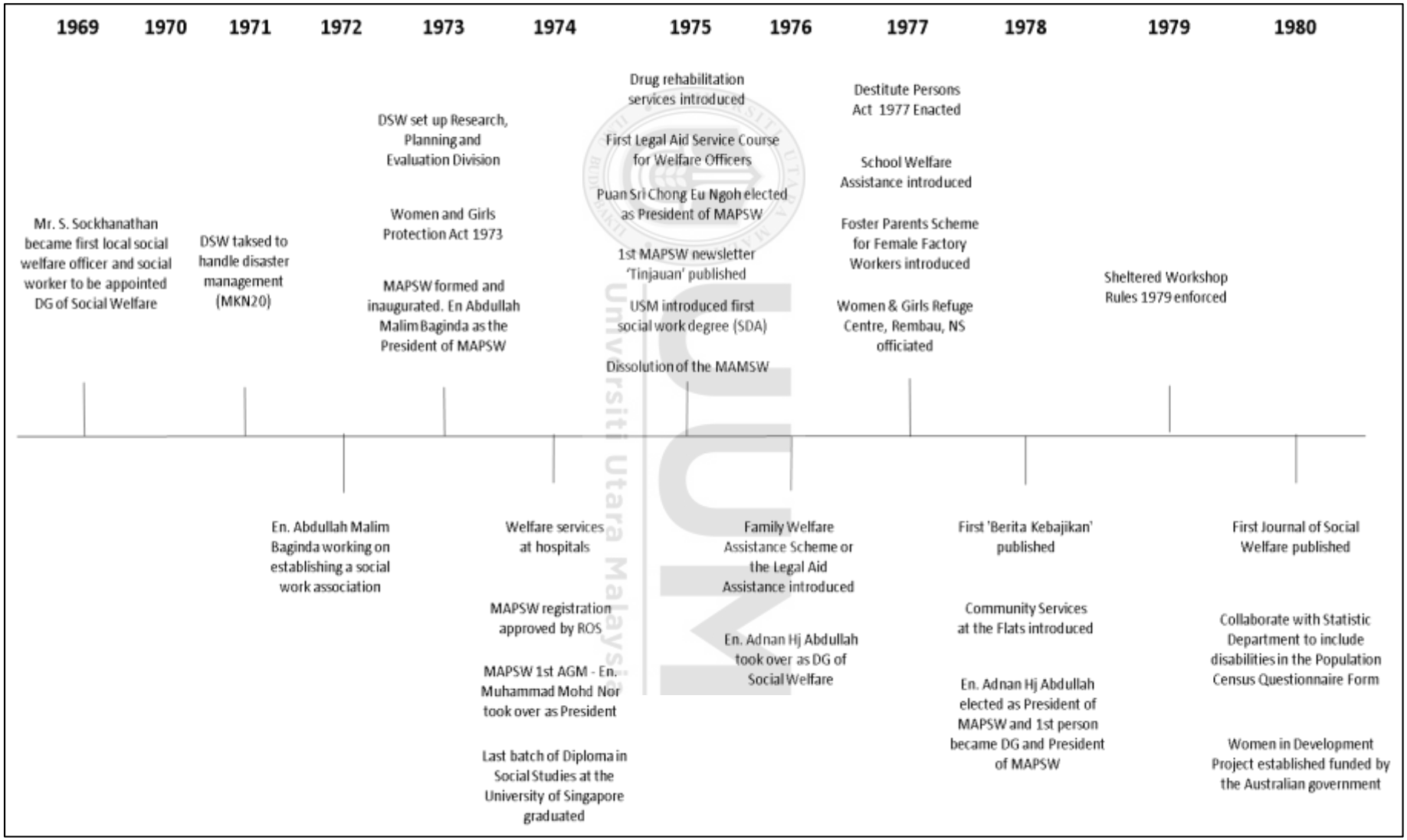
1969
1970
1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
1979
1980
Mr. S. Sockhanathan became first local social welfare officer and social worker to be appointed DG of Social Welfare
DSW taksed to handle disaster management (MKN20)
DSW set up Research, Planning and Evaluation Division
Women and Girls Protection Act 1973
MAPSW formed and inaugurated. En Abdullah Malim Baginda as the President of MAPSW
Drug rehabilitation services introduced
First Legal Aid Service Course for Welfare Officers
Puan Sri Chong Eu Ngoh elected as President of MAPSW
1st MAPSW newsletter 'Tinjauan' published
USM introduced first social work degree (SDA)
Dissolution of the MAMSW
Destitute Persons Act 1977 Enacted
School Welfare Assistance introduced
Foster Parents Scheme for Female Factory Workers introduced
Women & Girls Refuge Centre, Rembau, NS officiated
Sheltered Workshop Rules 1979 enforced
En. Abdullah Malim Baginda working on establishing a social work association
Welfare services at hospitals
MAPSW registration approved by ROS
MAPSW 1st AGM - En. Muhammad Mohd Nor took over as President
Last batch of Diploma in Social Studies at the University of Singapore graduated
Family Welfare Assistance Scheme or the Legal Aid Assistance introduced
En. Adnan Hj Abdullah took over as DG of Social Welfare
First 'Berita Kebajikan' published
Community Services at the Flats introduced
En. Adnan Hj Abdullah elected as President of MAPSW and 1st person became DG and President of MAPSW
First Journal of Social Welfare published
Collaborate with Statistic Department to include disabilities in the Population Census Questionnaire Form
Women in Development Project established funded by the Australian government

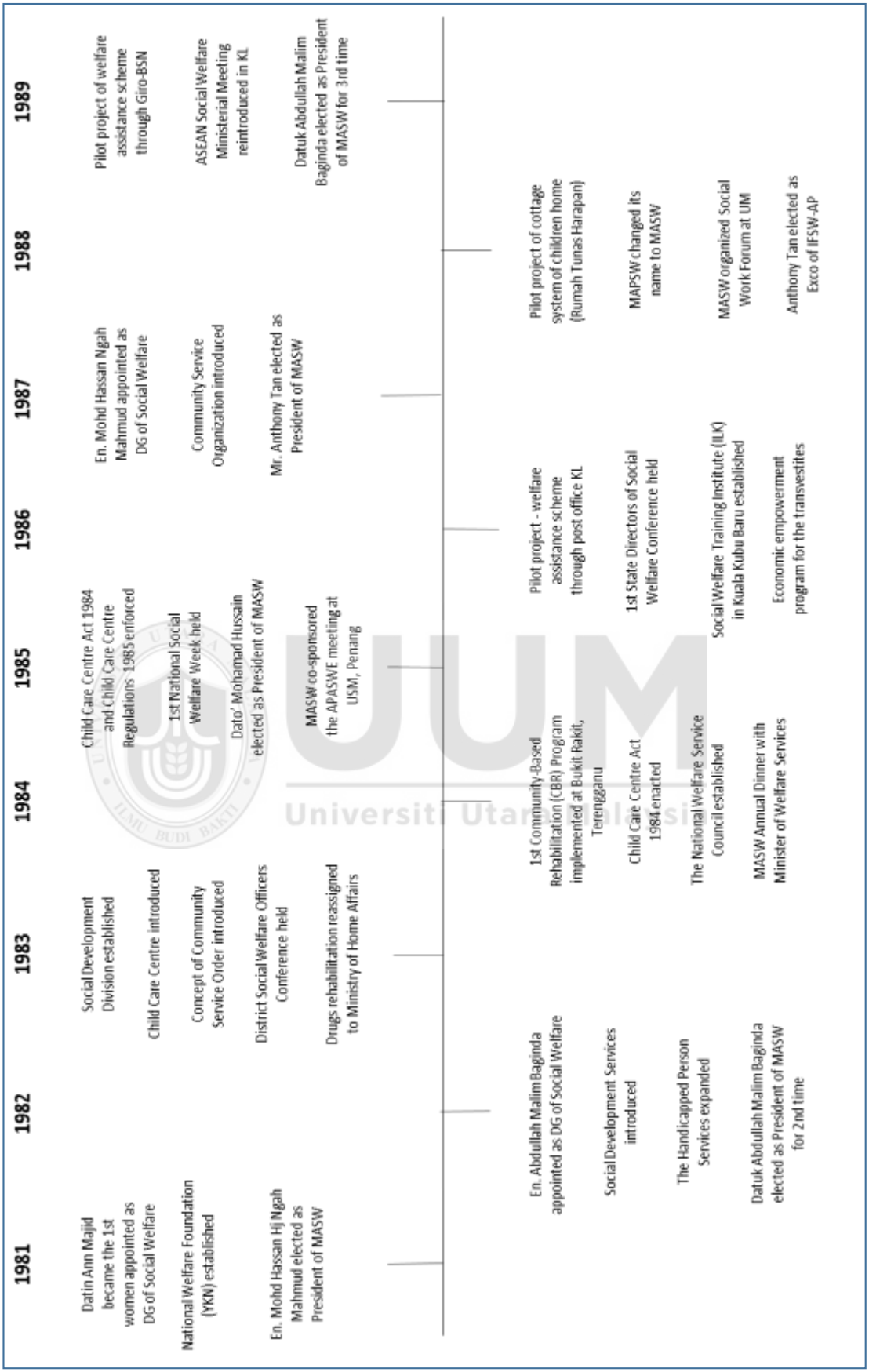

Figure 4.3. Timeline for Social Work Development in Malaysia (1969-1989)

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored and analysed the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia through the chronological development of social work from the early years of the British Colonial administration to the establishment of the DSW in 1946, the introduction of social work education in 1952, the formation of the MASW in 1973, and right through until 1989. The key events taken place and efforts undertaken by these three stakeholders in making social work a profession were identified and discussed. It was followed by examining issues and challenges encountered by the DSW, MASW and social work education, which had disrupted their organisational progress and the professionalisation of social work in the country. It can be concluded that the era from 1946 until 1968 as the beginning of social welfare service in Malaysia because the main concern then was about responding to society needs rather than the idea of profession. The era from 1969 until 1989 can be labelled as the infancy stage of the social work profession and education in Malaysia which witnesses the formation of the MASW and the SDA program at USM. The next chapter continues with the analysis of the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia for the next two decades from 1990 to 2010.

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CHAPTER FIVE
1990-2010: EXPANSION OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL COMPETENCY STANDARDS IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

5.1 Introduction

Recovering from the economic crisis in the 1980s, the Federal Government's has driven for corporatization, privatization and the Malaysian Incorporated Concept for better public-private partnership, as well as strategies to shift the civil service to be customer-oriented by, as the then Chief Secretary to the Government put it, 'first, improvements in civil service structure, systems, rules and regulations and information technology; second, inculcating the values of quality, productivity and accountability into the civil service' (Ahmad Sarji, 1995, p.267). It was the era where the Government came out with Vision 2020 to propel Malaysia to achieve high income status nation by 2020. The policy direction of the government influenced the development as well as changes in the DSW, the social work profession, and social work education. This chapter studies the continuation of the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from 1990 to 2010. The analyses on the efforts taken by the DSW, MASW and social work educators in advancing the social work profession will be further divided into two periods of time: the period from 1990 to 1999, and the period from 2000 to 2010. The issues and challenges in both periods will also be analysed and the chapter is concluded with a summation of the four decades of professionalisation of social work in Malaysia.

5.2 The Professionalisation of Social Work in Malaysia 1990-1999

As noted in the previous chapter, after going through approximately 15 years of having its professional organization MASW and one social work program at USM, social work

in Malaysia has been moving but at a slow pace. The 1990-2000 period brought some promising opportunities, as well as challenges for the profession. It was also the era when new social ills came about where both the government and the universities started to come out with measures and programs to address those social issues. These responses resulted in new policies and legislation being introduced, and the expansion of social work education at the Institutions of Higher Learning. Contradictory, the development of the Malaysian Association of Social Workers was less obvious than what were taken place at the DSW and the universities.

5.2.1 Organization Change of the DSW

The DSW experienced big changes as an organization in the 1990s. First, the department was no longer under a Ministry of the same name but was put under a new Ministry with other agencies in 1990. The DSW also underwent major structural change in 1997 which continue until today. The impact of the freeze of staff recruitment in the 1980s continues in the 1990s despite the change of Ministry and restructuring exercise.

5.2.1.1 Placed under the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development

After the 1990 General Election, the government decided to put the Department of Social Welfare, the Department of National Unity and the National Population and Family Planning Board (Lembaga Penduduk dan Perancangan Keluarga Negara, LPPKN) under the same Ministry. As a result, the Ministry of Social Welfare was abolished and a new Ministry of National Unity and Social Development (KPNPM) was established. The KPNPM existed for approximately 15 years with three ministers serving under it before being replaced by the Ministry of Women, Family and

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Community Development in 2004. The following Table 5.1 shows the name of the Ministers of the KPNPM from 1999 to 2004.

Table 5.1

Name of Minister of National Unity and Social Development 1999-2004

Year	Name of Minister
1990-1995	Dato' Napsiah Omar
1995-1999	Tan Sri Zaleha Ismail
1999-2004	Dato' Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman

Source: JKM (2007)

The reactions of the DSW, after 26 years having its own Ministry, was understandably not positive especially when the top management were not engaged in the decision making process. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman shared the sentiments of his superiors and colleagues at the time in the interview.

> "We are not happy. It's simple. None. If you are happy then I think you are not welfare officers…We are in a way part of the policy makers but we were not being, I would say, consulted…My predecessor En. Hassan, DG, Hassan Ngah Mahmud, the one before Mohamad Hussain. He was in China. We came back, the whole Ministry changed!". (Sayed A. Rahman)

However, the change of Ministry presented some positives for better collaboration between the DSW and the Department of National Unity when it comes to streamlining services for relevant target groups. Mrs Amy Bala described how different agencies who work for same target populations benefited by being put under same ministry.

> "It was very interesting. Suddenly we were not working in isolation, for me, with people who were also working with the same target group. Like *Perpaduan* (Department of National Unity) was also working with the urban poor, and *Perpaduan* and us became very good friends. All the meeting we will go together. Then we have this KSU (Secretary General), Zainul Ariff, who used to organize meetings according to the core areas, the target groups. So like say children, since I was working with children I have to go for this meeting. Even

> from *Perpaduan*, those who were working with *Tabika* and all that will come for the meeting. So we started collaborating with our sister organization working for the same target group, which is very good". (Amy Bala)

While the change of Ministry did not show direct impact on the professionalisation of social work, the two contrasting views expressed above does indicate two possible ways in understanding the dynamics of organizational change onto the practitioners. One, from the top management perspective is issue of power which will be further address in the latter part of this chapter. Second, from the practitioners on the front line perspective, such arrangement benefits their work with closer inter-agency discussion and collaboration, especially with the Department of National Unity which also have officers who have been sent to USM for their social work education as reported in Chapter Four.

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5.2.1.2 The Leadership and Services at DSW from 1990-1999

The DSW continued to be led by social workers trained in Singapore from 1990 until 1999. The three Director Generals of this era, namely Tuan Mohamad Hassan, Dato' Mohamad Hussain and Dato' Jaafar Wahid, were all graduates of social work program in Singapore. In 1999, Dato' Sayed A. Rahman became the first social welfare officer who joined the DSW as a graduate officer to be appointed as DG. Although his first degree was not in social work, he acquired knowledge and training on social work and social administration when he went for his postgraduate study in the UK.

> "I went to the University of Wales, Swansea to do Master (MSc Economics and Social Planning) …but before that I did (Postgraduate) Diploma in Social Policy and Administration …I took one or two papers on social work and social administration …the content was more development, economics and administration". (Sayed A. Rahman)

The appointment of Dato' Sayed A. Rahman as the DG also marked the end for the Diploma in Social Studies group holding the helm at the DSW as most of them would have retired or retiring by the turn of the millennium.

5.2.1.3 Key Events and People Impacting on Social Work Development

This decade also witnessed the formulation of key social welfare policies like the National Social Welfare Policy and the National Older Persons Policy, as well as new legislations which introduces new services into the DSW like Child Protection Act 1991, Care Centre Act 1993, Domestic Violence Act 1994 and Counsellors Act 1998. The Department for Orang Asli Affairs was put under the newly formed MNUCD in 1990 but was placed under the Ministry of Rural Development four years later. At the same time, the DSW also encouraged the participation of the community as volunteers through the 'Briged Kebajikan Perdana'. The department also started the process of computerization and standardization for accountability and quality through the MS ISO certification. The following Table 5.2 highlighted the names of the DGs, key services, programs and legislations introduced in from 1990 to 1999.

Table 5.2

Service/Program/Legislation introduced at DSW 1990-1999

Year	Director General of Social Welfare	Key Service / program / law introduced or changed
1990	Tuan Mohamed Hassan Ngah Mahmud	• The Department of Orang Asli Affairs was placed under the MNUCD on 27 October 1990
1991	Tuan Mohamed Hassan Ngah Mahmud	• Child Protection Act 1991 (Act 468) • National Social Welfare Policy[22] • 'Teledera' toll free service

[22] Although the DSW put the National Social Welfare Policy in 1991, the policy was known as National Social Welfare Policy 1990 (Dasar Kebajikan Masyarakat Negara 1990). For example, *Dasar Warga Emas Negara* and *Dasar Belia Malaysia* made reference to the Dasar Kebajikan Masyarakat Negara 1990.

		• First Child Welfare Expo
1992	Tuan Mohamed Hassan Ngah Mahmud	• Regulations Children (Place of Safety) 1992 • Group Homes Program for the handicapped • Child Protection Teams formed • Cottage System Children's Home (Rumah Tunas Harapan) in Melaka, Negeri Sembilan dan Terengganu came into operation
1993	Tuan Mohamed Hassan Ngah Mahmud / Dato' Mohamad Hussain	• Care Centre Act 1993 (Act 506)
1994	Dato' Mohamad Hussain	• Domestic Violence Act 1994 (Act 521) enacted • Care Centres Regulations 1994 • The Department of Orang Asli Affairs was placed under the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development • DSW Charter launched • 3 Children Activity Centres (PAKK) opened • Home for Terminally Ill in Kuala Kubu Bharu completed • National Handicapped Day launched
1995	Dato' Mohamad Hussain	• National Older Persons Policy (Dasar Warga Tua) formulated • DSW received ESCAP/WMO award for outstanding in areas of prevention and disaster preparedness
1996	Dato' Mohamad Hussain	• 'Briged Kebajikan Perdana' launched • Domestic Violence Act 1994 enforced • Nationwide survey on registered and illegally operated Child Care Centres
1997	Dato' Mohamad Hussain / Dato' Jaafar Abdul Wahid	• DSW disaster management role expanded (include building collapsed) • Restructuring and rebranding of the DSW o Community/Social Development Division renamed to Consultancy and Community Service Division o Creation of two additional divisions: Counselling Division / Legislation & Advocacy Division
1998	Dato' Jaafar Abdul Wahid	• National Older Persons Advisory and Legal Council established • Plan of Action for Older Persons Policy introduced • Counsellors' Act 1998 enacted • The Economic Planning Unit asked MNUCD to draft the National Social Policy

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1999	Dato' Jaafar Abdul Wahid / Dato' Sayed A. Rahman Sayed Mohd	• Pilot project Community-Based Rehabilitation Net (PDKNet) • MNUCD appointed PINTAS as consultant to draft the National Social Policy

Source: JKM (2017)

Several of the services, policies and legislation as shown in Table 5.2 can be linked with the professionalisation of social work or showing the contributions of social workers at the DSW in enhancing social services. These include the National Social Welfare Policy, Caring Society and Vision 2020, Child Protection Act 1991 and Care Centre Act 1993, *Briged Kebajikan Perdana,* the official creation of the District Social Welfare Officer position at the undergraduate level, and the Counsellors' Act 1998.

(i) Formulation of the National Social Welfare Policy 1990

The Ministry of National Unity and Social Development launched the National Social Welfare Policy (NSWP 1990) in 1990 after it was approved by the Cabinet in May 1990 (Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000; Wan Azmi, 1992). The NSWP 1990 was formulated out of growing concerns over increased social problems that affected Malaysian society (Faizah & Siti Hajar, 2000). In fact, the NSWP 1990 has listed a number of social ills which is seen to be a threat to the social well-being of the country which includes the increasing crime rate, prostitution, child abuse, school drop outs, juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, divorce, abortion, child abduction, elderly abuse, drug abuse, and youth loitering which social workers at the DSW have been responding to since the inception of the department. It was also being referred when government formulated other policies for other target groups[23].

[23] See examples of the revised National Older Persons Policy 2013 and the Malaysia Youth Policy 2015.

Wan Azmi Ramli[24], one of the key writers on social welfare and social work during that time, revealed that the idea of having a national social welfare policy had been taken place for 5 years with a consultant from the United Nations being invited to make a study and to draft the policy by the Ministry (Wan Azmi, 1992). However, the consultant's draft was rejected by the National Social Welfare Service Council. Eventually, a working committee led by Mr. M. Kandiah[25], the Director of Planning and Development of Ministry of Social Welfare, with two other members Wan Azmi (who was the Deputy Director) and Haji Mohd Ghazali b. Sulaiman, was set up to work on the draft policy.

The team also consulted other people like Dr. Fadil Azim Abbas from INTAN, Dr. Wan Halim Osman from USM, Dr. Husna Sulaiman from UPM, as well as representative from *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* in the nine-month process to come up with the draft policy. The draft policy was presented by the Minister of Social Welfare Dato' Mustapha b. Mohammad to the Cabinet and was endorsed in May 1990 (Wan Azmi, 1992). Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman who was working under Mr. Kandiah during that time acknowledged his role as the main person in coming up with the policy.

> "Kandiah was the writer for that. That time I was in *Bahagian Perancangan* (Planning Division). Kandiah was *Pengarah Bahagian Perancangan* (Director of Planning Division) then. He was the one who really came up with the whole concept of *Dasar Kebajikan* (Welfare Policy), with the booklet and what not. Because he kept calling us, at that time I was in Planning (Division), after 5 or 4 o'clock to his room and discussed his idea". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

[24] Mr. Wan Azmi Ramli who graduated with Diploma in Social Studies from Singapore was an avid author who has published several books on social policy, social issues and management in public administration in the 1990s.
[25] Mr. M. Kandiah was a graduate of the Diploma of Social Studies from Singapore and served as Assistant Secretary of the MAPSW for the term 1976-1978 (Tinjauan, 1976).

It is evident that social workers like Kandiah, Wan Azmi and other officers in the Planning and Development Division were the key drivers in drafting the NSWP 1990. Besides, tracing the time-line recorded by Wan Azmi (1992), the idea of the national social welfare policy was probably started around 1984-85 when Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda was holding both the positions as the DG of the DSW as well as President of the MASW. However, its formulation did not show the involvement of the MASW and social work educators from USM. Perhaps the input from the professional body was blurred with Dato' Abdullah's dual-position at that time, and the involvement of the like of Kandiah and Wan Azmi was seen more of the DSW rather than representing the MASW. At the same time, the numbers of social work educators at USM were small and none of them have attained their PhD then[26]. That could be the reason why no social work educators were reportedly involved in the formulation of the NSWP 1990, but more established social sciences educators like Dr Wan Halim Osman and Dr Husna Sulaiman were mentioned in Wan Azmi's writing.

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Nevertheless, the language used in the NSWP 1990 was very much in line with social work's vocabulary such as the concept of individual, family, group and community; prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and development; social justice; equal opportunity; as well as the mention of social workers and social work skills under the sub-topic of implementation as follows:

> "*Pekerja sosial dilengkapkan dengan berbagai-bagai pengetahuan dalam bidang pembangunan manusia serta kemahiran kerja untuk meningkatkan tahap prestasi kerja*" (Social workers to be equipped with a variety of

[26] Dr. Ismail Baba was the first person from the social work program at USM who obtained his PhD in 1995. He mentioned about this in the interview in this study.

knowledge in human development field and working skills to enhance the level of job performance) (Dasar Kebajikan Masyarakat Negara, 1990).

From the social policy perspective, Faizah & Siti Hajar (2000) concluded that with the introduction of the NSWP 1990, social welfare has moved from a more traditional reactive approach into developmental and preventive areas, and the need to develop a more professional care service with minimum standards. This is evident with the introduction of legislation like the Care Centre Act 1993.

The irony is that the NSWP 1990 document is no longer mentioned in the official website of the DSW. The website of the KPWKM does mention about the policy but has no link of the document either to be read online or to be downloaded. The only place to get hold of the original document is from the website of the Prime Minister Office[27]. How this relate to the issues of professionalisation of social work will be further discussed in Chapter Seven.

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(ii) Caring Society and Vision 2020

One of the most significant policy introduced in the 1990s was Vision 2020. Vision 2020 was introduced by the then Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his speech to the Malaysia Business Council on February 28, 1991 (Mahathir, 1991; Rahman, 1993). The nine strategic challenges outlined, including the seventh challenge of establishing a fully caring society, influenced the policy planning and direction to propel the country of becoming a high income and fully developed nation status by the year 2020 (Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2010). Interestingly, one of the objectives of the

[27] https://www.pmo.gov.my/dokumenattached/Dasar/Dasar_Kebajikan_Masyarakat_Negara.pdf

National Social Welfare Policy 1990 was to create a society that embrace *budaya ikram* (caring society), an unfamiliar terminology during that time. Social workers, especially those working at the DSW were prominent in promoting the concept according to Dato' Sayed Abdul Rahman and Dato' Shamsiah.

> "I can still recall them, Prof. Wan Halim was involved in caring society, with Mr Kandiah, and I was there, and the late...you know writer Azmi, Wan Azmi. He was also part of the caring society, initiating from zero base you know! Nobody talks about caring society". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "I remember we want to introduce caring society, to introduce the term 'Caring Society' in *bahasa* all those". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

While there was no dispute with the terminology of caring society in English, the terminology used for Bahasa Malaysia was not that clear cut. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman and Ms. Elsie Lee shared their views on the situation then.

> "*Dulu kita kata Masyarakat Madani, no, Masyarakat Ikram*! *Budaya Ikram*! (Last time we said *Madani* Society, no, *Ikram* Society! *Ikram* culture!) So Arabic! I went upstairs, "What? What's *Ikram*?" "Caring Society *lah*!" *Penyayang*! That's where it comes…The first person to implement the concept of *Penyayang* was Director of Selangor, Laili. Laili was the first to practice *Yayasan Penyayang* in Selangor. See, this thing nobody knows. They are unsung heroes down there" (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "What the local social workers were active about was they were promoting the Caring Society concept so there was a lot more of exposures in the local papers at that time...The main players were Sushama, Zahara Awang, Wan Azmi, Abdullah Malim Baginda and even later on Hitam Chik. They spoke out more on these activities". (Elsie Lee, 2017)

Towards the end of 1990, the Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia (ISIS Malaysia) organized the First National Conference on the Caring Society with the theme 'Caring Society: Emerging Issues and Future Directions' on 5-6 December 1990 (Cho & Ismail, 1992). Several key members of the MASW like Abdullah Malim Baginda, P.C. Sushama, Zaharah Awang, M. Kandiah, Ismail Baba and Denison Jayasooria participated and presented papers at the conference. The ideal of having a

caring society was subsequently put into Vision 2020 as one of the strategic challenges for Malaysia to achieve a fully developed country by 2020.

> "I think because ISIS and the late Tan Sri Noordin Sopiee[28] took on Caring Society as a theme, because it is coming from Vision 2020 as one of the components and they got some kind of a grant to host this. There were many discussions before the conference and before the book was launched. There was this guy Cho Ka Sin and our Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda were almost full time, and they brought a lot of people from NGOs for discussion within ISIS, and they gave some sort of policy credibility to social work, caring, national welfare policy these kind of discussions" (Denison Jayasooria).

Although the book 'Caring Society: Emerging Issues and Future Directions' published in 1992 was a collection of articles from the conference, it serves as a rare reference on social work and its development in Malaysia as nothing much has been published on social work around 1980 to 1990[29]. The idea in rising to the aspiration of a caring society also in a way spurs the expansion of social work education at the local universities in the 1990s which will be deliberated in later part of this chapter.

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(iii) Child Protection Act 1991 and Care Centre Act 1993

Malaysia became the signatory of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which was adopted at the United Nations on 20th November 1989 and coming into force on 2nd September 1990. The roles and responsibilities of the social welfare officers expanded in the field of child welfare the 1990s with the enactment of the Child Protection Act 1991 and Care Centre Act 1993, as well as the introduction of hotline '*Teledera*' for the public to report child abuse cases[30]. Under these two legislations,

[28] Tan Sri Mohammad Noordin bin Sopiee (26 December 1944 – 29 December 2005) was the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), a major think tank of Malaysia. It was recorded that ISIS Malaysia contributed to the crafting of Vision 2020. Source: https://isis.org.my/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/attachments_ISIS_FOCUS_25Aniv.pdf

[29] To the researcher's knowledge, the most notable book related to social welfare at that time and was written by a social worker was probably *Dasar Sosial* by Wan Azmi Ramli in 1982 but it was mainly on social policy, not on social work.

[30] Teledera ceased operation in 15 January 2010 when the KPWKM replaced it with Talian Nur 15999. Source: http://penyayanglovely.blogspot.com/2012/06/talian-teledera.html.

social welfare officers play the statutory roles of protecting children from all forms of abuse and harm, and ensuring all care centres adhere to safety and quality requirement in providing care especially to children.

Prior to 1991, no specific position nor service within the DSW was cater for child protection. Most social welfare officers dealing with children were employed as probation officers in accordance to the Children and Young Persons Act 1947, or as the Children Officer under the Children Division. Dato' Shamsiah recalled her appointment as probation officer (*pegawai akhlak*) which also handled some protection work.

> "I think most of us then were *Pegawai Akhlak*. *Perlindung tak banyak* (Not many Child Protector) ...That time protection cases not many because that time the Act was Child and Young Persons Act". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

However, Mrs Amy Bala who was working as welfare assistant in the 1970s informed that she was helping with a lot of child abuse cases in the big city when she was posted to the Wilayah Kuala Lumpur office.

> "So the graduates go to court but we assist so that's where my child protection work started. I used to go with *Pegawai Kanak-kanak* first, slowly picked ourselves up, a lot of child abuse work". (Amy Bala)

As shared by Mrs Amy Bala, social welfare officers had been dealing with child protection work even before the Child Protection Act 1991 was enacted. Nonetheless, the Child Protection Act 1991 officially put child protection work as one of the crucial services for children at the DSW.

In 1996, the Government mooted the idea to consolidate all legislations regarding children into one legislation by setting up a Cabinet Committee to Combat Social Problem (*Jawatankuasa Kabinet Bagi Membanteras Masalah Sosial, JKMMS*) (JKM,

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2017) due to rising social problem, especially among adolescence and youth. Dato' Sayed Abdul Rahman recollected that functions of the Cabinet Committee which was chaired by the Minister of Education at the time Dato' Seri Mohd Najib Tun Razak.

> "I could recall, then Najib was Minister of Education. So we were thinking...the you know *masa itu masalah bohjan, bohsia* [31] all those things. Social issues...so they formed a Cabinet Committee chaired by Najib to look at all our welfare related Act, which is children related act, which we have the Juvenile Court Act 1947, then you have Children Protection Act 1991, and then Women and Young Girls Protection Act 1973. So we combined these Acts together to become Child Act in 2001". (Sayed A. Rahman)

The enactment of the Child Act 2001 will be further discussed in the section on the professionalisation of social work 2000-2010.

Meanwhile, the quality of care facilities was under public scrutiny especially in relation to the complaint of ill treatment of the residents at the centres. The DSW was tasked to look into regulating centres that provide social care, both day care and residential care, in the country. At the end, the DSW came out with the Care Centre Act 1993 to ensure these centres are regulated to safeguard the safety and interest of the service users as evidence in the interview with Mrs Amy Bala.

> "Care Centre came up because there were a lot of complaints about homes ill-treating their inmates. So they felt it should be regulated. The first draft said residential care so they took examples from New Zealand, Norway and then they were having meetings on residential care. They then realised that there were a lot of homes that run day care, like there were *OKU* (people with disabilities) day care, children were going to day care…Then they changed it to Care Centre Act. The Care Centre Act has two definitions: one it covers residential care of all the target groups, the other is if more than four hours, three days something like that, you have to register…The concern there was quality and safety. Earlier it was started with safety". (Amy Bala)

[31] Both bohsia and bohjan are derogatory slang words for girls and boys, respectively, who like to loiter and fooling around, or involved in immoral activities such as free sex.

Through the Care Centre Act 1993, the DSW plays the role as regulator while its officers perform the role as inspector or enforcement officer to ensure safety, quality and compliances of the care centres for children.

(iv) *Briged Kebajikan Perdana*

In line with the National Social Welfare Policy 1990 that promotes independence and equal opportunity to the community, when serving as the DG of social welfare, Dato' Mohamad Hussain introduced Primary Welfare Brigade (*Briged Kebajikan Perdana*, BKP) in 1996 to facilitate easier access for the vulnerable communities to the social welfare services. He passionately explained that part of the effort in setting up BKP was also to raise the profile of social workers and social welfare officers as expert to deal with social problems.

> "I think at that time I try to form a community service. *Briged Kebajikan Perdana*. So in all the villages they have a representative from social welfare. So who are poor, who are sick are referred to the social welfare department…to help poor people. To refer case to social welfare…that's the reason I wanted to do it last time. Because you can control all the constituencies, state and federal. *Briged Kebajikan Perdana* will go to every house, to every poor people, to every sick people, to the elderly, to give them assistance you see…That's why I said I want to set up *Briged Kebajikan Perdana*. This is one of the reason to tell people that social work is not like ordinarily work...You have problem - family problem, relationship problem, financial problem, health problem, you have to come to social work, you see, to help you out. Children problem - *anak-anak nakal atau jahat apa semua*, so we are like the medicine, medical officer in terms of human welfare. So this is the thing. So we are as good as medical department in terms of social, social relationship...but this is the thing that last time I want to put the image through *Briged Kebajikan Perdana*, I do all these so that the image will go up. Anything about relationship, social problem you have to see social doctor, social welfare officer". (Mohamad Hussain)

The concept of BKP in practice was to promote self-help and to get the general public to participate as volunteers in tackling social problems under the guidance and supervision of the social welfare officers. The volunteers could refer social problem to the social welfare officers. The number of members registered throughout the country

started with 27,601 in 1995 (JKM, 1995) and reached its height in 1997 and 1998 with 63,965 & 61,181 respectively (JKM, 1997 & 1998).

While Dato' Mohamad Hussain has his ideal when he launched the BKP, however, as leadership changes, its membership throughout the nation has eventually dropped to 4,519 in 2010 (JKM, 2010). The DSW stopped the operation of BKP eventually and replaced it with the *Sukarelawan JKM* (DSW Volunteers) where individuals register directly as volunteers with district social welfare officers as the department could not trace any laws or policies that can back up the establishment of the BKP as an entity[32].

(v) Restructuring of the DSW and creation of the post of PKMD

The DSW underwent a major restructuring in 1997 which includes creation of new divisions and more importantly the position and designation of district social welfare officer (PKMD) which previously was commonly used in a loose sense. After the restructuring, all PKMD positions were upgraded and standardized at degree level. Dato' Shamsiah who was involved in the restructuring planning share her recollection of the exercise.

> "I was PKMD (in 1975) and you know that time in the office only one officer. The rest all welfare assistant. But that time the designation was called Probation Officer. It was not PKMD. That time no post of PKMD, no such designation. Since you are the most senior there, the only one officer, you take care of administration and everything so they simply call you district social welfare officer". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman).

In addition, the position of social welfare officer was not an official designation in the public service as well as the officers were of different scales in the DSW. Hence, the

[32] Personal conversation with a senior social welfare officer from the Policy and International Relations Division of the DSW on 10 March 2018.

DSW decided to streamline and to standardize the salary scale of all the PKMD and their proposal was accepted by the Public Service Department.

> "That's where (the restructuring of the Department) we started creating the posts of PKMD, because we realized at that time our PKMD, B11. That time we have B11, the degree on A. When I came into *Bahagian Latihan*, it was A22, A24, A12 that kind of thing. There's another group of B, like the *Penolong Pegawai*. So then that time some of our PKMD were B11, some were A group. Some were graduates, some were not because their designation as *Pegawai Akhlak* and *Pegawai Pelindung* that time. That time we realized we don't have anybody designated as *Pegawai Kebajikan Masyarakat Daerah*. So then we created it. Make sure must be degree holder. All PKMD must be a degree holder. So we created the A22 that time. And we got it from JPA". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

The streamlining of the position of the PKMD to a graduate position was also in line with the reducing number of officers with the Diploma in Social Studies holders from Singapore as more and more of them retiring in the 1990s, as well as more and more social welfare officers being recruited with a degree qualification, consistent with the social work education at USM being offered at the undergraduate level.

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(vi) Counsellors' Act 1998

One of the services in the DSW that was professionalized in the 1990s was counselling. Initially, it was a common practice at the DSW that the social welfare officers conduct counselling service, especially by those who have obtained their social work qualification from Singapore University and later the SDA program from USM. In fact, these officers also conducted training course on counselling skills at ILK for other social welfare officers and assistants. Dr Ling How Kee who started her career at the DSW in the 1980s recalled the training of counselling by social welfare officers at ILK.

> "...we did a lot of training courses at that time counselling for drug dependent and also we did counselling courses. That was when we have Peter Jeshuran[33], the late Peter Jeshuran, Venga…There were a lot of emphasis on counselling, training social welfare officers to do counselling". (Ling How Kee)

[33] Both Mr. Peter Jeshurun and Mr. Vengadasan were social work diploma graduates from Singapore.

In 1993, the government established the National Counselling Council, and counselling service was upgraded to become a Division in 1997. Social welfare officers who have qualification in social work were also took charge of the Counselling Division as stated by Dato' Norani Hashim.

> "…from Labuan I came back. I was placed in Counselling for a while…Then from Counselling, I moved around different places". (Norani Hashim)

It was revealed that one of the reason why the government decided to regulate counselling was the increased number of people calling themselves counsellors and charging fees for their services regardless of their qualifications.

> "I can't remember all but one of the reasons why they wanted the Counsellor's Act then because they are so many people calling themselves counsellors. The motivators those days like Fadzilah Kamsah, they called themselves counsellors. So they want that to stop". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

Although social welfare officers and the President of the Malaysian Association of Social Workers were represented in the National Counselling Council, and were involved in discussion of the Counsellors' Act, the irony was when the Counselling Act 1998 was enacted and started registration of Registered Counsellors, social workers and social work qualification were not recognized under the legislation. Mrs Elsie Lee recollected that the MASW was represented by the President Puan Hajah Umi Kalthum Abdul Karim and Mrs Grace Ng to the Council. Puan Hajah Umi Kalthum was also the Director of Training at the DSW at the time.

> "We were involved actually. Umi Khalsum was the President. She was going for the meeting. Grace also went for the meeting, representing medical social workers. I sat in for one meeting". (Elsie Lee)

The fact was that social workers did try but it seems that they failed to convince the Council to give exemption to social workers to provide counselling without being

registered under the Act. Dato' Shamsiah, Mrs Amy Bala and Ms. Elsie Lee revealed what had happened at the time.

> "We insisted on that we don't have to be registered to be recognized because in our work we do counselling. Like doctors, they don't have to register as counsellor…Puan Umi, she was *Pengarah Latihan* then, went to see Datin Fauziah, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry. We insisted on getting us being exempted…I remember Datin Fauziah insisted on it...exempted from registration under the Act, but was not accepted". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "She (Puan Ummi) used to come back and ventilate. She said how she fought very hard, she reported in MASW meeting, for social workers to be exempted but they refused to accept because we reiterate the fact that it is a tool we use. But they said we were not trained in it. They wanted people with qualification. They meant professional means qualification. Accreditation means qualification so we cannot be exempted or accredited. So they said we didn't have the qualification". (Amy Bala)

> "I sat in for one meeting. We actually...came to the fact that we thought social workers will be included. After that I was not involved and the next thing we knew they came out with this thing and says that you cannot be a counsellor if you don't have a degree in counselling. We were all like taken aback. Subsequently, they have an advisory council where they called people from other fields for meeting. I remember going for one and I was again brought this issue up that how is it social workers are not recognized. They still stuck to it and said no you have to have degree in counselling". (Elsie Lee)

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At the end, Puan Umi Kalthum decided not to represent the MASW to the National Counselling Council in 1999 after the social workers were not being recognized as capable of undertaking counselling by the Act. Social work educators like Dr. Ismail Baba and Dr. Ling How Kee were not involved in the process so they were puzzled and disappointed why social work was being left out and counselling moved ahead in achieving professional status through legislation.

> "initially we were supposed to develop the same Bill of counsellor and social work together. Suddenly social work was left out. Suddenly there was no representative...Umi Kalthum, supposed to represent MASW and then suddenly she didn't attend, and suddenly I guess there's no interest, I think because I don't know why. Suddenly when I heard when they tabled it, social work was not in… I didn't get any reaction. I was in the dark and don't know who to ask. At that time one of the Pengarah was the President of MASW, then suddenly it was too late to…". (Ismail Baba)

> "...instead of developing social workers, in the late 80s they decided to have counsellors. They have this...so the Counsellor Act all that was actually in the hands of the Social Welfare Department. So there is a post of counsellor being developed. There's a Counsellor's Act being actually, from a Bill become an Act. All that was done by the Social Welfare...They were doing that! And this is kind of...disappointing". (Ling How Kee)

Social workers failed to secure recognition under Counsellor Act 1998 as the law focused on the entry academic qualification of a counsellor while the social workers were arguing from the counselling function that they have been undertaken in handling cases. The reasons why social work could not get itself recognized will be examined through theory of profession in relation to professional boundaries in the next chapter.

5.1.2.4 Summary of the Professionalisation of Social Work at the DSW 1990-1999

Social work seems to have moved in positive direction at the early stage of the 1990s with the introduction of the National Social Welfare Policy and the discussion on caring society which witnessed the involvement of several senior social workers from the DSW. Social welfare officers were also given statutory role in child protection through the Child Protection Act 1991. The position of District Social Welfare Officer (PKMD) as head of the district social welfare office, also as a graduate position, was official established. Nonetheless, the professionalisation of social work did not progress well with the dissolving of the Ministry of Social Welfare where the DSW was put under the MNUCD which marked the beginning of the decline of power of the DSW in relation to the power of the Ministry. Lastly, social work lost in the professionalisation race with counselling when social work qualification was not recognized in the Counsellors Act 1998 despite social welfare officers with social work qualification were involved in the drafting of that legislation.

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5.2.2 Professionalisation of Social Work and the MASW 1990-1999

The MASW continues to see social workers from JKM taking the lead in the association in early 1990s. Only in 1995 where Siti Hawa Ali from USM became the first social work educator to be elected as President, while Anthony Tan made a comeback in 1997 to lead the association for the second time. The following Table 5.3 shows the names of Presidents and their organizations from 1991 to 2000.

Table 5.3
President of MASW (1991-2000)

	Tenure	Name	Affiliation
1	1991-1993	Tuan Haji Hitam Chik	DSW
2	1993-1995	Puan Hajah Umi Kalthum Abdul Karim	DSW
3	1995-1997	Siti Hawa Ali	Academic
4	1997-1999	Anthony Tan	NGO
5	1999-2001	K.N. Singham	DSW

Source: Adapated from MASW (2003)

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5.2.2.1 Key incidents and people of the MASW 1990-1999

The MASW was comparatively more active after 1990 than before 1990 in terms of activities and events organized, and also better recognized at the national level where it was appointed into several national consultative councils. The summary of the main activities of the MASW from 1990 to 1999 can be found in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4

Key MASW Events 1990-2000

Year	Key MASW Events
1990	• 5-6 December - Several key members of MASW attended the First National Conference on the Caring Society: Emerging Issues and Future Directions organized by the Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Kuala Lumpur. Articles by P.C.Sushama, Zaharah Awang, Ismail Baba and Denison Jayasooria was published by ISIS Malaysia in 1992.

1991
- Tuan Haji Hitam Chik elected as President

1993
- Puan Hajah Umi Kalthum Abdul Karim elected as President
- 13 Aug – ROS approved Constitution amendment for 4A(a) – expansion of membership eligibility to those with related social science degree and 5 years' experience in social work.
- Majlis Kaunseling Kebangsaan – government has agreed to establish a National Counselling Council. Launched by Minister on 21 Oct 1993. MASW is one of the NGOs selected to the Council and has submitted position paper on counselling to the Council. The President represent MASW.
- 17-18 Nov - organized training course 'Psychiatric social worker as part of the rehabilitation team' at LPPKN. Resource persons – Prof Richard Winterseen & Lois Wintersteen from Univesity of Mankato, Minnesota, USA.

1994
- 31 Jan – Dialogue 'Future Directions for Social Work Training in Malaysia' organized by Commonwealth Association for Local Action and Economic Development (COMMACT) and Centre for Community Studies at ISIS Malaysia. President & Tuan Hj Hitam Chik represented MASW.
- 25 June – Seminar Kebangsaan 'Kerja Sosial ke Abad 21- Cabaran, Strategi dan Program' & Majlis Malam Mesra at Hotel Equatorial, KL in conjunction with 21st Anniversary of MASW. 87 participants for seminar. Seminar officiated by Minister KPNPM YB Dato' Napsiah Omar, while dinner graced by Datin Fauziah on behalf of KSU. 350 people attended dinner.
- 9-13 July – IFSW International Symposium, Sri Lanka – Anthony Tan and Peter Jeshurun attended. COSW was established in Sri Lanka and Anthony Tan as "Founding Chair"
- 30 July - Talk on 'Social Work – A Global Perspective' by Mr Ellis Envall, IFSW President, at the DSW

1995
- Talk 'Politics and Social Work' by Dr Mansor Merican. 'Social work has entered the agenda of Malaysian Politics through government policy ad media'
- 23 June – Special discussion among Exco on P.U. (A) 203 – JKM not listed as a department and its activities being absorbed under the Ministry. MASW sent letter to Minister to 'save' the situation and identity of JKM. Minister replied and actions taken to rectify the situation.
  - 16 Sept – 22nd AGM at JKMM. 22 members attended.
  - Siti Hawa Ali became the first social work academics to be elected as President.
  - MASW is member of the National Counselling Council
  - Also member of Majlis Penyelidikan dan Kemajuan Sains Malaysia
  - Need for proper office

Response to only one Exco meeting – President too busy in her official duty

1996
- Annual Report 1996 mentioned:
  - Activities that period was on planning and reviving the association. 51 social work students from USM joined student membership.
  - 48 paid up members.
  - Plan to apply for grant from YKN to set up Secretariat.
  - Anthony Tan is in the process of establishing COSW with colleagues from the Commonwealth. This would allow social work association from small states can join IFSW eventually.
  - Exco represented at National Counselling Council, National Elderly Council and BIM
- 29 Aug – Notice of AGM on 16 Sept to be held at Sandy Bay Hotel, Penang, in

conjunction with Seminar "Pusat Khimat Bersepadu untuk Mangsa Dera dan Rogol" organized by Women's Crisis Centre supported by MASW.

- 16 Sept – AGM adjourned due to short of quorum.
- 26 Sept – President Siti Hawa wrote letter to members – informing members that the association is still 'exist' and is getting resources to it active. Identified 3 factors causing the decline of organization – leadership, members' activeness and finance. Priority to get recognition as profession through accreditation. Training activities perceived by certain quarters need to attain recognition. Number of trained and active social workers is declining. Called for members' support.
- 31 Oct – Notice of AGM to be held on 16 Nov at Wisma Shen, JKM
- 16 November – AGM without election at Wisma Shen, JKM, KL
  - Attendance: 9 (5 Exco, 4 members)
  - Anthony Tan expressed disappointment that several Exco not attending meeting without reasons. Suggested President to write letter of displeasure to those Exco. Suggestion supported by members.
  - Counselling Act has been established – a few members (Pn. Umi and Grace) involved in the drafting through their representation in other organizations. Suggested Pn Umi to represent MASW to the Council and taking initiative to brief members around KL on the Act.
  - The need of Secretariat was mentioned again

1997

- Mac – Seminar "Perindustrian dan kesejahteraan pekerja – kepentingan kerja sosial di industry" – PPSM & Kelab Pembangunan & Pentadbiran Sosial USM
- 24 Mac – Attended Dialogue with NGOs by Ministry of National Unity and Social Development
- Difficulty in disseminating news to member.
- Member in Majlis Kaunseling Kebangsaan, Majlis Kebangsaan Warga Tua, Majlis Penyelidikan dan Kemajuan Sains Negara, BIM
- 30 August – AGM @ JKMM, Wisma Shen, KL
  - Anthony Tan elected as President for the second time
  - Attendance: 20
  - Anthony Tan as chair of COSW has been invited to attend CHOGM in Edinburgh. He attended CHOGM in Oct.
  - Puan Umi represented MASW to Majlis Kaunseling Kebangsaan – Akta at final stage
  - Four IPT offer social work program – USM, UNIMAS, UUM & UMS. One social work student received best student award at UNIMAS. MASW is urged to be activist in the development of social work education.
  - Image MASW has to be raised as the association has not functioned fully. That also caused lack of confident among members
  - Need to get more members and activities to focus on strengthening the association.

1998

- 7 Exco meetings held at Malis Pusat Kebajikan Semenanjung Malaysia & JKMM
- 23 Feb – Courtesy call on DG JKMM
- 30 June – Panel discussion "Social Work at a Crossroad – what prospect for the practitioner?"
- 8 Sept – Talk by Dr Louis Minster from Malta @ JKMM
- Member to Majlis Kaunseling Kebangsaan, Majlis Kebangsaan Warga Tua, Majlis Penyelidikan dan Kemajuan Sains Negara, BIM
- MASW was appointed as member of the First Malaysia Counsellors' Board for 2 years (1998-2000). Puan Hjh Umi Kalthum bt Abd Karim represent MASW in the Board.
- Identified 11 social workers as trainers. Names given to JKMM, Majlis Kebajikan Masyarakat Kebangsaan Malaysia, & YKPM

	• 16-17 Nov – Anthony Tan attended 'Advancing Social Work Education seminar' in Kuching, Sarawak. • Ms Sushama had met with KSU KPNPM Mr R Theivendran and raised the issue of Council of SW Education and Accreditation Body. Need follow up. • 28 Nov – Talk "Acknowledging Culture in Child & Youth Care Practice" by Prof Leon C. Fulcher from NZ at JKMM. 14 attended.

1999	• 27 Feb – Meeting on setting up Task Force for Social Work Education Council at DSW – analysis of current social work education program at the public universities, report on social work education accreditation in other countries, form a directory of social work educators/trainers, sought out cooperation from Ministry of Education & PSD. (The Task Force idea initiated after the UNIMAS Seminar)
	• 24 Apr – Task Force for Social Work Education Council meeting @ DSW – Dr Ismail Baba & Dr Denison presented papers
	• 22 May – AGM postponed
	  • 11 June – AGM @ DSW, Wisma Shen, KL
	  • Attendance: 13
	  • Mr K.N. Singham elected as President
	  • Majlis Kaunseling Malaysia – Pn Umi Kalthum did not want to represent MASW in the Council any more. Exco to nominate new person.
	  • President expressed confusion over the poor turn out for MASW's talks.

Source: adapted from MASW Annual Reports from 1990-2000

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Things started rather positively for the MASW in the early 1990s when social workers were able to present their views on national and international events. First, as already mentioned in the early section, when ISIS Malaysia organized a national conference on caring society in late 1990, several key members of the MASW were invited to present papers that, among other things, highlighted the role of social workers and social work practice in creating a caring society.

In 1993, the government established the National Counselling Council and the MASW was one of the NGOs selected to sit in the Council. MASW took the opportunity and submitted a position paper on counselling to the Council.

In the same year, the MASW amended its constitution to expand its full membership to practitioners with degree in related social sciences discipline but with minimum five

years' social work experience. This drew the close to the debates and discontentment of practitioners without social work degree but had been employed as social welfare officers or medical social workers.

Also in the same year, 1993, former President Anthony Tan who was visiting UK on a Commonwealth Fellowship mooted the idea of a Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) with David Jones who was then Secretary General of BASW. The idea was then put forward to social workers from the Commonwealth countries during the IFSW bi-annual meeting and world conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka a year later and received warm response from those who attended. Anthony was later elected as Chair of COSW and he worked closely with David Jones from the British Association of Social Workers to develop COSW (Jones, 2017). Anthony Tan was also elected as member of the Executive Committee of IFSW 1994-1996 at the World Conference in Sri Lanka (IFSW, 1994).

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In 1994, MASW organized a national conference on 'Social Work towards 21st Century - Challenges, Strategies and Programs' (*Kerja Sosial ke Abad 21- Cabaran, Strategi dan Program*) which was officiated by the Minister of National Unity and Social Development. This is the first national social work conference organized by the MASW which focused on the challenges of the profession in the new millennium.

In addition, through its members' contact with social workers from other countries, MASW organized training workshops and talks in the 1990s with invited international social work experts and leaders, for examples, workshop on psychiatric social work by Prof. Richard Wintersteen and Lois Wintersteen from the United States in 1993; talk

on 'Social Work – A Global Perspective' by Mr Ellis Envall in 1994, IFSW President, and talk on 'Acknowledging Culture in Child & Youth Care Practice' by Prof. Leon C. Fulcher from New Zealand (1998).

On 30 June 1998, MASW organized a panel discussion "Social Work at a Crossroad – what prospect for the practitioner?" at JKM (MASW, 1998). The panellists for the discussion included the DG of Social Welfare, social work educator, social workers from both JKM and hospital, and a representative from PSD. Many issues were raised pertaining to the training, recruitment, professional recognition and professionalism of social workers in the country.

MASW started the discussion on setting up a Council of Social Work Education after that idea was brought up in the 'Advancing Social Work Education Seminar' organized by UNIMAS in 1998. A task force was set up in the following year to study and to discuss about the possibility of establishing a regulatory body for social work education. Two main person involved were Dr Ismail Baba and Dr Denison Jayasooria. This initiative will be further discussed in the social work education in the later section.

In short, the MASW has played a more active role as a national professional body, with the exception of 1995-1996 which the inactiveness of the association will be discussed in the issues and challenges section later, by organizing national seminar, professional talks by experts from abroad, as well as dialogues on the progress of the social work profession. The membership criteria were expanded to experienced social workers but without social work qualification. The MASW was also being appointed into the National Counselling Council and the National Council on Elderly but as discussed in

the earlier section, social workers were not recognized as counsellors when the Counsellors Act was enacted in 1998.

5.2.3 Professionalisation of Social Work and Social Work Education 1990-1999

The development of social work education at the institutions of higher learning in Malaysia intensified in the 1990s following the pronouncement of Vision 2020 where it outlined establishing a fully caring society as one of the challenges, as well as the establishing of new public universities in the 1980s and 1990s.

5.2.3.1 Expansion of Social Work Education in Malaysia

During this period, social work education was introduced at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) in 1993 with a Bachelor of Social Science (Social Work), and Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) in 1997 with a Bachelor of Social Work Management. It was then followed by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) which offers Master in Medical Social Work in 2000.

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During the same period of time, two public universities also started to offer programs related to human services and human development. In 1993, University Malaya (UM) established a Department of Social Administration and Justice which later introduced a Bachelor of Arts in Social Administration and Justice. In 1999, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) changed its Department of Social Development to the Department of Social and Development Sciences and started to offer minor in social work for its Bachelor of Science (Human Development) in 2000. All these five universities are all public universities.

When looking into the reasons behind the establishment of social work education post 1990, it was quite evident to see the link between the introduction of new social work programs introduced at some of these universities with the aspiration of Vision 2020 in creating a caring society that can deal with social issues effectively. Social work was seen fit to produce the human resource that addresses social ills and lead to the creation of a caring society as shared by Dr Ling Howe Kee from UNIMAS.

> "I got to know that they (the university top management) were interested in social work because I think they see there is a need to address some of the current issues". (Ling How Kee)

The establishment of the social work education at UUM was also strongly motivated by the Vision 2020 as indicated in the excerpt from a bulletin published by the School of Social Development in 1999 written by Tuan Haji Azmi Shaari, the head of program for the Bachelor of Social Work Management.

> "*Memandangkan masalah-masalah sosial yang semakin ketara dan membimbangkan, khususnya dalam usaha mencapai Wawasan 20202, Sekolah Pembangunan Sosial mempunyai tanggungjawab untuk melahirkan graduan-graduan yang boleh menguruskan masalah-masalah sosial yang berbagai bentuk. Oleh itu, Sekolah Pembangunan Sosial mengambil langkah yang proaktif...Program Sarjanamuda Pengurusan Kerja Sosial dengan kepujian ditawarkan*" (Sekolah Pembangunan Sosial, 2000: p.2)

In addition, University of Malaya, which did not offer any social work program after the separation of autonomy and campus with Singapore in 1961, set up the Department of Social Administration and Social Justice in 1993 as a respond to social problems in the country in its website.

> "The goal of this department is derived from the establishment of the department on March 29, 1993, as it is in line to the needs of the university in addressing social problems in the community and nation. As managing social problems is our main professional concern, the department is committed to produce skilled human capital that are equipped with various social work practices and variety of social work techniques which eventually lead them in

> addressing the social problems effectively in our society and nation at the present and future" [34]

Although it did not mention Vision 2020 directly, the timing of establishing the department, inclusion of the word Social Justice[35] as the name of the department, and coining the need to address social problem from the oldest university in Malaysia can be seen as a response to the challenges raised in Vision 2020.

The emergence of social work program at UNIMAS and UUM was different from how the SDA program was planned at USM. While the USM social work program was a joint collaborative effort between the university, the DSW and the MASW (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013), the beginning of the social work program at UNIMAS and UUM was initiated by the these two relatively new universities to introduce new programs to cater to the need of society that time. The MASW was not engaged in the new program but the social work program at USM was referred in preparing the curriculum as claimed by Dr. Ismail Baba.

> "In fact they all looked at USM's curriculum, which is good. Some of the universities I was involved in designing...UNIMAS, I think I was involved ...UMS and UUM". (Ismail Baba).

Both Dr Ling How Kee and Madam Gill Raja who were two of the earliest educators engaged by UNIMAS as social work lecturers gave their stories on the developing of the social work program at UNIMAS.

> "I got to know that they (the university top management) were interested in social work because I think they see there is a need to address some of the current issues…Apparently they went to UK, the top management team in UNIMAS - the Vice Chancellor, and Deputy VC and Prof Halimaton, they are all not in social work. They looked at the curriculum in, if I'm not mistaken, from Royal Holloway in the UK". (Ling How Kee)

[34] https://socialadmin.um.edu.my/overview

[35] Social justice was used by Prime Minister Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his Vision 2020 speech to the Malaysia Business Council on February 28, 1991 (Mahathir, 1991)

> "So I think social work, UNIMAS like the idea of being different. Also, I was trying to remember correctly, UNIMAS was wanting to make sure that their program was quite relevant to the work needs, following traditional disciplines, so social work fitted in…they are more geared to produce graduates who could be out there in the workforce, but then when you are actually wanted to help build professional based, I was reminded that it was not". (Gill Raja)

With limited social work educators available in the country, the newly established social work program at UNIMAS has to engage social workers who have at least a Master degree to come in as part time lecturer while recruiting and sending people with social work experience to do their postgraduate study in social work.

> "I joined in 1995, part time. At that stage, Kee had already been appointed and gone because she was from JKM, she came as a tutor although she is an experienced social worker. She went in and very quickly went for her Master which actually got converted straight into a PhD. Sushama, she has been flown in part time as well. I think Kee would be the person most influential in putting together. When I came in, she was only tutor. They appointed her full time worker...Sushama arrived while I was a part timer because they were still coming in. Gabriel Chong came in later. Also we have non-social work person". (Gill Raja)

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Similar situation happened at UUM where the social work program has to recruit tutors first and sent them to do their postgraduate study. While UNIMAS was searching among practising social workers who are interested to teach, UUM resorted to recruit fresh university graduates who were interested to come into the field of social work. The first three tutors who were sent for their postgraduate degree in social work were Abdul Razak Abdul Manaf, Rusimah Sayuti and Teoh Ai Hua. When the first batch of social work students came in 1997, the program was supported by non-social work lecturers with qualifications in psychology, sociology and counselling while the three tutors were away pursuing their Master degree in social work[36].

[36] This is the personal experience of the researcher who was among the three tutors.

5.2.3.2 USM Changed Program Name of SDA to Social Work

The debates over the name of SDA and social work at USM continues into the 1990s. Eventually USM, after much debates and deliberations, decided to change the program's name from SDA to social work in 1997 as explained by Dr Ismail Baba who was in the renaming exercise.

> "When we changed the name from SDA to social work in 97, of course there was a lot of problems in trying to change the name. Even among my colleagues, especially Siti Hawa at that time, even Siti Hayati but I don't blame them because they graduated from that program. We brought it to Senate. That was during my time as the Chairperson. It's funny because Zulkarnain and Dr Azizan...it was like the male against the female in terms of changing the name. And we have Prof Ahmad Fattahipour as a visiting lecturer for a long time at USM. So all the men kind of agreed. We had an expert meeting. I remember Elsie came and we called people from JKM, whether it was ok or not to change to social work. So basically they all agreed to call it social work. Then we managed to convince the Senate so the name was changed to social work". (Ismail Baba)

With the change of name of SDA to social work, the social work programs at USM, UNIMAS and UUM use the term social work in their program. Dr Ismail Baba, however, has concern over the term Social Administration and the content of social work at UM.

> "Of course Universiti Malaya still insisting on Social Administration but they don't claim that is social work". (Ismail Baba)

5.2.3.3 Efforts in Introducing Diploma in Social Work

Apart the introduction of undergraduate degree in social work by the universities in the 1990s, there were two efforts in introducing diploma in social work which both lasted only one year. Both efforts were not found or reported in any publications when the researcher was conducting the literature review on social work development in Malaysia.

First was the effort by the DSW, through its Training Institute of Welfare (ILK) which had offered a Diploma program with the collaboration with USM in 1993 which only lasted for one cohort[37]. It was revealed that the teaching staffs consisted of both social work lecturers like Dr Angeline Cheah, Siti Hawa Ali and Siti Norhayati from USM, as well as senior social welfare officers like Dato' Mohamad Husin, Tuan Haji Hitam Chik, Mr. Vengadesan, and Mr. K.N. Singham. Unfortunately, the Diploma program stopped after it was not recognized by PSD as a qualification for promotion as it did not meet the requirement of the National Accreditation Board (Lembaga Akreditasi Negara, LAN). The researcher only came to know about this effort after the passing of Dato' Mohamad Husin so did not have the chance to check with him again on the matter.

The second effort was an attempt to offer a Diploma in Social Work at the University of Malaya in 1999 (Appendix 8). It was an effort by *Yayasan Kajian dan Pembangunan Masyarakat* (YKPM, Foundation of Community Research and Development), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of University Malaya, and University Malaya Centre for Continuing Education to come up with a social work course aims to, according to the brochure of the Diploma, 'equip staff and volunteers with knowledge, skills and values to function as competent social workers' (University of Malaya Centre for Continuing Education, 1999). The key initiator was Dr Denison Jayasooria from YKPM and he shared the flow of events in the following interview excerpt.

> "...when the YKPM was set up after I left Malaysian Care, we felt that social work training at the diploma level and certificate level was necessary and UM had a section that was interested in continuing education. They have the Centre for Continuing Education, and Professor Leonard[38] was in charge at that time, and he was opened to a diploma level course…The Foundation together with

[37] According to two of the social welfare officers, En. Ghani and En. Shukri who attended that program, they were given one-year study leave to attend the program at USM. The researcher met them during a workshop in 2016.

[38] Professor Leonard Yong was the Pioneering Director of Universiti Malaya Centre for Continuing Education.

> individuals from Malaysian Care worked up the program and we then got the Department of Anthropology and Sociology from UM to co-organize with us this course. There were six modules, it was taught over the weekends, it was one-year level course with requirement, placement and things like that". (Denison Jayasooria)

The UM Diploma initiative was mainly from individual social workers from the non-government sector that dealt direct with the university. Professional body like MASW was not involved, and neither was representatives from the Ministry of Education. According to Dr Denison, the diploma differed from its original practice-based approach and became more classroom-based due to majority of the instructors were lecturers from non-social work disciplines at UM.

> "No. Nobody (from MASW) because I think I was also teaching part time at UM so that's how Prof. Zainal Kling and Prof. Roziah Omar …she and the rest were all in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, and they had a degree in Social Administration. So the course ended up more as a teaching classroom course rather than too much of practical. So you won't see practical component as very big, but the social work methods, social work policy, social work values, the core concepts were there from social work background". (Denison Jayasooria)

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However, the course was short live as it couldn't get PSD's recognition and could only be offered as an executive diploma. Without PSD's recognition as qualification for recruitment and promotion in the public service, the DSW would not send their staff to do this diploma. So the program could only manage to complete one cohort before ceased operation.

> "We had a good response for the first batch, I think more than 20 people from voluntary and government organizations joined but along somewhere along the line we had a difficulty because some of the government people wanted this course to be validated for recognition. I think this is where they found out that this course cannot be recognized for job promotion or salary increase, but we managed to complete one batch within one year". (Denison Jayasooria)

> "Actually UM declared this as an Executive Diploma rather than a Diploma because we had difficulty with Diploma which runs full time like UiTM ran diploma courses which is two or three-years full time, as opposed to this which was part time nine months. So that led eventually to the end of this course, Prof

> Leonard shifted, and personalities that helped me like Dr Roziah and Prof Zainal Keling and a few others also left UM, so the period was, and I left for my PhD work and all that. So it was discontinued …So it was only one cohort and then I think UM they were more keen in business, management, other courses because they maybe thought government people would not come because it is an executive diploma. They didn't continue it at all". (Denison Jayasooria)

It is interesting to study the motives behind these two efforts from the professionalisation of social work perspective. The first effort by the DSW through ILK was an effort to professionalize their workforce with a proper and recognized professional training program, with the collaboration with the SDA program at USM. The second effort by Dr Denison was aimed to professionalize the workforce in the NGO setting. The targets of both the diploma were those who were already employed in the service but without social work qualification. Both efforts have to rely on the universities where tertiary education is offered. Coincidentally, both diploma suffered the same fate as both did not meet the rigorous requirements of an academic diploma set by the higher education accrediting body which in return would be recognized by the PSD as employment or promotional criteria. When compared to the Diploma of Social Services offered in Singapore back in 1952 which took about two years to complete, the design of these two diploma maybe too simplistic or non-academic enough to warrant approval from the authority. Nonetheless, both efforts have indicated the demand of professional training for many practitioners in the field who were employed in both the public and NGO sector without having the required social work qualification. They were also trying to address the need of the practitioners who could only attend the program on a part-time basis which was not available because all the social work programs at the universities were offered in full time mode.

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5.2.3.4 Idea of a Council of Social Work Education

The increase of social work programs within a short time has raised concerns over the differences in curriculum design and the lack of qualified and experienced social work educators (Fuziah & Ismail, 2013; Sinnasamy, 2007). The issue was raised when UNIMAS held its first Advancing Social Work Education Conference in 1998. Gill Raja and Dr. Ismail Baba who attended the conference shared their thoughts on the matter.

> "After the name changed (at USM) to social work then I realised so many social work programs coming up like *cendawan tumbuh* (mushrooming) in the 90s, UNIMAS, UUM, etc. Suddenly everyone I noticed like trying to work separately and don't want to...like trying to compete with each other I sensed that". (Ismail Baba)

> "The Advancing Social Work series really brought about the Joint Consultative Council on Social Work Education (NJCCSWE). To be honest, that was it initiated from". (Gill Raja)

A year after the 1998 UNIMAS conference, the MASW set up a task force to study the feasibility to set up a Council on Social Work Education in Malaysia where Dr Ismail Baba was tasked to lead the task force.

> "I also noticed that, at that time, they develop the social work program but they didn't have enough trained people. I told my colleagues "lets start this Committee" but just to help out our colleagues and promote social work education and also to have certain standards, minimum standards. Basically like sharing knowledge. In the beginning we have a lot of meeting, and we looked at some of the curriculum, how to teach certain subjects and all that. Knowledge sharing among colleagues, especially in the Peninsula". (Ismail Baba)

The preliminary meetings and preparation on the idea of a Council on Social Work Education has brought greater collaboration among social work educators in the next two years until the establishment of the NJCCSWE which will be deliberated in the professionalisation of social work 2000-2010 section later in this chapter.

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5.2.4 Key Issues and Challenges Faced by Social Work in the 1990s

Despite experiencing some positive developments in the early 1990s, social work as a whole did not progress as much apart from the expansion of social work education at the public universities. Three issues faced by the profession between 1990-2000 were identified, namely (i) limited openings for social worker positions at the DSW, (ii) the lack of leadership and drop of memberships of the MASW; (iii) Setback for social workers being excluded from the Counsellors' Act 1998.

5.2.4.1 The Limited Openings for Social Worker Positions at the DSW

As mentioned in Chapter Five, the action taken by the Malaysian government in freezing new intake of staffs in the 1980s had impacted the manpower at the DSW. That policy continued in the 1990s and the numbers of degree level social welfare officers at the DSW were further reduced as shown in Table 5.5. The scheme of services in the 1990s as shown in Table 5.5 can be referred in Appendix 9. The ratio of P&P to Supporting 1 & 2 was calculated by the researcher.

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Table 5.5

Number of DSW staffs employed 1992-1998 comparing to 1986

Year / Categories	1986	1992	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Management & Professional (P&P) (S1-S3)	201	180	145	145	145	170	169
Supporting 1 (Diploma & STPM) (S4 & S5)	232	591	661	661	674	668	668
Supporting 2 (SPM, S6 & S7)	641	417	429	429	441	445	445
Total positions (S Scheme)	1074	1188	1235	1235	1260	1283	1282

Ratio of P&P to Supporting 1 & 2	1:5.3	1:6.6	1:8.5	1:8.5	1:8.7	1:7.5	1:7.6

Source: adapted from annual reports of DSW 1986, 1992-1998

As shown in Table 5.5 above, although the total number of three categories of staffs had increased in the 1990s compares to the 1980s (from 1074 to 1282), the number of social welfare officers who are degree holders had actually dropped from 201 in 1986 to 180 in 1992, and dropped further to 145 for 1994 to 1996. It only started to increase in 1997 to 170. Dato' Mohomad Hussain, the Director General of Social Welfare from 1993 to 1997, claimed that he managed to get the Finance Ministry for allocation for more recruitment into JKM.

> "I always approach the Finance Ministry. The Financial Minister also I know him quite well. My relative was assistant KSU of Finance you see. So through him we get all these back". (Mohamad Hussain)

What Dato' Mohamad Hussain claimed was true to a certain extent but the number of social welfare officers were still lower than the numbers employed in the 1980s. In addition, the statistics shows that the increment in Table 5.5 were mainly at the supporting level for assistant social welfare officers (Supporting 1) and welfare assistants (Supporting 2). The negative impact of such development on social work in the 1990s as a whole are:

(i) The professional social workers at the DSW has decreased and not being replaced. When the early batches of social workers with Diploma from Singapore retiring in the 90s, fresh social work graduates, particularly from USM, did not have much opportunity to be recruited into the DSW to replace them due to the freeze policy;

(ii) The widening of the ratio of graduate level officers (P&P) to supporting staffs (Supporting 1 and 2) from 1:5 in 1986 to 1.85 in 1997, calculated by the

researcher, indicates greater burden for the officers in providing on-job training and supervision to the supporting staffs;

(iii) Heavier workload for the social welfare officers where certain statutory responsibilities could not be delegated to lower rank staffs;

(iv) Less opening for social worker positions also means many social work graduates turned to other jobs than social work, thus reducing the number of trained social workers in the workforce.

5.2.4.2 In-activeness and Drop of Membership of the MASW

The in-activeness of MASW was again highlighted in the 1990s, especially among members who were not in the Executive Committee as described by Dato' Shamsiah Abd Rahman.

> "I got to know about MASW when I was at training division. I think that time, the MASW President was our KP or seniors. People like Puan Ummi, KN Singham...so we got to know about MASW and we were recruited as member. The Association was not that active. Other than being a member I don't remember anything else". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

The shrinking number of social workers in the DSW in the 1990s could have also affected the Association as the leadership who were mainly from the DSW were stretched in their work. The inactiveness of the MASW was raised during the annual general meeting (AGM) in 1995. It was recorded in the minutes of the AGM dated 16 September 1995 that "the Executive Committee only met once because the Association was not active in the second year as the President was busy in her official duty" (MASW, 1995). The number of members of the Association for 1995 was only 48 people (MASW, 1996).

The in-activeness of the Association came to a critical stage when Siti Hawa Ali, who took over as President for 1995-1997, had to write a letter dated 26 Sept 1996 to members informing them that the Association still 'exist' and was trying to secure resources to get it active. She identified 3 factors causing the decline of organization – leadership, members' activeness and finance. She also mentioned that the priority activity for the executive committee was to get professional acknowledgement through accreditation process, that includes giving recognition to training programs conducted by relevant organizations. In addition, the number of trained social workers who were in formal social work practice were declining. Therefore, she deemed the importance of gathering the workforce of social workers to generate ownership of the profession, as well as to provide moral support, ideas and materials in line with the needs of social work development in the country.

Despite the President's call for members' support for the Association, the situation didn't improve in the following year as the AGM scheduled for 16 September 1996 had to be postponed due to lack of quorum. The inability of the leadership to work together was seen by Mrs Amy Bala as a contributing factor causing the decline.

> "Very bad, that was our worst period. They just don't see eye to eye. They were working together but I think there were some fall outs during work…We didn't have anything. It was such a waste, really. It was like went down". (Amy Bala)

The inactiveness of the MASW in catering to the needs of members as well as social workers as a grouping may have prompted the medical social workers to revived their own association under the name of the Malaysian Association of Social Development Officers (Medical) in 1996.

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5.2.4.3 Setback for Social Workers Being Excluded from the Counsellors' Act

Perhaps the biggest setback suffered by the social workers in its quest for professionalisation during the 1990s was its exclusion from the Counsellors' Act 1998. It was a bitter pill to swallow for the profession especially after its President Puan Umi Kalthum has been appointed into the National Counselling Council since 1993 and both the President and Grace Ng, a key founding member of the Association, had worked on the Bill before it was passed in the Parliament. By failing to get social workers to be exempted from conducting counselling in their practice, social workers who did not have the stipulated tertiary qualification in counselling were prohibited to register as a Registered Counsellor and therefore not allowed to conduct such practice under the law. The setback presented a long term impact on the social work profession as counsellors received greater public recognition, more specific positions in the public sector were created for registered counsellors, and the function of counselling which has been part of the practice of social workers were taken over by registered counsellors eventually in the DSW and hospitals.

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5.2.5 Summary for the Professionalisation of Social Work 1990-1999

After enjoying positive developments in early 1990s in promoting the importance of the social work profession, the momentum stalled in the middle of the 90s due to the reduction of manpower at the DSW, and problems of leadership, in-activeness and drop of membership in the MASW. The decreasing of positions for degree level officers at the DSW deprived new social work graduates from entering the service. The failure to secure a position in the Counsellors' Act 1998 further eroded the practice of social work where the treatment function which utilizes counselling was taken over by registered counsellors. The obvious positive development in the 1990s was the expansion of social

work education program at the tertiary level, and the beginning of setting up a coordinating body for social work education. The summary of key events of the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from 1990 to 1999 is shown in Figure 5.1 in the following page.

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Figure 5.1. Timeline for Social Work Development in Malaysia (1990-1999)

5.3 Professionalisation of Social Work in Malaysia 2000-2010

The professionalisation of social work in Malaysia picked up its momentum came the new millennium which sees a closer collaboration among the three stakeholders. The DSW was placed under a new minister during this period of time, while the MASW under a new leadership set the priority in addressing the competency issues among social work practitioners who were mostly not trained in social work, and the social work educators coming together to form the NJCCSWE. The launch of the competency standards in social work practice project has given the three stakeholders the same purpose in responding to the ideal of professionalism and standardizations during this decade.

5.3.1 Professionalisation of Social Work and the DSW 2000-2010

The professionalisation of social work at the DSW is discussed from the leadership, key events and manpower development in the department perspectives.

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5.3.1.1 Leadership at the DSW

Moving into the new millennium, the DSW ccontinued to be led by social workers or social welfare practitioners from the P&P group, namely Dato' Sayed A. Rahman (2001-2003), Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman (2003-2006), Dato' Rafek Reshidullah (2006-2007), and Dato' Meme Zainal Rashid (2007-2011). Apart from Dato' Shamsiah who did her social work qualification at the undergraduate level, the other three DGs were all degree holders from social science or humanity who joined the service when the DSW started to recruit degree holders in the 1970s. Nevertheless, they all have many years of experience as practitioners in the field and with the exception of Dato' Sayed A. Rahman, were members of the MASW. It would wait until 2013 when Dato'

Norani Hashim became the first graduate of the SDA program from USM to be appointed as the DG of social welfare. In addition, upon her retirement, Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman was appointed as advisor to the Minister which ensure some form of continuity, especially on the competency standards in social work practice project.

5.3.1.2 Key Incidents/Initiatives at the DSW

The DSW remains busy with new legislations and services being introduced after the turn of the century. Quite a substantial emphasis was given to children services starting with the enactment of the Child Act 2001, nationwide survey on registered and unregistered child care centres (2002), and formulation of child protection policy (2009). The services for people with disabilities were also given the lift with the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 followed by the establishment of the Department of Persons with Disabilities and the implementation of the related policy and plan of action the same year. The DSW was also tasked with the protection for victims of trafficking with the enactment of the Anti-Trafficking of Persons Act 2007[39], and tasked with the implementation of the Community Service Order in 2007. The summary of services/programs/laws introduced in 2000 to 2010 is shown in the following Table 5.6.

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Table 5.6

Summary of Services/Programs/Laws at the DSW 2000-2010

Year	Director General of Social Welfare	Services/programs/laws introduced
2000	Dato' Sayed A. Rahman Sayed Mohd	• MS ISO 9002/2004 for Client Management System (CMS) for field services at HQ and several states and districts

[39] The Act was later expanded to become The Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act 2007 (Act 670).

2001	Dato' Sayed A. Rahman Sayed Mohd	• Child Act 2001 enacted
2002	Dato' Sayed A. Rahman Sayed Mohd	• Child Act 2001 enforced • Productive Welfare program initiated • Institute Sosial Malaysia (ISM) under the Ministry commenced • Nationwide survey on registered and illegally operated Child Care Centres
2003	Dato' Sayed A. Rahman Sayed Mohd / Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman	• Child Witness Support Service for victimized children in court initiated • National Social Policy launched in 19 August
2004	Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman	• DSW-MASW colloborated in producing 'National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice' which approved by the Ministry and included in the 9th Malaysia Plan • 'Skim Bantuan Segera Kawasan Parlimen' • Introduce Community Care Centre concept
2005	Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman	• First Seminar of Independent Living and Disability Equality Training (DET) • Established Social and Development Council for Parliament Constituency (MAYANG) • MAYANG Seri Endon Award for Caregivers • Reorganization of DSW structure - 7 divisions to 10 divisions • One Stop Centre for PWDs at CBR centres
2006	Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman / Dato' Rafek Reshidullah	• MS ISO 9001:2000 awarded by MAMPU • Care Centre Act (Amendment) enforced • Delegation of power for approval of Federal Financial Assistance from DG to District Social Welfare Officer
2007	Dato' Rafek Reshidullah / Dato' Meme Zainal Rashid	• Akta TASKA (Pindaan) 2007 • Akta Pusat Jagaan (Pindaan) 2007 • Akta Anti Pemerdagangan Orang 2007 • MAYANG Seri Endon Award extended to workers/carers at NGO's Welfare institutions and outstanding Welfare NGOs. • Social Service Assistance Centre at Chow Kit, Kuala Lumpur • Community Service Order Division established following the amendments of Section 293 of Criminal Code Procedure Act (Amendments) 2006 • First Social Welfare Assistant Conference (Central Zone) in Ipoh • First 'Prime Minister Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Award • Welfare Assistant Management System

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		(SPBK) developed • Implementation of Persons with Disability Policy, and Plan of Action for PWD • Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 enacted • Roadshow on CSO nationwide
2008	Dato' Meme Zainal Rashid	• Financial assistance to carers of bedridden PWDs • Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 enforced • Child Care Centre Act (Amendment) 2007 enforced • Approval of additional posts for counsellors and assistant counsellors (one district one counsellor) • Social Development Officer placement program at PPR areas in three areas • National Council for Persons with Disabilities established • 'Project Cari' launched • Establishment of the Department of Persons with Disabilities (JPOKU) • MS ISO 9001:2000 certification • First DSW's National Special Olympic Championship held
2009	Dato' Meme Zainal Rashid	• JPOKU came into operation under DSW • Federal Financial Assistance extended to Sabah and Sarawak • Financial assistance for 'Unable to work' PWDs • Child Protection Policy approved by the Cabinet • Development of eJKM system
2010	Dato' Meme Zainal Rashid	• Six-point Memorandum on enhancing of professionalism in social work approved by the Cabinet on 23 April • MS ISO 9001:2008 certification • The joint-collaboration of DSW, MASW and UNICEF (JKM-MASW-UNICEF Strategic Planning Project (2010 – 2017) - the establishment of Technical Committee on Enhancing the Professionalism of Social Work in Malaysia • Drafting of the Social Workers Bill • Consultations and Roadshows on the Social Workers Bill across the nation 2010-2011

Source: Adopted from annual reports of the KPNPM 2000-2003 and KPWKM 2004-2010

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Among the events and initiatives identified as related to the professionalisation of social work are (i) enactment of the Child Act 2001; (ii) launching of the National Social Policy 2003; (iii) the DSW put under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development; (iv) establishment of the Institut Sosial Malaysia (ISM); (v) delegation of power to assistant social welfare officers through legislations; (vi) manpower of the DSW, and (vii) the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project and related activities. All these events or initiatives will be further deliberated in this section except item (vii) where it will be discussed in another section as it is a joint effort that involved mainly the DSW and the MASW, and social work educators in some of its related activities.

(i) Child Act 2001

One of the key legislations that the Government enacted on the turn of the millennium was the Child Act 2001. It was a combination of three laws - Juvenile Court Act 1947, Women and Girls Protection Act 1973 and Child Protection Act 1991. The three laws were abolished and replaced by the Child Act 2001. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the working on the Child Act has started in the 1990s when the government started to look into upholding the rights of children as commitment to the UNCRC[40], and in addition, there was great concern on social issues especially casual sexual activities among adolescence (*bohsia* and *bohjan*) at the time. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman shared the initiatives behind the Child Act that had taken place during the tenure of Dato' Jaafar Wahid as the DG (1997-1999) as follows:

> "That was during Jaafar's time…I could recall, then Najib was Minister of Education (1995-2000). So we were thinking...you know that time we have issues of bohjan and bohsia all those things. Social issues...national social issues,

[40] The Malaysian government accepted the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child (UNCRC) on Dec 28, 1994.

> so they formed a Cabinet Committee chaired by Najib to look at all our welfare related Act, which is children related act, which we have the Juvenile Court Act 1947, then you have Children Protection Act 1991, and then Women and Girls Protection Act 1973. So we combined these Acts together to become Child Act". (Sayed A. Rahman)

It was further revealed by Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman that the enacting of the Child Act 2001 was a collaboration between JKM and the Law Faculty of University Malaya. Both Dato' Sayed A. Rahman and Dato' Shamsiah who were the two Deputy DG then were involved in the process together with another social welfare officer Chong Paik Kee[41].

> "That time they commissioned University Malaya, the late (Prof) Mimi Kamariah who was the head of the team, and Chong (Paik Kee) was attached to this team. The whole Act was, every week we have meeting with Dato' Seri Najib who is the Chairman of the *Jawatankuasa* (Committee) of the Bill. That time he was Minister of Education…Tan Sri Zaleha was our Minister. She came in to sit at the meeting also. They always say because he is the Minister of Education so he is in charge of children. I do not know why it was that way. Dato' Sayed, myself were involved in that team but I'm not that involved like Chong. Chong was really doing it together with the team". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

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Incidentally, the push for the consolidation of the legislations on children was not from the social work profession but from the Ministry's Secretary General Tan Sri Zainul Ariff, an Administrative and Diplomatic Officer (PTD) from the civil service. Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman, Madam Vijayakumari and Mrs Amy Bala revealed that it was Tan Sri Zainal Ariff who was not happy with the different definitions of children in all the children related laws and wanted them to be standardized and streamlined.

> "That was from Zainul Ariff. He said, "Why the definition of children is different?" because Juvenile's Court Act says below 18. Children then was under Young Person and Child - young person was 14 and below. Women & Young Girls was under 21. He doesn't understand. So we need to create what is - a child is a child so it must be one age. That's how the Child Act came in". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

[41] Dato' Chong Paik Kee was a social welfare officer who eventually retired as the Director of Social Welfare of the State of Perak. She is a member of the MASW.

> "...Dato' Zainul Ariff came as KSU. When he came, he asked what is this? So many laws on children? We got two laws on adoptions, Juvenile Court Act, Child Protection Act. He was very angry. Put it together!". (Vijayakumari Pillai)

> "Then Zainul Ariff wanted to collapse three laws and making into one law. So again we were spending days, afternoons and nights discussing this. Nobody listened to anybody…So finally we lost". (Amy Bala)

The enactment of the Child Act 2001 has brought three implications to the service and practice of social work at the DSW:

(a) The Child Act 2001 has broadened the definition of social welfare officers where it includes the assistant social welfare officers. The application of this definition was not only in this Act but also in all subsequent laws related to social welfare after 2001. This imposed the question of competency and professionalism as the entry criteria for social welfare officers is an undergraduate degree while the entry for the assistant social welfare officers is diploma or high school certificate. The disparity created the notion of deprofessionalisation (Dominelli, 1996) where tasks and responsibilities that required a higher degree of knowledge and skills are now being delegated to those who do not poses similar level of expertise.

(b) By dissolving the Women and Young Girls Act, it created a vacuum in the protection of young girls between 18 to 21 under the law as they were no longer seen as children in the Child Act 2001. Dato' Shamsiah shared her concern on the matter during the interview.

> "When the *Akta Wanita dan Gadis* was dissolved in that sense, everyone below 18 we already take care, so between 18-21 for young girls, nobody takes care …These people on the ground very happy also because all these while the girls working in brothels were always 18 to 21. So now they take after 18 because nobody can disturb them already. Below 18, they are in schools. I remember when I was PKMD Kuantan, we used to get a lot of girls brought in from the brothels who're 18-19 so we took them to court and we were like magistrate for the girls, calling the police to see whether...we did the inquiry". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

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(c) The position and power of the DSW (representing the professional group) in policy decision making in relation to the top management of the Ministry (representing the administrator group) needs further scrutiny from the perspective of the New Public Management (Healy, 2009) which is seen in undermining the power of professionals in the public service.

(ii) Launching of the National Social Policy in 2003

The National Social Policy (NSP) was officially launched in August 2003 (Dasar Sosial Negara, 2003). It is 'the umbrella policy that covers the philosophy and various national social development policies' which aims to 'create a developed and well-established Malaysian community with each member have opportunity to develop their potential to the optimum in a healthy social environment based on the characteristics of cohesive, resilient, democratic, moral, tolerant, progressive, caring, fairness and equity in accordance with goals of Vision 2020' (Dasar Sosial Negara, 2003). The initiative to push for a National Social Policy came from the Department of National Unity (JPPN) in 1998 and then the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) asked the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development (KPNPM) to formulate the Policy. The chronology of the formulation of the NSP can be found in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7

Chronology of the formulation of the National Social Policy

Year	Implementation
1990s	• Discussion of social issues and needs of the national social policy
1996	• The establishment of a Cabinet Committee to Eradicate Social Issues (JKMMS)
1998	• JPPN discuss the need for an NSP
	• UPE ask KPNPM to formulate NSP
1999	• KPNPM organize NSP workshop

	• PINTAS[42] Specialist consultant appointed
2002	• PINTAS Specialist consultant produce a draft of NSP
	• Special Task Force at KPNPM
	• NSP, implementation task force and approaches presented to JKMMS
2003	• NSP approved by The Cabinet (19 February)
	• NSP officially launched (19 August)

Source: Mohamad Zahir & Roziah (2012), p.38

Dato' Shamsiah Abd Rahman who was the then Deputy DG at the DSW concurred with the chronology of events.

> "Somehow or another, the Ministry of National Unity insisted on National Social Policy, because, in a way true, we have an economic policy but we don't have a social policy. When it was done, the hope was we have a central agency that takes care of social policy, something like EPU". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

However, Dato' Sayed A. Rahman claims that he mooted the idea of having a National Social Policy much earlier to Tan Sri Abu Hassan Omar who was the Minister of Social Welfare from 1984-1986.

> "You know how we develop this social policy? I can relate. It was actually started during Tan Sri Abu Hassan Omar. We went to Terengganu. He was Minister then. So we went to Terengganu, with me in the car. I said, "YB, what we have in this country all from British. We just follow. What's our policy? What's our own policy? What's our...these principles, all sort of things was from British and Western values. So this where we need a policy. We led the social policy in this country. We went there and that's my small mention". (Sayed A. Rahman)

What Dato' Sayed A. Rahman has suggested back in the 1980s was perhaps led to the introduction of the National Social Welfare Policy in 1991 first before the government started to look at the need of a national social policy after the KPNPM was formed. It was recorded that the KPNPM had appointed consultants which form the National PINTAS Secretariat in 1999 as an advisory group to the Ministry of National Unity and

[42] PINTAS is the acronym of *Pelan Induk Tindakan Sosial* or Social Action Master Plan

Social Development, and to work on the NSP. Among those who were appointed to the group were Prof Dato' Dr Wan Halim Othman and Prof Chiam Keng Heng. Prof Dato' Wan Halim was also involved in the formulation of the National Social Welfare Policy 1990.

> "I was also in the social policy, you know, in National Social Policy. I was really in. I was DG. Datuk Wan Halim....I think you have to recognize this group - Prof Chiam[43], of children. These are the working group. They really contributed in the Natioanl Social Policy because then we had a campaign go down, kind of doing road show". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Unlike the formulation of the National Social Welfare Policy which was led by social welfare officers with social work knowledge from within the DSW, the NSP was led by consultants appointed externally. The only consultant with social work knowledge was Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, former DG of Social Welfare and former President of the MASW (A strong instrument to address social ills, 2003).

Meanwhile, the NSP, advocating for self-efficacy and community participation to tackle social ills at the grass-roots level, did not have any mention about social work or social worker although it listed strengthening and developing social services as its third objective. Furthermore, it only makes general statement about manpower needs in the social services, for example,

(a) Strategy no. six of the third objective - 'ensuring organizations or agencies which provide social services to give importance to their staffs to be equipped with social skills and latest technologies, and in direct contact with their target groups', and

(b) Strategy no. eighteen of the third objective - 'developing specialist services in sectors related to social development to meet the real needs of the society'.

[43] Datuk Prof Dr. Chiam Heng Keng was the Professor of Social Psychology at the Universiti Malaya, specializing in child development, as well as adolescence and educational psychology.

Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that the NSP did not give any direct impact on the professional development of social work as the Government placed greater attention to volunteers as means of community participation in tackling social problems. There were also issues relating to the implementation of the NSP and will be discussed in the later section of this chapter.

(iii) Change to Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development in 2004

The government established the Ministry of Women's Affairs on 17 January 2001 to solely focus on the development of women. The scope of the Ministry was widened to include family development and the name was changed to the Ministry of Women and Family Development on 15 February 2001. After the General Election in March 2004, the scope was further widened to include social welfare and development and the Ministry was changed to Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM) on 27 March 2004 (KPWKM, 2017).

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The DSW, like what they had experienced in 1990 with the change of Ministry, was again not consulted in the formation of the new ministry. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman who serving as the DG until 2003 claimed that there was no consultation on the ministry change.

> "No (DSW was not consulted). Then Women Affairs was just a small unit at JPM (Prime Minister's Department). It evolved to become...it's not even a department actually… So they tagged into welfare department's component. In fact, I was not consulted (as DG)". (Sayed A. Rahman)

One point worth noting is the position of the DSW within the larger organization of a ministry. They were the sole department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, then

became one of two departments under KPNPM, and by 2004 became one among five departments under the KPWKM. This is one issue that will be further discussed in later part of this chapter.

(iv) The Establishment of Social Institute of Malaysia (ISM)

The Social Institute of Malaysia (Institut Sosial Malaysia, ISM) commenced in 2002 and officiated by the Prime Minister in 2005. For the leadership of the DSW, the original planning for a proper training institute such as ISM was to replace their Welfare Training Institute (*Institut Latihan Kebajikan, ILK*) at Kuala Kubu Baru as explained by Dato' Sayed A. Rahman and Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman in the following excerpt.

> "I wanted to have ...that myself, Jaafar (Wahid) and the group, Mohamad Hussain, also Pak Lah (Abdullah Malim Baginda) to have our Social Institute for welfare …The previous idea was different (for ISM) …Ya, it was for JKM". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "In fact we put in application when we in the Sixth Malaysia Plan (1990-1995) for an institute. I think we were the only department didn't have a training institute then. You mention any other departments they always have a training institute. The ILK was not a custom made institute. Not proper structure, staffing, and of course the building not conducive for training. So we fought for it and we got the provision under...maybe the Seventh Malaysia Plan (1996-2000)". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

However, ISM did not turn out the way the DSW envisioned it to be. It was not put under the control of DSW but instead was put directly under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. It was revealed by Dato' Sayed A. Rahman and Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman that the person who made the change, despite the objection by the DSW, was the Secretary General of the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development at the time.

> "That time we still called it *Institut Latihan* (Training Institute) and when it was completed it came under Ministry of National Unity and Social Development,

> the Secretary General Zainul Arif decided it is to be called ISM, *Institut Sosial Malaysia*. He has this grandeur idea of ISM which is very interesting as you have it on top of the hill…He was the one. It was called ISM. It became under the Ministry; it didn't come under JKM". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "...the Secretary General talked to me. Then I was the DG. "Fine" I said, "I agree with you to do the Social Institute like INTAN base for Malaysia but that is not the place. You have to create different outfit". But he bulldozed through with the idea. Since we were building our own Social Welfare Training Institute, because we have been fighting for many years, finally we got and they turned it into Social Institute (of Malaysia)". (Sayed A. Rahman)

At the same time, the Federal Government also came out a directive to streamline the number of training divisions within one Ministry as many Departments have their own training division. The new ruling put the training portfolio under the human resource division of the Ministry.

> "People like to go training, but subsequently JPA said in all departments, there shouldn't be any training division. Only one training division under the Ministry. There was a change in policy. For all departments cannot have training division, so training, this was the directive, was put under human resource. The human resource department is headed by a PTD officer, and under that we have the DSW officer". (Norani Hashim)

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Hence, with the closure of ILK after the commencement of ISM, the DSW not only lose the controlling of the training institution, they were also not successful in getting their Training Director to lead ISM, as well as the power to decide on the training needs and direction for the DSW staffs. Both Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman and Dato' Norani Hashim shared their thoughts on the matter.

> "...in fact we wanted one of our officers to become the Director (of ISM) but I suppose they said we don't seem to have anybody suitable then…Because we were hoping then the Training Director (of ILK) becomes the Director but it didn't work that way". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "...but I agree with you, it is not a *Pengarah* (Director), not even senior, not very senior. No power. That was a lost for JKM". (Norani Hashim)

The post of the Director of ISM is an open post, meaning the Minister can appoint any suitable candidate within or outside the Ministry to be the Director. Nevertheless, none of the Directors appointed since its inception were social workers.

> "ISM was created initially to provide for this training but it went astray. If fact when it was started, (Minister) Siti Zaharah asked me to help the director in terms of its direction and so on. I did help but I found that...very hard, because it was staffed by academic". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

> "Initially the training was in line with what we have been doing at ILK but the Director is not a social worker, right from the beginning. The first one was a lady from UITM, that was the choice of the Minister…along the way when I was also KP, the Director changed. The Minister changed, the director also changed. We got somebody from Universiti Malaya (Professor Datin Dr Roziah Omar), then Dr Fadzil, and then Dr Al Azmi. All are not social worker". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

The change of direction and functions of ISM on what it was supposed to be can also been seen in the postings of two government website. According to ISM official website[44], the institute was established to be 'a training hub for civil servants and other social practitioners, and is also a resource centre for new ideas and information in the field of social policy and social development' (ISM, 2017). However, according to the portal of 1Malaysia Training Centre (1MTC)[45] which carries the info of all government training centres and their facilities, ISM was established to 'prepare facilities for professional and para professional training and research, as well as social research to all social workers at all levels and groups from domestic and overseas including NGOs'. It also refers ISM as 'was previously Welfare Training Institute Kuala Kubu Baru, Selangor which was operated under JKM'.

[44] https://www.ism.gov.my
[45] https://www.mytc.gov.my/index.php?page=hotels&hid=5173

In this instance, 1MTC might have referred to the older version of description of ISM which was more in-sync with what the DSW has aspired and made specific reference to social workers, while ISM version reflects its latest aspiration which is more broad base without specific mention of social workers. ISM's change of direction has a direct impact on the training for social welfare officers. Unlike ILK that caters to the training needs of the DSW solely, ISM needs to look after all the training needs of all sectors within the Ministry with limited budget. Besides, the position of Director of Training of the DSW was scrapped and training was put under Human Resource of the Ministry. Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman and Dato' Sayed A. Rahman pointed out the different direction taken by ISM compares to what was planned initially.

> "Then it was decided to close ILK and moved the people there…Initially the training was in line with what we have been doing at ILK…our officers were basically our officers from ILK. So we still do a lot of training. In fact, you look at the ISM building there was a mood court because it was built according to the needs of JKM's training…Now I was told they are not going to do training for social welfare officers, I was told". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

> "That's why we design the building (ISM) to have moot-court for the disability, all those things, disability design. I was involved. I said to give confidence to our welfare officers in enforcing all those Acts we got there got enforcement element. So they can appear in court, probation case, have confident. So with the moot-court comes the training. I went there it became meeting place. How can it be like that? It's not even fully utilized for the concept it was built for". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Despite these shortcomings, ISM continues its role as both a training and resource centre in the social sector, and have been running social work courses like basic social work skills, social work theories, the Professionally Accountable Practice model and the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice by engaging practitioners and educators from the DSW MASW and universities[46].

[46] The researcher has been a regular trainer invited by ISM to conduct social work courses since 2010.

(v) Delegation of Power and Tasks to Assistant Social Welfare Officers at DSW

As highlighted in the earlier discussion on Child Act 2001, the enactment of that Act has paved the way for the DSW to delegate the tasks and responsibilities which was previously solely assigned to the social welfare officers in the old legislations to the assistant social welfare officers in the new legislation. The subsequent laws like the Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act 2007 (Act 670)[47] and Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 all use the same definition of social welfare officers used in the Child Act 2001 which include assistant social welfare officers.

In addition, new service like the Community Service Order (CSO) also put the responsibility of enforcement to assistant social welfare officers. The DSW established a Community Service Order (CSO) Division in February 2007 after the Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment) Act 2006 was passed in Parliament in May 2006, and CSO was placed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Women, Families and Communities Development. It is used as an alternative to custodial punishment for young first time offenders, aged 18 to 21 years, of minor crimes (Othman, 2013). The idea of having the CSO was not new. As the matter of fact, the Minister of Social Welfare and Services have suggested the idea of implementing a CSO back in 1979 (Othman, 2013). The DSW has introduced the concept of CSO for short sentenced prisoners in 1983 (JKM, 2016). Some officers, including Mrs Vijayakumar Pillai, were sent overseas for training in the field.

> "The CSO service started long ago. I went for some of the training also in New Zealand". (Vijayakumari Pillai)

[47] Although the Minister responsible for the Act is the Minister of Internal Affairs, social welfare officers have been particularly mentioned as public officers that can be appointed as Protection Officers under Section 43 of the Act.

The DSW was involved in the working of the CSO when Dato' Sayed A. Rahman was still the DG of Social Welfare. He said he worked closely with Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail, the Attorney General at the time, although the department was short of manpower.

> "Community Service Order. That one I was involved (with) Ghani Patail[48], just division. I was there, and Chong Paik Kee. Ghani said, "Eh Sayed, do you have staffs (for this)?" "No!". We worked together with the AG Office". (Sayed A. Rahman)

In a way the introduction of CSO enabled the DSW to increase their manpower in the field. Othman (2013) reported that in 2006 the government approved 591 post on various designations for the purpose of implementing the CSO. As of September 2010, 591 designated posts have been created of which 510 were filled to man CSO throughout all the states in Malaysia.

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However, unlike the position of the social welfare officer which is a degree level position (grade S41 and above), the person designated to take charge of the CSO portfolio were not standardized in terms of their education level. For example, of the 34 participants handling CSO in Othman (2013) study, more than half or 19 of them were social welfare assistants with high school qualification (grade S17); nine were assistant social welfare officers with diploma qualification (grade S27-32) while the remaining nine were social welfare officer or social development officer with degree qualification. Although these participants have indicated that they have attended at least one basic course on social work and also courses related to the implementation of CSO including helping skills, therapeutic skills and emotional intelligence, in reality the CSO service in the field is still undertaken by or delegated to social welfare assistants.

[48] Tan Sri Abdul Gani bin Patail was the Attorney General of Malaysia from 2002 to 2015

(vi) Increment of Manpower at the DSW 2000-2010

The number of positions of staffs with social (S) scheme at the DSW increased after the turn of the millennium. The positions for Management & Professional (P&P) officers increased by almost 48% from 169 in 1998 to 250 in 2002, while the positions for supporting group increased by 26% in the same period. The following Table 5.8 shows the number of positions at DSW from 1998 to 2010[49].

Table 5.8

Number of DSW staffs employed 2002-2010 comparing to 1998

Year / Grade	1998	2002	2003	2004	2008	2009	2010
Top Management (Jusa)[50]					3	3	3
Management & Professional (P&P) (S41-54)	169	250	250	258	540	542	549
Supporting 1 (S27-32)	2032*	2570*	2579*	2707*	3989	3993	4250
Supporting 2 (S17-22)					1857	1858	1566
Total positions	1283	2820	2829	2965	6389	6396	6368

Adapted from the annual report of the DSW, 1998, 2002-2004, 2008-2010.
* 1998, 2002, 2003 & 2004 only gave a round up number for the supporting staffs.

The total number of positions at the DSW increased slightly more than double in 2008 as compare to the numbers in 2004. The positions of the P&P category including the 3 top management positions have increased by 110% to 543. At the same time, the number of the two categories of supporting group has increased by 115% to 5846 (3989 for supporting 1 & 1857 for supporting 2). However, the number of Supporting 1 staffs

[49] The statistics in 1998 is used a guide for comparison. As not all the annual reports of the DSW or KPWKM within the period of time have the relevant statistics, the table only use annual reports that have the numbers.
[50] Jusa refers to the highest scale (A, B and C) of the P&P group where the DG position at the DSW is Jusa B while both the Deputy DG positions are Jusa C.

increased to 4250 in 2010 but the number of Supporting 2 staffs dropped slightly to 1566 while the P&P only see slight increase of 9 positions.

The increasing number of staffs at the DSW was needed in line with the expansion from seven divisions to ten divisions in 2005, as well as the introduction of CSO service in 2006. Despite the increment of manpower, the ratio of graduate officer positions to non-graduate positions of supporting staff 1 & 2 as at 2000 is approximately 1:10.5 (552:6086) which has getting wider when compares to the average ratio of 1:8 in the 1990s as shown in Table 5.5. This trend indicates the DSW continues to rely on the non-graduate staffs, especially those assistant social welfare officers in the supporting 1 group as the core caseworkers in its services. Again, the issue of deprofessionalisation arises as there were no social work education at the diploma level so this group of assistant social welfare officers would not have any social work education or training before coming into service.

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5.3.2 Professionalisation of Social Work: MASW 2000-2010

This period can be described as the most active and progressive for the MASW in terms of activities and impact made. This period saw the shift of the leadership of the MASW away from the dominance of the DSW. Under the new leadership, the association stabilized and became more functional by having an office of its own. The concerns over the qualifications and quality of practising social workers has driven the MASW into various activities to address the competency of social workers, which led to the close collaboration with the DSW in the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project and subsequent related training programs and activities. The MASW were also involved in organizing bigger social work events nationally and

regionally. The summary of the major events of the MASW from 2000 to 2010 is in the following Table 5.9.

Table 5.9

Summary of Major Events of MASW 2000-2010

Year	Key events
2000	• MASW co-organized the 'National Social Work Seminar: Social work management towards excellence' with SPS, UUM and DSW on 26-27 January at UUM. (Five Exco members attended the seminar and met up with social work lecturers and students at UUM to introduce and promote MASW to them. One of the suggestions from the meeting was to established chapters of MASW). • 22-23 September Meeting on 'Towards a Unified Vision for Social Work Education' in USM - Reps from USM, UUM, UNIMAS, UM, UMS & UPM attended. MASW represented by Mr KN Singham, President. The participants agreed to form a 'collaboration & coordination' body for social work education. USM as secretariat to work on the jurisdiction, tasks and responsibilities of the body. • Listed seven universities which offer social work related program: USM, UUM, UM, UPM, UKM, UNIMAS, UMS • MASW representation in the first Counsellors' Board (Lembaga Kaunselor) ended in October 2000. MASW's rep, Puan Hjh Umi Kalthum, has attended all the meetings as well as contributing to the development of the by laws and road shows for the Counsellors Act.
2001	• 31 July - 3 August 2001 – MASW delegation • 7-8 August - 2 evening meeting with David Jones, Honorary Secretary of COSW - discussion on issues relating to the regulation of social work education, training and practice
2002	• 17-18 January - meeting of social work educators, MASW & JKM reps at USM led to the official formation of NJCCSWE. Dr Ismail Baba appointed as Chair, which will be rotated every two years. Secretariat based where the Chair is located. Members: 2 reps each from social work program of USM, UUM, UNIMAS, UMS, UM, UPM, UKM & HUKM; 2 from MASW, Medical SW Association and JKM, and 1 rep each from PSD & MOHE. NJCCSWE will be an advisory body - 'gathering data on local social work education and sharing resources, advocating uniformity in syllabus and maintenance of professional standards in line with international social work regulations, and networking with local and global agencies to promote the quality of social work education' • UKM planned to introduce a basic degree in social work, and eventually publication of the Malaysian Social Work Journal. • April & May - Mental Health Training Workshop for JKM staffs • Source: MASW Annual Report 2001-2002
2003	• 30th Anniversary Symposium 'socialworkmalaysia.com - continuity and

	renewal' & Dinner Tribute, 19 April 2003, Crystal Crown Hotel PJ
2004	• Workshops on Competency Standards in partnership with DSW with the commissioning of Dr. Pauline Meemeduma • National Survey on Social Work Practice among Social Service Practitioners in Government and Non-Government Organisations
2005	• Presenting the proposal on the Competency Standards to the Ministry for Women, Family and Community Development and to stakeholders from related government ministries and agencies • Report of the National Survey on Social Work Practice among Social Service Practitioners in Government and Non-Government Organisations presented to DSW • MASW organized first Training of Trainers (TOT) on competency standards
2006	• Memorandum and Draft of National Competency Standards submitted to the Ministry • The National Polices and Standards for Social Work Education was moderated by Dr. Pauline Meemeduma • Draft of the National Policies and Standards for Social Work Education in Higher Learning Institutions in Malaysia by the Joint Consultative Committee on Social Work Education presented to the Ministry of Higher Education • Initiating training courses on the Professionally Accountable Practice (PAP) Model with subsequent training workshops conducted from 2006-2008
2007	• 1st IFSW-Asia Pacific Regional Symposium: Disaster Management and the Social Work Response. For the first time MASW organized event relating to disaster response • Celebrating World Social Work Day initiated by IFSW
2008	• Seminar on Global Trends in Social Work with David Jones, President of IFSW
2009	• National Symposium on Social Work Competency Standards in Genting Highlands, 11-13 August • During the symposium, MASW had a discussion with representative from MOHE on the standardization of social work curriculum and was informed the enforcement can only be done at their part with the establishment of an Act. • The Natioanl Symposium wasa co-organized by MAKPEM and funded by YKN
2010	• Joint collaboration of JKM, MASW and UNICEF (JKM-MASW-UNICEF Strategic Planning Project 2010-2017). Dr Pauline Meemeduma as consultant for the project while Elsie Lee appointed as program assistant • 4 May - KPWKM announced that the Cabinet has approved the 6 point measures to promote the competency and professionalism of social workers • 10-14 June – MASW sent a delegation to the IFSW-IASSW-ICSW Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development in Hong Kong. • Exchange program between MASW & AASW

Source: Annual Reports of the MASW 2000-2010

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5.3.2.1 Leadership at the MASW

The leadership at MASW moved away from DSW dominant to a mixture of practitioners from the DSW after 2001 where Mr. K.N. Singham was the last serving social welfare officer elected as the President. Ms Elsie Lee who opted for early retirement as a medical social worker was elected as President for two terms in 2001-2003 and 2003-2005, and was succeeded by Mrs Amy Bala, who retired from DSW in 2004, for the term 2005-2007. Ms Elsie was re-elected as President for the term 2007-2009, making her the second person after Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda who held the Presidency for 3 times. The researcher became the second social work educator after Siti Hawa Ali of USM to be elected as President in 2009, and was subsequently re-elected as President for the next three terms until 2017. Table 5.10 shows the information of the President of the MASW from 1991 to 2011.

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Table 5.10

President of the MASW (1991-2011)

Tenure	Name	Background
1999-2001	Mr. K.N. Singham	DSW
2001-2003	Ms. Elsie Lee	Medical social worker (retired)
2003-2005	Ms. Elsie Lee	Medical social worker (retired)
2005-2007	Mrs. Amy T.K. Jones	DSW (retired)
2007-2009	Ms. Elsie Lee	Medical social worker (retired)
2009-2011	Mr. Teoh Ai Hua	Academic

Meanwhile, the participation of social welfare officers who were still in service in the Executive Committee of MASW were also declined as the leadership of the Association no longer led by DSW. The last active social welfare officer who served in the Executive Committee was Madam Lai Poh Guat who eventually retired as the Deputy

DG of the DSW in 2009. The likes of Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman, Dato' Memee Rashid and Mr. Raymund Jagan only joined the Executive Committee after they have retired from DSW.

Perhaps the main reason why the MASW became more active after 2001 is that with more retired social workers came into the leadership of MASW, they have more flexibility in terms of time for meetings and events. Their experiences and positions held before retiring enable the MASW to enjoy goodwill, credibility and access to both the government agencies and NGOs. These can be seen in the variety of organizations which approached MASW for training which is discussed later in the chapter. Mrs Amy Bala shared her view on the matter in the following excerpt.

> "…we could go back there because the bosses there were still friends with us so we could. That kind of relationship continued which until today it continues because MASW has always have a link with JKM. We are able to work, and JKM on the whole admits or agrees and accepts MASW's competencies, they do, and how we can actually be useful to them as well. I see it positively". (Amy Bala)

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5.3.2.2 MASW has Its Own Office

One of the major decision made by the MASW was getting its own proper office in 2004. Prior to that, as the leaderships were mainly held by senior DSW officers, MASW normally used DSW premise as meeting place, as well as for corresponding address, except in 1995-1997 at USM when Siti Hawa Ali was the President. The MASW did not work towards having its own office because it was more conducive for the Executive Committee members who were majority for the DSW to organize meeting at its premise which has meeting facilities as indicated by Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman and Mrs. Amy Bala.

> "The meeting then was always at the department. Maybe I don't remember because I didn't differentiate between JKM and MASW because same people, and your boss is the President". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

> "All the time (meeting at JKM). No problem about that. You just need to submit a memo to admin you want to use, you can use. Tea, coffee all these we can also order". (Amy Bala)

Sometimes, the meeting would be held in either the President or the Honorary Secretary's house. MASW has already thinking of having its own office during Anthony Tan's tenure in 1997 as the intention of having its own office was put in the strategic plan in 1998 (MASW, 1998). However, MASW did not have sufficient income according to Ms. Elsie Lee.

> "We didn't have an office so we were like always having our meetings borrowing premises at JKM or the home of the President. I remember Anthony was very generous, hosting meetings. …because we didn't have money. Most of the meetings were held at my house. All the expanses were from our own pocket". (Elsie Lee)

The competency standards initiative provided opportunity for MASW to undertake research project and was given funding to set up an office. Eventually, MASW rent an office in Petaling Jaya from 2004 onwards until now.

> "We need to have some kind of survey result to show why we need the competency standards. So Pauline even agreed to help us draft the questionnaire and all that. We sent it out and got the feedback. Because of that, DIGI[51] gave us the funding to set up office. Dato' Shamsiah (as the DG of the DSW) gave us about 30 or 35 thousands that we could set up an office. That's how we rented the room that we have now. We bought 2 computers, printer. That's how we finally got an office through that project". (Elsie Lee)

The story of the MASW getting its own office may see petty, but for a non-for-profit organization perspective, it demonstrates the importance of the organization in having a specific purpose or cause and be relevant that worth the attention and consideration

[51] DIGI is a telecommunication

of the authorities or potential funders. More importantly, by getting the house in order, it drives the MASW to be better organized in its positioning, operation and planning.

5.3.2.3 MASW Position Itself as Training Provider in Social Work Practice

Another important development for MASW at the turn of the millennium was to position itself as a training provider on social work knowledge and skills. It changes the direction of MASW of merely providing talks or workshops for its members to provide skills training for a larger pool of practitioners in both the public and voluntary settings. Back in 1998, MASW had already identified 11 social workers as trainers and had given their names to relevant organizations like the DSW and MPKSM[52] for consideration should they need trainers to conduct training courses (MASW, 1998). It was also due to the inclination of Ms Elsie Lee, who took over as President of MASW in 2001, to highlight the capability and significance of the association through training.

> "I felt a very strong need for the association that they could contribute in providing training. From that time even I just felt that was one way we to be of significant use. It was actually to promote training for social workers and NGO workers, even for government welfare workers". (Elsie Lee)

Mrs Amy Bala sees the survival need of MASW when it has to stand alone moving out from the comfort zone of depending on JKM premises for the Association's activities, and have to organize events and training programs to solicit funding.

> "When we were in the same building, it was like part of JKM's machinery, we didn't see much differences...When we moved out of JKM's office and we have to function…Then for certain decision like you need financial assistance, you need a grant, you need to run a program". (Amy Bala)

[52] MPKSM is the acronym of Majlis Pusat Kebajikan SeMalaysia or The Central Welfare Council of Malaysia. MPKSM was established in 1946 as a non-government entity funded by the government in providing welfare services to the needy community particularly the elderly and persons with disabilities. Source: https://www.mpksm.org.my/v1/index.php

The partnership of Elsie and Amy, leading the Association from 2001 until 2009, both passionate and have experienced in training, started series of training program on mental health and child welfare work, and subsequently through the organizing of the competency standards related training like the Professional Accountable Practice (PAP) Model, MASW was able to reach out to both government and non-government organizations. Ms. Elsie Lee and Mrs Amy Bala shared their aspirations for the MASW as a key social work training provider passionately during the interview.

> "Between Amy and me, we managed to persuade JKM Negeri Sembilan that time to run a course on mental health. That was the first kind of thing we did to introduce training program into the association activities…My dream has always been that MASW will finally set up a training institute, run all those professional development courses, be able to enhance the skills of the NGO workers". (Elsie Lee)

> "At that time the competency standards have already started and we were very busy with the competencies which meant that we need to focus on that. So you can see that during that period, MASW were very involved with working on the competency training. It's not JKM but we also opened up a lot to the NGOs, which is one of my forte working with NGOs, so we also empowered the NGOs into the competencies. They also came in as trainers which was good because they came as partner. That's the time we linked to the universities. The very first training, we have universities that came for the training. Universities, JKM, and then some NGOs were led by retired JKM like Viji and those people like that. So my two years (as President) was actually focus a lot on that". (Amy Bala)

Ms. Elsie Lee sees more satisfactions in conducting training for the NGOs, despite their lack of resources, as they appreciate the need to build up the capacity of their workers in social work competency.

> "I think the more satisfying relationship is with NGOs. We find that working with NGOs like Good Shepherd, Malaysian Care, HisTeam, there is this kind of response. They see the need for capacity building the workers, for enhancing the image of social work. Although they are struggling in their own way but at least they seem to be moving with us in that direction". (Elsie Lee)

The capability of the MASW in skills training has raised the profile of the association as the leading organization for the social work profession to the government and the

NGOs in the social welfare sector. Organizations other than the DSW started to approach MASW to discuss about conducting training for their workers especially after 2010.

5.3.2.4 MASW Taking Up Roles in Organizing International Events and Research

MASW has never organized an international conference or seminar on its own since its inception, although it had co-sponsored the APASWE conference in 1985 where the SDA program of USM was the organizer, as well as hosting talks and workshops for overseas speakers, including for the President of IFSW in 1994 and 2008 respectively.

It took a regional tragedy, the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake which triggered a huge Tsunami that resulted thousands of people dead or missing, that presented an opportunity MASW to organize an international symposium. The Tsunami also hit part of the western coast of the Peninsula Malaysia. As Malaysia has never experienced earthquake nor tsunami before, the tragedy prompted a public discourse on Malaysia readiness in responding to large scale. As other countries affected by the tsunami were also discussing about disaster response, IFSW-Asia Pacific (IFAP) has asked Malaysia to organize a regional event to deliberate on social work response to disaster management. MASW led by Mrs Amy Bala successfully organized the 1st IFSW-Asia Pacific Regional Symposium on Disaster Management and the Social Work Response in 2007 with the funding from IFAP and support from the DSW.

> "…on my lap (as President) came this disaster workshop but that I was helped greatly because Dato' Shamsiah was the advisor to the Minister. Sharizat was there…So when we went to say this is an Asia Pacific thing, people are coming from different countries, she supported us. And we were able to make a lot of leeway and worked together because she supported that. It made my job as the President much easier". (Amy Bala)

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> "…when Amy was President we did one on disaster which was a success. I think that was really a good event, a good effort. So many people came regionally and internationally. That was the big one. Sharizat was the Minister. That was a huge effort. Amy did very well". (Elsie Lee)

As mentioned earlier that more retired social workers became more active in the MASW, their experiences and networking have become useful in assisting the association to organize big events. Another big event where the MASW was involved in was the National Symposium on Competency Standards in Social Work Practice in 2009 which will be deliberate further in the section on the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project. It was also due to the urge to push the agenda on competency standards that the MASW ventured into research and consultation by doing a national survey on the topic in 2004. Ms. Elsie Lee who was involved in the survey explained how the MASW got into doing the survey in the interview.

> "After that when we talked about setting up the standards, they (the DSW) talked about doing the survey. We need to have some kind of survey result to show why we need the competency standards. So Pauline even agreed to help us draft the questionnaire and all that. We sent it out and got the feedback". (Elsie Lee)

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The period of 2000 to 2010 saw the MASW became more active and more noticeable by focusing on the need for competent social work practice. The leadership set a clearer priority and managed to get the association in order by having a proper office, securing funding in running training courses related to improving the competency of social workers in their practice, and organizing bigger national and regional events through strategic collaboration with the authority and social work international organizations.

5.3.3 Professionalisation of Social Work through Education: 2000-2010

The number of social work programs at the tertiary level continues to expand after the turn of the millennium. In 2003, UKM, offered a Bachelor of Social Sciences (Social

Work Studies) which is placed under the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities[53]. A year later, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) introduced a Bachelor of Social Work[54]. By 2009, the number of universities represented in the NJCCSWE were seven, namely USM, UNIMAS, UUM, UMS, UKM, UM & UPM (NJCCSWE, 2009). The increment of social work program seems to have stalled when no new social work programs were offered for the next year from 2004 to 2010, until Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UNISZA) offered a degree in social work in 2014. Two prominent events that involved the social work educators during this decade are the formation of the NJCCSWE in 2002 and the publication of Educational Policy and Standards for Social Work Education in Higher Learning Institutions, Malaysia in 2009.

5.3.3.1 Formation of the NJCCSWE

As discussed in Chapter Five, the increment of social work education programs in the 1990s have created the urge among social work educators to form a grouping of educators to ensure consistency and quality in curriculum design and teaching. On 22-23 September 2000, USM hosted a meeting 'Towards a Unified Vision for Social Work Education' with the participation of representatives from USM, UUM, UNIMAS, UMS, UM and UPM. MASW was represented by its President Mr. KN Singham. The meeting agreed to form a 'collaboration & coordination' body for social work education, and the social work program of USM would be the secretariat to work on the jurisdiction, tasks and responsibilities of the body (MASW, 2001).

[53] Sinnasamy (2007) reported the Bachelor of Social Work program at UKM started in 2003. MQA website reported the UKM program received MQA approval in 2003. Source: https://www2.mqa.gov.my/mqr/iptaKPListAA.cfm?IDAkrIPTS=253

[54] Sinnasamy (2007) reported the Bachelor of Social Work program at UMS started in 2004. MQA website reported that the UMS program received MQA approval in 2003. Source: https://www2.mqa.gov.my/mqr/iptaKPList_printAA.cfm?IDAkrIPTS=250

The National Joint Consultative Committee on Social Work Education (NJCCSWE) was officially formed on January 2002 when the representatives from all the social work programs in the public universities, the MASW & the DSW met in USM on 17 & 18 January. It was recorded that the NJCCSWE will be an advisory body - 'gathering data on local social work education and sharing resources, advocating uniformity in syllabus and maintenance of processional standards in line with international social work regulations, and networking with local and global agencies to promote the quality of social work education' (MASW, 2002). The NJCSSWE was formed as a loose network among social work programs and is not a registered entity. The objective of this grouping is to provide support to less experienced social work program to ensure quality and standardization of social work education in the country (Fuziah and Baba, 2013).

The meeting appointed Associate Professor Dr Ismail Baba of USM as Chair of the NJCCSWE. It was agreed that the Chair will be rotated every two years and the Secretariat will be based where the Chair is located. Members of the NJCCSWE will consist of two representatives each from the social work program of USM, UUM, UNIMAS, UMS, UM, UPM, UKM & Hospital UKM (HUKM); two representatives each from MASW, Medical Social Work Association and the DSW, and one representative each from PSD & MOHE. Professor Dr Ismail Baba describe the objectives and activities of the NJCCSWE during the interview.

> "I also noticed that, at that time, they develop the social work program but they didn't have enough trained people. I told my colleagues 'let's start this committee' but just to help out our colleagues and promote social work education and also to have certain standards, minimum standards. Basically like sharing knowledge. In the beginning we have a lot of meeting, and we looked at some of the curriculum, how to teach certain subjects and all that. Knowledge sharing among colleagues, especially in the Peninsula". (Ismail Baba)

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The idea to rotate the Chairmanship of the NJCSSWE every two years was to reflect the concept of fairness and inclusiveness that is integral part of social work values and principles. Therefore, USM held the chairmanship for 2002-2004 before passing it to UNIMAS to lead for the 2004-2006 term. UUM took over the chair in 2006-2008 and USM again became the chair for 2008-2010. When the government started the drafting of the Social Workers Bill in 2010, Dr Azlinda of USM was asked to hold on to the chair until passing of the Bill to ensure continuity of the representation of the NJCCSWE in the drafting committee. The evidence can be found in Prof. Dr. Ismail Baba's interview transcript.

> …We sort of like trying to be fair, trying to apply the concept of inclusiveness so we said it's better that the chair rotates. It stopped when this Bill came out because it was expected to be introduced during Sharizat's time, it's better for Azlinda to stay on". (Ismail Baba)

5.3.3.2 Publication of the Educational Policy and Standards for Social Work Education in Higher Learning Institutions, Malaysia

In 2006, the NJCCSWE and the MASW collaborated on preparing a document on the standardization of social work education in Malaysia. Dr Pauline Meemeduma from Australia facilitated the workshop which was participated from representatives of every social work program. The draft of the National Policy and Standards for Social Work Education in Higher Learning Institutions in Malaysia was eventually produced under the name of the NJCCSWE. The document was then presented to the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and was finally endorsed by the Ministry in 2009. Prof. Dr. Ismail Baba who was involved in the drafting of the educational policy and standards noted that the policy is meant as a guide to ensure the quality and standardization of social work education. He was not certain, however, of the response from the MOHE as Dr Azlinda was the chair of NJCCSSWE when the document was presented.

> "Ya. As a guideline. I'm not sure about their response because Azlinda was involved. I think Azlinda presented the report. I noticed some of the write-up was like coming from my paper. Then even when Azlinda was appointed to present social work education in MQA, I wasn't aware. But then she was the chair so I can understand". (Ismail Baba)

Being guided and facilitated by Dr Pauline Meemeduma who was also the main drafter of the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice, the National Policy and Standards on Social Work Education was written in line with the direction of competency practice and preparedness for registration and licensure should the profession being regulated one day. For example, the aim of the National Policy and Standards on Social Work Education is to 'set the minimum standards for social work education and training in order to prepare students for a professionally competent practice' where the social work degree 'will qualify graduate students to seek registration and licensing to practice' (NJCCSWE, 2009: p.2).

Since the NJCCSWE is a non-registered entity, the National Policy and Standards in Social Work Education can only be used as a guide without enforcement power. Therefore, the document also proposes 'the setting up of a regulatory body with the primary responsibility of specifying education policies and setting accreditation standards for professional social work courses' (NJCCSWE, 2009: p.2) akin to the roles of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)[55] in the US.

In short, it has been rather productive decade for social work educators in Malaysia from 2000 to 2010. They managed to form the NJCCSWE as well as producing the

[55] Founded in 1952, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is the national association representing social work education in the United States. CSWE's Commission on Accreditation is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in the United States and its territories. Source: https://www.cswe.org/

National Policy and Standards on Social Work Education. With the establishing of social work programs at seven of the public universities, social work education is gaining momentum in playing influential roles in advancing the social work profession in years to come.

5.3.4 The National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project

Perhaps one of the biggest development for social work in Malaysia was the initiation of the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice which was a joint developed project by MASW and DSW in 2004. This formulating of the National Competency Standards and its activities from 2004 until 2010 are being seen as related, hence, is termed and discussed as the National Competency Standard in Social Work Practice Project in this separate section as it involves the DSW, the MASW and the educators.

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The key persons who initiated the idea of competency standards was Dr. Pauline Meemeduma, a social work consultant and child protection specialist from Australia, and Ms Elsie Lee, the President of the MASW during that time. Elsie who met Pauline in the Advancing Indigenous Social Work Seminar organized by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) in Kuching, on 20-22 October 2003 came to know that Pauline has been developing competency standards for another country. Interestingly, Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, the founding President of MASW who was the President of MAKPEM then, played an indirect role in providing the opportunity for a workshop on competency standards to be organized in conjunction with the International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) Conference which was held in Kuala Lumpur in 2004. Ms.

Elsie Lee recalled how the whole idea of competency standards kick-started in the following excerpt.

> "As I was talking to her (Pauline) I found out that she had been doing this competency standards thing with Seychelles Islands. So I said why don't you come over. At that time also I think the ICSW was going to hold a conference here in 2004. They were looking for people to run some workshop. I think in 2004 we already started talking about the thing. Pauline was supposed to come and help run one workshop. I just asked her. I said since ICSW is asking MASW to run a workshop. He (Abdullah) asked us to take one workshop so I was thinking what do we do. So when Pauline talked about this (competency standards) I said, "Pauline, why don't you come and talk about this competency standards thing at this workshop?" So she agreed". (Elsie Lee)

After the ICSW Conference, the MASW managed to get Pauline to come to Malaysia again to conduct two more workshops on competency standards. At that stage, Elsie has approached relevant stakeholders, including the DSW for funding in organizing the workshops.

> "…and after she did that, we got her to come and meet us, and run two workshops on it. That was October 2004. So we had that workshop and we invited all the stakeholders, universities, hospitals and welfare, and we brainstormed through two workshops. Dato' Shamsiah was the DG then. She gave us actually the funding to run that workshop". (Elsie Lee)

The DSW gave its support as the then DG Dato' Shamsiah Abd Rahman felt that addressing competency standards for social workers would be good for DSW too.

> "When she (Elsie) brought Pauline in here, it was at Shah Hotel. I remember she called me to be there as the KP, just to get the support of the government. That was the first time we heard about competency. It took us some time also to get off the ground on that. So I thought this was a move. That time people already talking about professionalism and people keep saying you are a social worker but everybody else can do social work, and the understanding of social work what is all about. So I thought it was a good moment for us. MASW was the one who initiated it and we supported it". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

The draft national competency standards for social work practice was completed in 2005 and presented to the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development,

Dato' Seri Sharizat Abdul Jalil. The Minister was said to be excited over the competency standards as it was seen as a way to improve the image of social welfare.

> "Pauline came back to run a feedback session with stakeholders in the following year, Feb 2005. We fine-tuned the standards and made the presentation in April to the Secretary General. She said that this is good so she arranged for us to present to the Minister in the following month. Sharizat actually took it up. I remember Dato' Shamsiah was there, Memee was there, Lai was there. Amy was there. We went there to present and we were so hopeful. She even said, "This is God send!" She took the document and said, "This is God send! This is what Welfare need!" We were all like, wah, so happy!". (Elsie Lee)

Nevertheless, Dato' Shamsiah's account of the incidents provided a more realistic picture of the challenges of the MASW and the DSW to convince other colleagues in the service, as well as making the case to the top management of the Ministry.

> "When we came back, I even have to convince at our internal level also because some people are not very convincing about this being professional, getting competency or what not. What more to get it to the higher level to the Ministry. So one day we managed to arrange MASW, JKM to meet up with the Minister. That time Pauline wasn't there. Just among us. I can't remember whether Dato' Sharizat was very convinced on that day but she says ok it sounds good but after a while she still doesn't understand, keep coming back to us. Then one day Pauline came in and explained to her. Of course Pauline can explain better…During the session with Pauline, you know what Dato Sharizat told us, "Why you all never explain to me like that! She explained so well, so clear!" We just kept quiet because we understand our limit". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

Once acquiring the agreement from the Minister, Dato' Shamsiah approached Mr Harjeet Singh, the Deputy Secretary General (Policy) of the Ministry as all Ministries were in the midst of preparing their respective 5-year plan to be submitted for the consideration of the Ninth Malaysia Plan. By putting the Competency Standards as the Ministry's program for the next 5 years, DSW can use it as a source of reference for securing allocations to promote the initiative.

> "I was the DG. So the competency standards were mentioned in the Ninth Plan. We managed to convince who you know? Harjeet Singh. Harjeet was the one who prepared (for the Ministry). I said, "Harjeet, you must put that in because Dato' Seri Sharizat agreed". Anyway we managed to put that in the Ninth Plan.

> Once it was in the Ninth Plan, it was easier. We used it as a launching pad to move up, really advocate for it". (Shamsiah Abdul Rahman)

Put under the topic 'Community Development' in the Ninth Malaysia Plan, ISM was identified as a training hub to train professional social workers and utilizes the Competency Standards to train other social practitioners who are dealing with diverse social issues.

> "During the Plan period, the Institut Sosial Malaysia (ISM) will continue to train professional social workers and care givers with emphasis on providing quality care to the target groups. The National Standard for Social Work Competencies will be implemented to prepare social practitioners in facing challenges such as natural disasters, social security, population ageing and poverty eradication. ISM will become a training hub for social practitioners in the region". (Ninth Malaysia Plan, 2006, p.319).

Subsequently, from 2006 to 2008, under the guidance of Dr. Pauline and the funding from DSW, the MASW conducted series of training on the Professional Accountable Practice (PAP) Model to social welfare officers, social welfare assistants as well as NGOs workers as an introductory practice framework of the competency standards (Lee, 2011; Teoh, 2014). The PAP Model was subsequently being endorsed by the DSW and became one of training courses for social welfare officers taught at ISM.

Meanwhile, the DSW was asked by the Ministry to come up with a memorandum on how to enhance the quality of social work practice utilizing the National Competency Standards. The process took a few years as the Ministry wanted the memorandum to be easily understood by the policy makers who are not social workers. Ms. Elsie shared what has transpired during that time in the interview.

> "They said you should write a memorandum. JKM had to come up with a memorandum through the Ministry so we worked on that. Ding dong ding dong for a few years, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009....That time, Harjeet Singh in policy. He said, "Your language is hard to understand. You have to make it simpler when it goes to Cabinet. People don't know what...Streamline it, make it less

> wordy". We went through all that sessions, workshops after workshops with them". (Elsie Lee)

One of the efforts to push for the implementation of the National Competency Standards was to secure the confidence of the stakeholders through the organization of the National Symposium on Social Work Competency Standards in Genting Highlands on 11-13 August 2009. The Symposium was co-organized by MAKPEM, MASW, DSW with the funding from the National Welfare Foundation (Yayasan Kebajikan Negara, YKN), and was officiated by the Minister Dato' Seri Sharizat. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman, Chief Executive Officer of YKN during that time, endorsed the initiative as it is in line with the objectives of YKN in supporting social work.

> "Another one (objective) was to provide support to the social workers, social work associations, that was clear cut you know! To share the document, documentation, very clear cut, its trust deed on mention of social work. Yes, that's why I put RM60,000 to help your symposium because it was in line with that. It's related to social work". (Sayed A. Rahman)

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In the end, a memorandum consisting six measures to enhance the social work profession which include (i) establishing the National Social Work Competency Standards, (ii) enacting a Social Workers Bill, (iii) establishing a national social work regulatory body, (iv) recruitment of qualified social workers, (v) standardization of social work education and (vi) development of social work courses at certificate and diploma level was submitted to the Cabinet through the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development in 2010. On 23 April 2010, the Cabinet approved the six points memorandum. Ms. Elsie Lee shared her joy and appreciation to the Ministry for getting more initiatives approved by the Cabinet then just the National Competency Standards.

> "Finally the thing went up to the Cabinet in 2010 and it was approved. We didn't even expect it would come out with six points. We thought it was only the competency standards, then came out with the Bill as well, PSD etc. The

> Ministry put that all in when we were talking about the memorandum. Before that we were not, the main task was to get the competency standards sort of established and accepted, endorsed by government then we thought of following up on that. But the Ministry put in all those things and we were very happy". (Elsie Lee)

Upon receiving the green light from the Cabinet, the DSW wanted to get things moving immediately but they were faced with financial constrain. It was Madam Lai Poh Guat, the then Deputy Director General (Policy) of the DSW, who went to discuss with Miss Maya Faisal, Social Policy Specialist of UNICEF Malaysia on the matter. It was with the support and funding of UNICEF Malaysia that the project could continue as revealed by Ms. Elsie Lee.

> "The only problem was after that the Ministry says no money. Lai at that time was working on this also, she was Deputy DG then with Memee. So Lai herself approached Maya at UNICEF and told Maya the situation. Lai said within two minutes Maya said UNICEF will come in and hire Pauline, engaged her and asked her to come back and do the framework of the Bill and all that. That's how things started moving". (Elsie Lee)

Subsequently a task force meeting on 'Social Work Competency Standards and Social Workers Act Project 2010 - 2011' was called and chaired by Madam Lai on 18 May 2010. Ms Elsie Lee who was attached with UNICEF Malaysia that time was appointed as the project coordinator. In the meeting, it was decided that would be only two committees for the project - one is the Steering Committee which would be chaired by the Secretary General of Ministry with members from other ministries and relevant agencies; second is the Technical Committee, upgraded from the task force group to become the 'Technical Committee on Enhancing the Professionalism of Social Work in Malaysia'. The Technical Committee would be chaired by the Director General of Social Welfare and was tasked to work on matters related to training, regulations, employment and recruitment.

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The Technical Committee worked frequently and rapidly. By end of 2010, the Technical Committee already had 11 meetings, while Dr. Pauline Memeeduma and Dr Farah Nini Dusuki, legal consultant for UNICEF Malaysia and law lecturer at Universiti Malaya have started the drafting of the Social Workers Bill. Road shows were planned to inform social workers and stakeholders in the social welfare sector on the six-point memorandum and the Social Workers Bill across the nation in 2011 and 2012.

The competency standards and the proposed Social Workers Bill also attracted attention among NGOs in the social welfare sector. Dato' Dr Denison Jayasooria sees the development can motivate the NGOs in improving the competency of their staffs, many of which are not qualified social workers.

> "I think the impetus for these really came because of the social work competencies and possible licensing of social work profession that many felt that they needed to upgrade their staff. And because for majority of the organizations, the workers were mostly post Form 5 people, rather than first degree holders because they didn't have the money to pay the basic salaries". (Denison Jayasooria)

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The National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project is considered as the biggest catalyst in the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia. Starting with a modest aim to improve the competency of social workers in their practice by the MASW, it managed to draw the attention of the DSW, the Ministry and Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, and the support of multiple organizations like UNICEF, YKN, MAKPEM and NGOs, as well as many individual social workers and supporters of social work in these organizations as they were all concerned about the competency of social workers in the country. This project also has ripple effects in producing the National Competency Standards document, the National Policy and Education Standards document, introduction and training of the PAP Model,

and most importantly, the submission of the six-point memorandum in enhancing social work practice to the Cabinet which opens the door for greater opportunities for social workers from the DSW, MASW and social work educators to chart the future of the profession in years to come. The impact of the National Competency Standards Project and its trickle-down effect can be summarized in the following Figure 5.2.

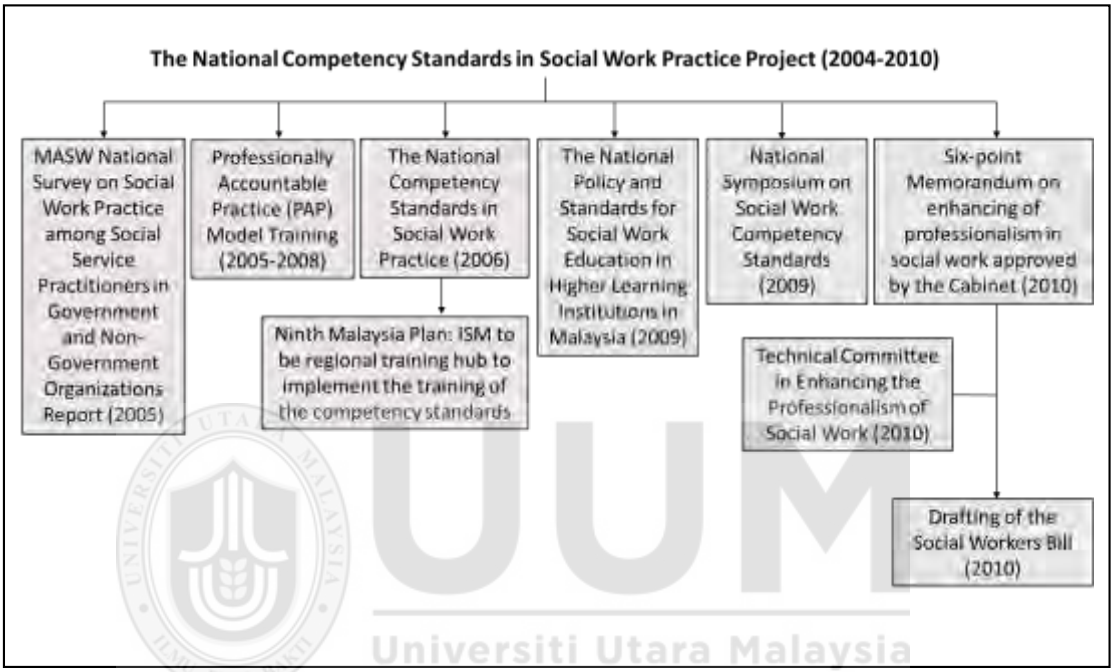

Figure 5.2. The trickle-down effect of the National Competency Standards in Social Work Project (2004-2010)

5.3.5 External Factor: Impact of International and Regional Social Work Development

Although the engagements of social work practitioners and educators from Malaysia with the international social work community have always been active prior to year 2000, like P.C. Sushama and Anthony Tan's involvement in the Executive Committee of IFSW-Asia Pacific. Siti Hawa Ali's involvement in APASWE, Anthony Tan's initiation of the COSW, and Abdullah Malim Baginda's initiation of the COMMACT, but their participations were more of a personal or individual effort, rather than involving the social work community in the country as a whole. On the hand, despite

having social workers or social work educators from overseas visited Malaysia from 1970 until 2000 on numerous occasions, either invited by MASW, USM or JKM, the impact brought by these visitors were rather minimal on the development of professional social work in Malaysia as well. The one that stood out, perhaps, was Dr. Fattihipour whose research papers on the SDA program at USM had pushed for the change of name from SDA to Social Work eventually.

On the other hand, the more active role of social workers on international social work in line with the pace of globalization (Midgley, 2001, 2006), and the more pro-active role played by IFSW and IAASW as leaders in the international arena made greater in-road into the development of social work in the world, Malaysia is no exception in this aspect. There are several initiatives which took place after 2000 that have been helpful to the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia.

First, is the global definition of social work which was adopted at the IFSW General Meeting in 2000 at Montreal, and was later jointly adopted by both practitioners and educators in May 2001 (IFSW, 2002). MASW has used that global definition in its promotional kits like pamphlets, bookmarks and file folders. The existence of IFSW and the global definition certainly has helped in boosting the professional standing of social work in Malaysia, and the connection between the MASW and IFSW in particular has grown stronger during this era. In 2001, MASW sent a delegation to attend the IFSW-Asia Pacific Regional Social Work Conference in Singapore. A group of social work educators from UUM also attended that conference. A few days after the IFSW-Asia Pacific conference, MASW held two meetings with David Jones, Chair of COSW, who visited Malaysia on issues relating to the regulation of social work

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education, training and practice. In 2008, the MASW organized a Seminar on Global Trends in Social Work with a keynote address by David Jones who has become President of IFSW. MASW has also arranged for David Jones to pay a courtesy call on the Director General of the KPWKM. The courtesy call was to show the international social work community support for social workers in Malaysia to enhance its professional standing through the National Social Work Competency Standards Project. When the IFSW, IASSW and ICSW held a Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development in Hong Kong in 2010, the MASW sent a delegation to attend the Conference and the general meeting of the IFSW-Asia Pacific region and APASWE.

Second, is the IFSW Statement of Ethical Principles which was approved at the General Meetings of the IFSW and IAASW in Adelaide, Australia, October 2004. Although MASW has come up with its Code of Ethics when the Association was established, it was following the older version of Code of Ethics in the 60s and 70s which put more emphasis on the responsibilities of a social worker without much reference to the principles and values of social work. When MASW conducted a review of its Code of Ethics in 2011, the IFSW Statement of Ethical Principles was adopted and incorporated into the new Code of Ethics.

Third, is the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training which was also adopted at IFSW and IASSW 2004 General Meetings in Adelaide, Australia. That document has provided a solid foundation for social work educators to develop its National Policies and Standards for Social Work Education in Higher Learning Institutions in Malaysia in 2007 through a workshop organized by the NJCCSWE and moderated by Dr Pauline Meeduma. The National Social Work Education Policies

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document, approved by NJCCSWE in 2009, made reference to the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training, as well as the global definition of social work.

Forth, is the setting of the World Social Work Day on every third Tuesday of March by IFSW in 2007 (IFSW, 2008, 2020). MASW has made the World Social Work Day as its annual event, either organizing forum or talks by itself, or partnering with other stakeholders like the universities, and appeared on media to promote the profession on the day itself. It has helped to raise the profile of the MASW

In short, the IFSW-IASSW efforts and policy documents from 2000-2010 have helped both MASW and NJCCSWE to promote social work in Malaysia by showcasing social work as a globally recognized profession.

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5.3.6 Key Issues and Challenges for Social Work 2000-2010

With the active roles taken up by the MASW and NJCCSWE with strong support by the DSW the development of social work in Malaysia from 2000 to 2010 can be described as rapid and dynamic as the three stakeholders formed a closer and greater collaboration, in particular with the National Competency Standards Project and the subsequent rolling out of various activities in enhancing social work practice and professionalism of social work. However, structurally, the three stakeholders were facing various challenges in the push for the professionalisation of social work.

5.3.6.1 Deprofessionalisation of Social Work Tasks in the DSW

One of the significant impacts of the legislations enacted after 2000, starting with the Child Act 2001, that has not been highlighted is the interpretation of social welfare

officers. Starting with the Child Act 2001, the term 'Social Welfare Officer' is now referred to 'any Social Welfare Officer in the Ministry or Department responsible for welfare services and includes any Assistant Social Welfare Officer' (Child Act 2001, p.15). In the Child Protection Act 1991, assistant social welfare officer is not mentioned in the interpretation of social welfare officer. In another words, after Child Act 2001, the task of child protection work, which is undertaken by qualified social workers in many countries, can be undertaken by assistant social welfare officer whose entry qualification is a diploma, not a degree level.

The change poses great challenge for assistant social welfare officers, most without relevant qualifications and training in the field of helping profession, but are now can be gazetted as child protection officer to handle complicated child protection cases. One of the possible reasons is also because the DSW has very small number of social welfare officers and the recruitment of assistant social welfare officers was on the rise when the Child Act was being planned in late 1990s.

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When asked about the qualification of the child protection officers, Madam Vijaykumari Pillai who was appointed by UNICEF in a pilot project in training child protection officers in the country concurred,

> "Ya. In Petaling Jaya all child protection officers (are diploma holders). They are not recruiting degree holders (for protection officers)". (Vijayakumari).

Although social welfare assistants also involved in working with children protection cases since early days, the main child protection officers have always been the social welfare officers who were university graduates. Mrs Amy Bala who started her career

in the DSW as social welfare assistants gave a clear picture of how child protection work were carried out during her time.

> "We (social welfare assistants) do more on the reporting like *bantuan kanak-kanak* (children aid). We interviewed mothers with children and then recommend what aid to offer and all that but we don't go to court. What they allowed us to do was actually investigated the cases. So there's a call we investigate, prepare the report and hand it to the *Pelindung*, and we assisting writing the report for the *Pelindung* then. *Pelindung* will go to the court. At that time only the graduates go to the court. All the graduates - Mimi Zaida, Peter Jeshurun, Simon, all those people. They go to the court". (Amy Bala)

When asked about who would the DSW assign to do child protection work during his time at the DSW, Dato' Mohamad Hussain replied,

> "Only Social Welfare Officers. Not the assistants. Assistants go to investigate and give assistance only". (Mohamad Hussain)

Dato' Mohamad Hussain gave his view on the difference between social welfare officers and social welfare assistants.

> "Not proper (to assign child protection work). They are not professionals. No. Like doctor and medical assistant two different thing. Medical assistants they are only asked to give out medicine prescribed by the doctors. The same thing should go with social welfare officers and social welfare assistants". (Mohamad Hussain)

The deprofessionalisation of the child protection officers at the DSW is seen as the erosion of professionalism of social workers. One of the respondents got emotional when she recalled the change which came from the directive of the Administrator of the Ministry, not by the professional who were handling the cases.

> "The downfall of the professionalism was when Dato' Zainul Ariff came as KSU. When he came, he asked what is this? So many Acts on children? We got two laws on adoptions, Juvenile Court Act, Child Protection Act. He was very angry. Put it together! So that's the time I also...I refused to go and I said I'll leave the Department". (Vijayakumari Pillai)

Subsequently, through the application of the definition of social welfare officer through legislation, the tasks of the social welfare officers were also delegated to assistant social welfare officers in other services like probation, services for persons with disabilities, and gazetted officers in-charge of overseeing the quality and compliance of child care centres and other institutions of care registered with the department, as well as the CSO which has been discussed in section 5.3.1.2(v). The impact of deprofessionalisation on professionalisation of social work will be deliberated through theories of profession in next Chapter.

5.3.6.2 The DSW Losing Its Control Over Training

As discussed in the earlier section on the establishment of ISM, the DSW lost its own Training Division when the Government streamlined the training divisions and put under the human resource division within each Ministry. In addition, their failure in securing their Training Director as the Director of ISM means not only they lost the senior position of Training Director in the hierarchy of the Department, they also lost control over the training when they can only place a much lower rank officer as training officer under the Human Resource Division.

The following Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4 shows the differences between the organizational structure of the DSW before and after the abolishment of the Training Division. Figure 5.3 is the organizational structure of the DSW under the Ministry of Social Welfare before 1990 where the Training and Career Development Division (highlighted yellow) is placed under the Deputy Director General of Social Welfare. Figure 5.4 is the organizational structure of the Human Resource Department of the

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Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development where the training unit (circled in red) is situated.

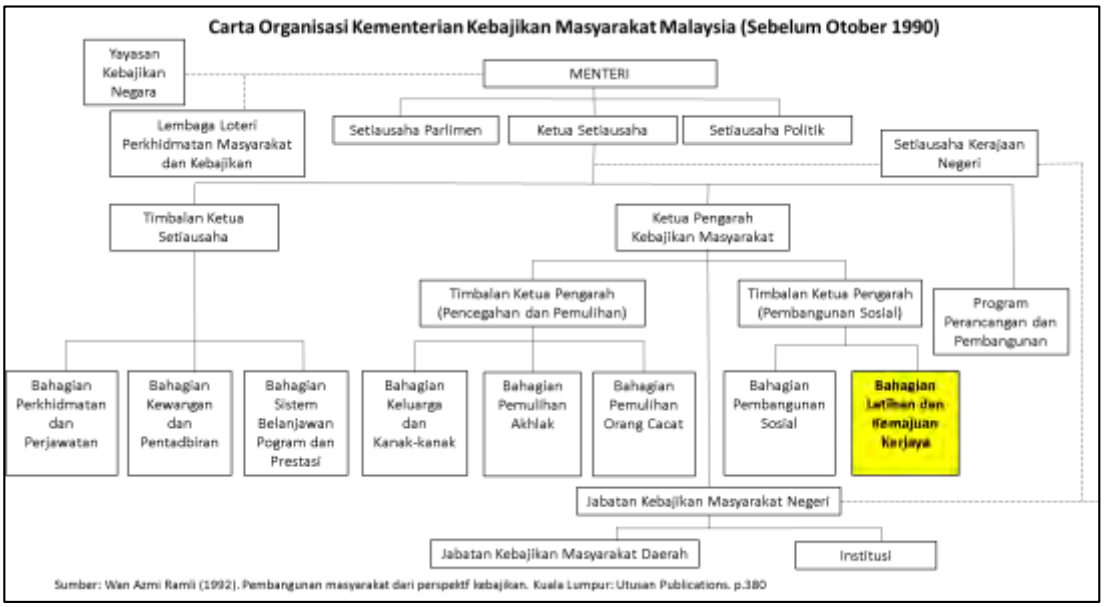

Figure 5.3. Organizational structure of the DSW under the Ministry of Social Welfare

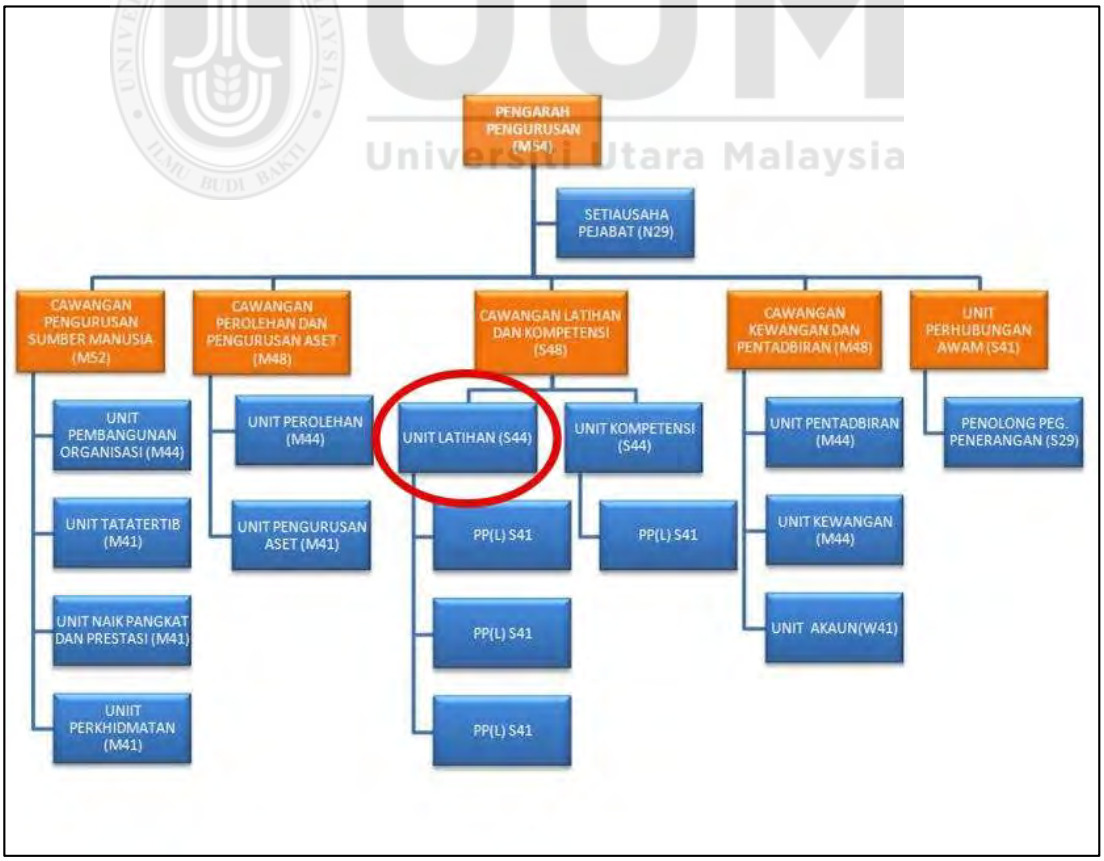

Figure 5.4. Organizational structure of the training unit under the Human Resource Department of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

The organizational structure change of the training division, and the ISM placed directly under the Ministry and its Director being appointed by the Minister, raised the concern over the training needs of the DSW, especially when a big majority of its manpower were not trained in social work. The DSW can request for social work training but ISM has the final say on what training courses to be offered every year subject to its budget allocation. The National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project managed to forge a closer and strategic collaboration between the DSW and ISM in planning relevant training courses with the technical support from the MASW and the increasing pool of social work educators.

5.3.6.3 Added Responsibilities Without Proper Matching of Manpower for the DSW

DSW was given additional responsibility with the introduction of new legislations and services for human trafficking, disability, and CSO etc. Although the introduction of CSO generated new positions for DSW, the actual increment took place at the assistant social welfare officer level.

As discussed earlier, the assistant social welfare officer position is a diploma level position, where specific diploma for social work or social welfare discipline was not available. The closest program that was offered was the Diploma in Human Development by UPM which was listed by SPA as one of the qualification recognized by the government for the position of assistant social development officer post (S27), but it neither has the social work methods component nor the block placement element, yet this largest group of personnel in JKM are the main front line caseworkers and

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gazetted protectors. This means that all the new recruits have to be properly trained and guided when coming into the job.

With the sudden increase of personnel at this level after 2008, added with the limited capacity of ISM to provide sufficient training courses for these officers, it raises concern over the competency of the officers and the quality of social welfare services in particular in the more challenging protection work. Again, the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project offers a possible solution to address this need.

5.3.6.4 MASW is More Active but with Limited Manpower

The MASW has become more active when Ms Elsie Lee took over as the President in 2001. Under her leadership and her efforts in making training as the Association's core activity, the MASW was given a grant to conduct a research on the initiation of the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project in collaboration with the DSW and UNICEF Malaysia. With the funding received, the Association finally has its own permanent secretariat, no longer depending on the DSW premise.

MASW also started to organize training programs for practitioners, not restricting to members only. While the MASW became active with more training programs and other activities to promote the profession social work, it also poses a challenge for the association to secure sufficient resources like funding to cover the maintenance of the office, as well as manpower to conduct training courses and promotional activities. This means that the MASW has to raise fund from time to time by coming up with training proposal or research proposal to relevant funding agencies or organizations. In this

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regard, the MASW has to call upon members among the Executive Committee or other members who can give their time for these activities.

One of the pushing factors for the increase activism of the MASW is several of its leaders in the Executive Committee during this period were retirees, therefore they can give more time to the Association as compare to the early years where the whole Executive Committee line up were social workers who were still in service. In addition, the increment of social work educators due to the expansion of social work programs at the local universities also provides a bigger pool of experts to assist the association to stay active. However, the association still feels the strain of not getting enough people on board, especially social workers who are still in the service, as the demand for the MASW to sustain its activism.

5.3.7 Summary for Professionalisation of Social Work 2000-2010

Compares to the 1990s, the first decade of the new millennium in general has seen greater dynamics and more progress in the development of social work in Malaysia, most notably through the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project. The DSW, placed under the newly Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, has seen some weakening in terms of power within the government bureaucratic hierarchy where the policy direction and staff training were more Ministry-led. The manpower of the DSW saw some substantial increments after 2007 with the introduction of new services like CSO and the establishment of the JPOKU with the department. Nonetheless, the increment was proportionally more in the non-graduate positions (S27 and S17) to the positions of graduate officers which indicated that positions for graduate social workers were still limited. Coupled with the

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delegation of statutory power and tasks of social welfare officers to assistant social welfare officers through legislation starting with the Child Act 2001, as well as the employment of non-social work trained personnel as social workers, has raised the concern of deprofessionalisation in the DSW and its services.

Social work education continued to expand, although with a slower growth as compares to the 1990s, with two more universities offered social work undergraduate program. UKM published the Malaysian Journal of Social Work in 2002 but ceased publication after a few years. In general, with the exception of USM, social work educators at the other universities were relatively young, majority of them has yet to obtain their PhD, and with less related working experience. Under the leadership provided by USM, and with the support of the MASW, social work education is slowly moving towards establishing itself as an academic discipline in Malaysia.

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The MASW, on the other hand, has slowly shifted from the DSW dominant leadership to a more diverse set up in the executive committee, and played a more instrumental and active role in collaborating with the DSW and the social work educators. For example, it was through the MASW platform that the social work educators started to plan for a coordinating body which eventually led to the establishment of the NJCCSWE in 2002, and the publishing of the National Policy and Standards in Social Work Education in Malaysia in 2006. Under the leadership of Ms. Elsie Lee and Mrs Amy Bala, with their networking and relationships with the leadership of the DSW and other stakeholders like UNICEF Malaysia and other NGOs, the MASW managed to initiate discussion on the competency standards, conducted a national survey, and getting the support of the DSW to start the National Competency Standards in Social

Work Practice Project in 2004. With the funding received for the project, the MASW finally could rent an office on its own which enable it to be run like a proper association, rather than a government-led organization. The focus on conducting competent social work practice training has also raised the profile of the MASW to the government as well as the NGOs in the social welfare sector. The summary of professionalisation of social work in Malaysia 2000-2010 is shown in the following Figure 5.5.

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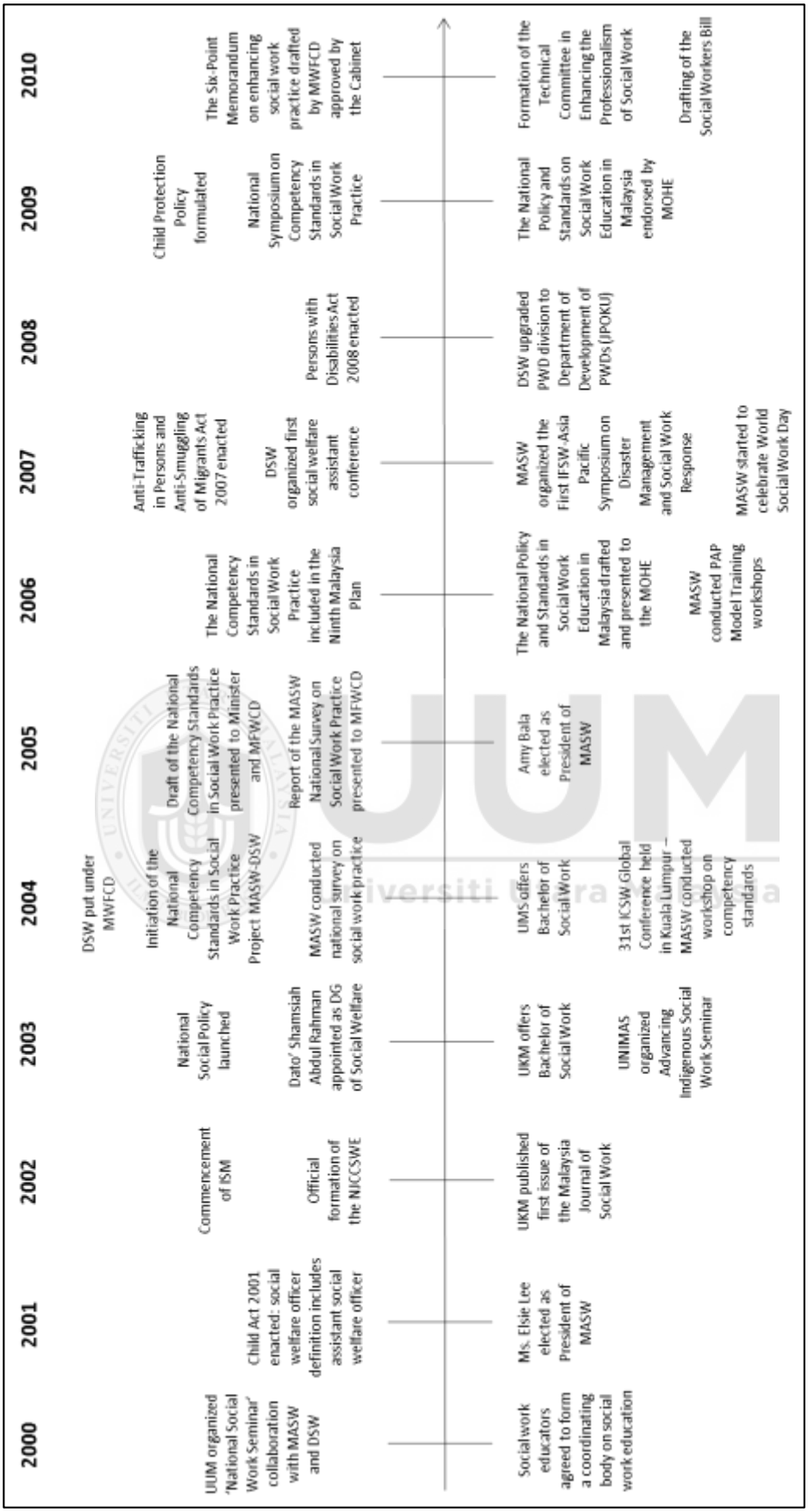

Figure 5.5. Timeline for Social Work Development in Malaysia (2000-2010)

Despite the progresses achieved in the first decade of the new millennium, social work has yet to achieve the status as a full fletch profession. For example, the occupational opportunity for social workers remained small with limited positions at the DSW. Social work programs up to that stage were only confined to several public universities, and more obviously without the participation of the private institutions of higher learning. This may be an indicator that social work has yet to be seen as a profession nor occupation with potential market value. The MASW were still facing with small membership numbers and limited resources. The public perception of social work, along with other professionalisation issues will be analysed from the theory of profession and professionalisation in the next chapter.

The National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project and its related activities has managed to form a closer collaboration among the DSW, the MASW and the social work educators. With the Six-Point Memorandum on improving social work practice in Malaysia being approved and endorsed by the Cabinet in 2010, it has opened the door for social workers in establishing itself as a profession through the drafting of the Social Workers Bill. While the synergy and like-minded of key social workers holding leadership positions at the DSW, the MASW and the NJCCSWE like Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman, Ms. Elsie Lee, Mrs. Amy and Dr. Ismail Baba was the prime mover in advancing social work to be recognized as a profession, the reception by the government in recognizing the need to raise the competency of social work practitioners as indicator of professionalism was something worth investigating through the thesis of occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism in the next chapter.

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5.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored and analysed the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia through the chronological development of social work at the DSW, the MASW and social work education from 1990 to 2010. Key events taken place and efforts undertaken by these three stakeholders in making social work a profession were identified and discussed. It was followed by examining issues and challenges encountered by the three entities that have disrupted their organizational progress and the professionalisation of social work in the country. It was evident that social work was facing uncertainty in the 1990s with the decreasing manpower of the DSW and the inability of MASW to promote greater presence of the profession, albeit the increase of social work programs at several public universities. The development of social work from 2001 to 2010 was more encouraging for the profession especially with the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice Project. Since there were two rather different development of social work in these two decades, it would be fitting to see the era of 1990 to 1999 as the expansion of social work education stage, while the era of 2000 to 2010 as the setting of standards for competent social work practice and education stage.

In conclusion, Chapter Four and Chapter Five has addressed the first two of the research objectives of this study, guided by the Research Framework in Chapter One, by analysing the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia, as well as identifying and analysing the efforts of the DSW, the MASW and social work education in advancing the profession of social work over the span of forty years from 1969 to 2010. With the completion of these two chapters, added the write-up of the development of social welfare and social work in the early years before 1969, the profile of the

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professionalisation of social work in Malaysia, in terms of key events, policies, initiatives, influential social workers and stakeholders, and supporting factors, have been identified and analysed. The professionalisation of social work from the theory of profession perspective will be discussed in Chapter Six together with recommended strategies in enhancing the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia.

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CHAPTER SIX

SOCIAL WORK IN MALAYSIA FROM THE PROFESSIONALISATION THEORIES PERSPECTIVE

6.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from theoretical perspective utilizing the professionalisation theoretical framework by Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2007 & 2008), follows by the thesis of Occupational Professionalism and Organizational Professionalism developed by Evetts (2003, 2013 & 2014). These analyses provide insights on how social work has developed, progressed or remain challenged in Malaysia from the early days to the current status.

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6.2 Professional Features of Social Work

As discussed earlier in Chapter 2 and 3, Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2007 & 2008) has combined both the trait and strength perspectives of profession into eight indicators:

(i) Public recognition of professional status

(ii) Professional monopoly over specific types of work

(iii) Professional autonomy of action

(iv) Possession of a distinctive knowledge base

(v) Professional education regulated by members of the profession

(vi) An effective professional organization

(vii) Codified ethical standards

(viii) Prestige and remuneration reflecting professional standards

These eight indicators are deliberated based on the interview transcripts of the respondents with additional supportive findings identified in Chapter 5 and 6.

6.2.1 Public Recognition of Professional Status

In general, all the respondents in this study shared similar view that public recognition of social work as a profession is very low. Most people don't know what social work is, and commonly equate social work to voluntary work or charity work kind of doing good activities. People are more familiar with social welfare in terms of the financial aid services provided by the DSW, and therefore equate social work to that type of services. Despite efforts being taken by the MASW and social work educators, the situation has not improved or changed significantly. In addition, the non-usage of the terminology of 'social worker' as a title in the DSW and the non-recognition of the Government of social work as a profession, as well as the loosely use of social worker by those who perceive themselves as social worker by doing something good for society, also contribute to the poor recognition of social work as a profession.

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6.2.1.1 Low Awareness or Poor Understanding of Social Work

A few respondents have claimed that the low public recognition of social work as a profession is due to low awareness or poor understanding of the entity of social work among the general public. This claim is evidenced by the transcripts gained as a result of interviews with key leaders in advancing social work as a respectable profession which is presented as follows:

> "When I applied as a clerk (at UMMC) I didn't know that is this kind of profession, so when I came back to work as a medical social worker, it was still that kind of situation where the public didn't really understand that there was such a service…It was still poorly understood, even among the hospital staffs itself. Not many doctors knew how to utilize our services". (Elsie Lee)

> "I was not even conscious about social work in Malaysia at that time. Never really until I came back to Malaysia that there is such thing of medical social work". (Ismail Baba)

> "I think perception of social work is like, it is really taking a long time for people to understand. Even up to today there are people who says that I never heard of this before…I didn't know there's an Association of social workers...even now I suppose when we are talking about training the NGOs, there are still a lot of misunderstanding about what social work is". (Elsie Lee)

> "...there's not a wide public understanding of (social work). It's always a challenge (as educator), so you always have to gear to where your students were at and really say what social work is something you can use in life forever". (Gill Raja)

> "So when you get the degree, it's back to the kind of societal requirement, "*Saya punya anak* graduate. Graduate *apa*? *Apa dia buat dia punya* degree? *Tak ada buat apa*". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "A lot of people don't know about social work so they look very low, you see. Low identify of social work of what it can do". (Mohamad Hussain)

It has been highlighted that majority of the public in Malaysia in earlier days (i.e., around 1970s) of the establishment of social work as entity was very much low in awareness as been stated by Ismail Baba and Elsie Lee based on their vast experiences. Even both of them were not aware of the existence of the position of social workers in the government service. This low awareness is due to the poor understanding of the what a social worker can do and its position in the government service.

In addition, the poor understanding of social work potentials is reflected in the opportunity to acquire a tertiary level of study, where not many parents or guardians realize what their children were studying specifically. They just know that their children were studying in a higher level institution which normally is good enough for conventional parents. It is also a challenge to the educators in this field to convience students studying social work that the knowledge and skills that they gathered can be

used to support their life long learning activities after graduation, as emphasised by Gill Raja.

Therefore, until today, the public understanding about social work remains low although the Malaysian Association of Social Workers has long been established, and social work education is available at various higher learning institutions. The issue of low awareness or poor understanding of social work is also occurred among the welfare-based NGO operators and their respective workers.

6.2.1.2 Public Perception of Social Work as Voluntary or Charity Work

Social work has been perceived by the general public more of a voluntary or charity work. Several respondents have verified this perception based on their experiences working as social workers themselves, which are reported in the following verbatimes:

> "Like voluntary work. They say social welfare is voluntary work". (Mohamad Hussain)

> "...social work has always been seen...misunderstood as a voluntary work or as community service so the professional elements of social work are often not really recognized". (Ling How Kee)

> "...because social work, even today, is seen as a voluntary activity rather than a prospect of a paid job…social work is often confused with volunteers doing activities". (Denison Jayasooria)

> "…they do not understand the concept of social work and they think that by doing philanthropy work or some kind of community service, some good deeds, is actually social work". (Elsie Lee)

> "…because to them social work everybody can do…everybody calling themselves social workers but nobody wants to stop...They don't see the difference". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

> "…people still think social workers are good people because they help people. Full stop" (Amy Bala)

> "They think (social work) is charity work" (Vijayakumari Pillai)

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These perceptions are similar to what some other countries have encountered with this issue (cite some a few countries/references). As have been emphasised by those respondents, the false views by the public has been around among the Malaysian communities for such a long time. Consequently, social work is still not being acknowledged as a professional career, instead as a voluntary or charity work only due to strong existence of such perceptions among the general public.

6.2.1.3 Social Work Seen as Social Welfare Financial Assistance

Another false perception on social work is being seen as merely as giving welfare financial aid as highlighted by the following respondents:

> "I think not many people know there is this social work. They know welfare". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "I think social work…basically people know that the welfare department is the place for people to get financial aid. That's the general public impression. It's not a place for people to get psychosocial intervention". (Ismail Baba)

> "Many people...those patients that came to us just looked at it as...like welfare...we were like welfare officers that kind of thing". (Elsie Lee)

All the respondents who are also experts in social work unanimously agreed that the general public knows more about the Department of Social Welfare, which mainly about its financial assistance schemes. They normally equate social work duties to activites related to handling out monetary aid only. Therefore, social workers also being perceived as officers who are dealing with monetary assistance, instead of other functions such as psychosocial intervention.

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6.2.1.4 Low or Loose Usage of the Terminology of Social Work and Social Workers

The issue on perception of social work has been worsened by the confusion in the terminology usage for social work and social worker. The terminology of 'social welfare officers' and 'social welfare assistant' have been introduced since the establishment of the Department of Social Welfare during the colonial occupation as revealed by Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda who joined the department back in the 1955.

> "No, no. Social welfare officers and social welfare assistant. Nobody used that term (social workers) actually. It was only introduced during the study". (Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Ever since the establishment of the terminologies, the DSW continued to use them instead of the term 'social worker' for the positions in the organization. The designation for those positions was set by the Public Service Commission which the governing body overseeing all positions in the public service including the DSW. So, the terminology usage of social welfare officer and social welfare assistant is obligatory. However, in revising the services, the former term has been changed to 'Social Development Officer' by the PSC, but still the term 'social worker' did not emerged. Hence, the public understanding regarding social work remains low due to the uncommon use of the terminology.

In addition, the lack of usage of the terminology of social work and social worker in Bahasa Melayu can also be heard in speeches delivered by top leaders in the government. For example, during the officiating ceremony of ISM in 2005, the Prime Minister delivered his speech in dual languages of Bahasa Melayu and English, there was different usage of terms. In the English version of the speech, he made reference

to social workers but neither 'kerja sosial' nor 'pekerja sosial' were used in the Bahasa Melayu version of the speech (Prime Minister Office, 2005, paragraph 10).

> "10. An institute specialising in social development issues, such as Institut Sosial Malaysia, can play a crucial role in helping policy-makers, social workers, academics and practitioners, to better understand and react to various contemporary social issues".

In the Malay text of his speech, the Prime Minister used the word social development (*pembangunan sosial*) ten times, and social services (*perkhidmatan sosial*), perhaps the nearest to social work, once.

> "*…Sehubungan itu, saya mengesyorkan agar kerjasama antara pihak kementerian serta agensi dengan pertubuhan-pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (N.G.O.) diperluaskan dan semangat kesukarelaan dipertingkatkan lagi. pihak kerajaan akan sentiasa memberi sokongan kepada N.G.O. dalam menjalankan aktiviti yang meningkatkan kesejahteraan keluarga, kanak-kanak, warga emas, orang kurang upaya dan golongan lain yang memerlukan sokongan. Begitu juga dengan kerjasama di antara sektor awam dengan sektor swasta. Kerjasama ini amat diperlukan untuk mewujudkan satu sinergi dalam masyarakat untuk tujuan menjamin* ***perkhidmatan sosial*** *yang terbaik bagi semua anggota masyarakat. Inilah asas kepada konsep "Pembangunan Sosial Tanggungjawab Bersama" yang disarankan".*

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Despite the low usage of the terms, people who think they are doing social work prefer to call themselves loosely as social workers, which was pointed out by the following respondent:

> "…because to them social work everybody can do…everybody calling themselves social workers but nobody wants to stop...They don't see the difference". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

Furthermore, no only the term 'social worker' that is not widely used in the Malaysian context, but the terms 'work' and 'worker' are also being seen as a manual and lower level type of occupation. This is evident in the following verbatim:

> "The term 'worker' itself is not acceptable among the Malays especially…Ya, when you say in Malay, *kerja* is just giving that connotation, manual work. But I have been so used to to think in terms of social work I don't think the

> term in English makes me think of manual work. But when you put that in Malay it has that connotation…*kerja sosial*". (Elsie Lee)
>
> "*Nama kot*...social worker ini...*susah sikitlah*". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)
>
> "We accept ourselves as a worker. As a worker, the most important thing for you is work. So it's not a policy kind of (position)…You are a worker. So if you are a worker, then no complain. I can place you wherever I want to place". (Sayed A. Rahman)

In relation to these opinions on the misunderstanding of the terms 'work' and 'worker' in Bahasa Melayu in contrast to its respective definitions in English, maybe the misunderstanding is influenced the Malaysian culture. The connotation reflects that there are different tiers with respect to positions involving managerial tasks and the lower level jobs, which are laborious in nature. Therefore, the terms continue to be misunderstood as a low level type of position. This is evident in the Malaysian labour law. Although the terminology of worker is not defined in the Employment Act 1955, the Ministry of Human Resources (2017) refers workers (*pekerja*) protected under that Act as "*Pekerja yang dilindungi di bawah Akta Kerja 1955 ialah semua pekerja yang menerima gaji tidak melebihi RM2,000.00 sebulan dan juga semua pekerja manual tanpa had gaji*", meaning those who received monthly salary less than RM2000.00 or those who are employed as manual workers without salary limit.

On the other hand, the term 'social' in 'social work' and 'social worker' also carries a more casual or leisure connotation in the Malaysian context. The theme emerged during the discussions with respondents in the following illustrations:

> "Even the word social is like...for many of them that got negative connotation. Don't know why so narrow minded". (Elsie Lee)
>
> "But to be recognized as a profession, and at the same time we are competing, more or less, with anybody and everybody who call themselves social workers, ladies of leisure and all those people. We still have the same problem today. I don't think we can ever quart that out". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

This negative connotation is connected to the way the term 'social' is perceived in the Malaysian culture as something to do with socializing in the leisure and entertaining activites. This socializing image is actually oppositite the noble duty of a social worker where the public gathers the totally wrong meaning of social work as a whole.

As a result, one respondent, Dato' Sayed A. Rahman, has even proposed that the terminology for the profession to be changed from 'worker' to 'manager' or 'developer', while keeping the term social work as an academic discipline, such that the profession is positioned as an elitist or specialist.

> "Social work, I think my contention is change social work to social managers. Social work is part...ok, it's a subject matter itself but you don't call yourself social worker. So you are worker all the time. That's where the elitist element is missing… So social worker is defined as a specialized group then everybody will go there, even you don't want to change to manager or developer or whatever. You put there". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "But I used to, even to a point, said, "Forget about the word community leader. Put it community manager, social manager, rather than social worker. So you work, work, work, when are you going to be manager? (Laugh) See, the terminology of social work is out of date again…We are social managers, social planners. I'm a social planner". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Dato' Sayed A. Rahman's rather radical viewpoints may be due to his educational background (he studied history at University Malaya) where he was one of the first few university graduates who were recruited as social welfare officers into the DSW. Prior to that, social welfare officers were normally promoted among the servicing staffs who were able to complete the Diploma in Social Studies from the UK and Singapore. Although he has vast experiences working as a social welfare officer and had taken up subjects in social work when he was doing his postgraduate studies in the UK and was in fact specializing in social planning. That's the reason he calls himself a social planner.

One of the key observations made by Dato' Sayed A. Rahman is that the word 'worker', used in the Malaysian context, is 'out of date' and more crucially, diminishes the element of elitist which separate between ordinary workers and managers (i.e. representing the professional group).

In a nutshell, it can be said that one of the reasons why social work has not been recognized as a profession is due to the terminologies 'social work' and 'social worker' in the local context. They are not widely used in welfare organizations, and furthermore, they are most of the time wrongly associated with the negative or immoral activities. Unfortunately, social work is also perceived as a lower rank and non-managerial type of job due to the terminologies.

6.2.1.5 Social Work is Not Regarded as a Profession by the Government

The government has not recognized social work as a profession since the very beginning, which in the 1950s. The British Administration in Malaya, as a start, perceived that social work qualification was irrelevant in the civil service as compared to the degree qualification from renowned universities in the UK (Robertson, 1980). After the independence of Malaysia, the DSW continued sending their staffs for the Diploma in Social Studies from the University of Malaya in Singapore. However, those who graduated were promoted as social welfare officers but the position was still not seen as a professional post. There are respondents who emphasised from the perspective of salary for the post.

> "When I joined probation service my salary was RM204…When you finished this education (in Singapore) you got RM420. That was a big jump so it's a good incentive, except that it was not a profession. You are still considered as one of those (government officers). (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

Although Dato' Abdullah was happy that his salary was doubled, but he was a bit disappointed that his qualification was not considered as a professionally advanced scheme in the service. The salary scales for the social welfare officers and medical social workers then were lower than the positions occupied by degree holders in other government services as agreed by both Dato' Sayed A. Rahman and Elsie Lee. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman who graduated with a degree and was already paid with a graduate level salary during his previous position and thus he had to endure with a pay cut after joining the DSW as a social welfare officer.

> "My salary dropped when I joined as Social Welfare Officer in 1972…Because they considered this (position) a diploma holder kind of position". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Similarly, Elsie Lee mentioned that the Diploma in Social Studies was seen as lower than a degree qualification in the medical or health related services. The medical social workers had to lobby with the government through their association. Eventually, their salary scale was upgraded.

> "...at that time the Association was fighting very hard to get professional recognition, to get that degree salary…So it was like important for us to get to that status even tough we came out with a diploma equivalent to a degree…So that was the time we also said why can't medical social workers in University Hospital and other teaching hospitals also be recognized as degree holders. So in the 70s and 80s they were fighting for that. Eventually it was given to us". (Elsie Lee)

On the other hand, the Public Service Department (JPA), which is the employing agency for the federal government, was seen as not helpful in recognizing social work as a profession by not acknowledging the social work qualification as the criteria for employing social welfare officers into relevant government agencies. This notion is as

claimed by Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda and Dato' Norani Hashim based on their long service experience dealing with JPA.

> "Before that there was this policy (to employ) graduates. We wanted to push for only social work graduates going into social welfare and other related agencies. No, JPA says no. This is what I was told. It happened after my time". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

> "Very difficult. Very difficult (to convince JPA) because this thing it has been on-going, not only my time. It has been on-going. JPA just don't seem to understand what social work does. They don't understand *apa itu kerja sosial* (what is social work). See, to that level. To me, they need make the effort to understand us why. It's not an easy task to convince JPA". (Norani Hashim)

Therefore, there are two instances which can be associated to the issue of non-recognition of social work as a profession by the government. The first instance is regarding the salary scheme for those who completed their further studies, yet receiving a salary not equivalent for their higher qualifications. The second instance is regarding the acknowledgement that is still not given to the social work qualification when recruiting for the service. Hence, it can be concluded that social work is not regarded as a profession by the Government from two instances as experienced by the experts during their tenures.

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6.2.1.6 Low Occupational Closure for Social Work Positions

Due to the low professional status of social work and not being recognized as a professional occupation by the government, it is difficult to stop the recruitment of people of other disciplines into positions of social workers like social welfare officers and medical social workers. Thus, it affects the opportunities of social work graduates especially into both DSW and medical related organizations. The following respondents shared their concerns and strategies on how to get the social work discipline to be included in the recruitment criteria for social work positions.

> "No. That time no because I believe we still didn't have enough people then. Although we keep saying that we need trained social workers, when comes to recruiting it doesn't happen. You get lots of people from all various disciplines that come in". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

> I used to be there to interview. When welfare officers called for, I interviewed them. But we interviewed them, out of 100, only 5 or 6 can come in. How? So, vacant still. Then at the end still many vacancy, so we just simply take in. (*100 yang boleh pun 5, 6 orang sahaja yang boleh masuk. Macam mana? So, kosong lagi*) Some of them, I said, "Your background is communication. What the hell are you doing in social work?". (Sayed A. Rahman)

One of the concerns is that during the recruiting period, there was not enough qualified applicants suitable for the post of social welfare officers. Instead, a lot of people from various disciplines applied which left not much choice for the authority to accept them to the positions. Both Elsie Lee and Dr Ismail Baba recalled the recruitment of medical social workers in the department they were working in.

> "She (Head of Department) was also pressured so they started to bring in more Malay graduates. That was when graduates who were not trained in social work were brought in to fill the positions because they wanted that balance I guess...That's when people…without social work, different fields like sociology. anthropology, human development, a few of them from UPM with human development all came in". (Elsie Lee)

> "I think UH (University Hospital) was the first hospital that really focus on medical social work, for a long time until they started hiring people without social work background. That one become 'rojak' already by then. When I came back to UH for the second time (1983-85) they already started taking in people, like half of the staff already people were not trained. Some of the staff were started to retire also". (Ismail Baba)

Moreover, the authority wanted to have a more balanced workforce in terms of racial composition which was among the reasons of the recruitment from various disciplines related to social sciences into the position. At that time, the pool of potential candidates for the positions could only be sourced from these social sciences study programs as the SDA program in USM was the only institution that offered social work study, and it had to cater for the DSW's demands on the training and upscaling of their workforce.

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Due to the mixed recruitment, Ismail Baba who returned in the service from his study raised his concern on the more non-social work graduates being recruited as medical social workers at that particular time. He was worried about the new recruitment not being able to support the vacant positions later due to the retirements of qualified social workers. This can be seen a counter effort in putting a closure for social work position which aims to allow only qualified person to take up such positions.

Nevertheless, the social workers through its Association and also DSW continue to push for more recognition of social work qualification as the entry requirement for positions in the public sector. This included organizing dialogue with the Public Service Department and positioned retired social workers into the recruitment machinery. When the MASW organized a panel discussion 'Social work at a crossroad: what prospects for the practitioners?' in 1998, the DG of Social Welfare at that time Dato' Jaafar Wahid, as the panel, raised the issue of recruitment of qualified social workers with the representative from PSD.

After Dato' Jaafar retired in 1999, DSW managed to get him into SPA to assist the recruitment of suitable candidates with social work qualification into DSW. This is evidenced through communications with Dato' Shamsiah Abdul Rahman as below:

> "I think after Dato' Jaafar left, what we managed to do was to put Dato' Jaafar in SPA. So at least the interview for social workers, he will put in the elements, ensuring the right people will come into the department". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

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After years of advocating, at last social work has been listed as one of the main field of study when comes to recruitment criteria for Social Development Officer position in DSW by the Public Service Commission as shown in Figure 6.1. Nevertheless, it still cannot claim closure for that position entirely, due to the need to compete with other fields such as psychology, counselling, human development and even Islamic studies.

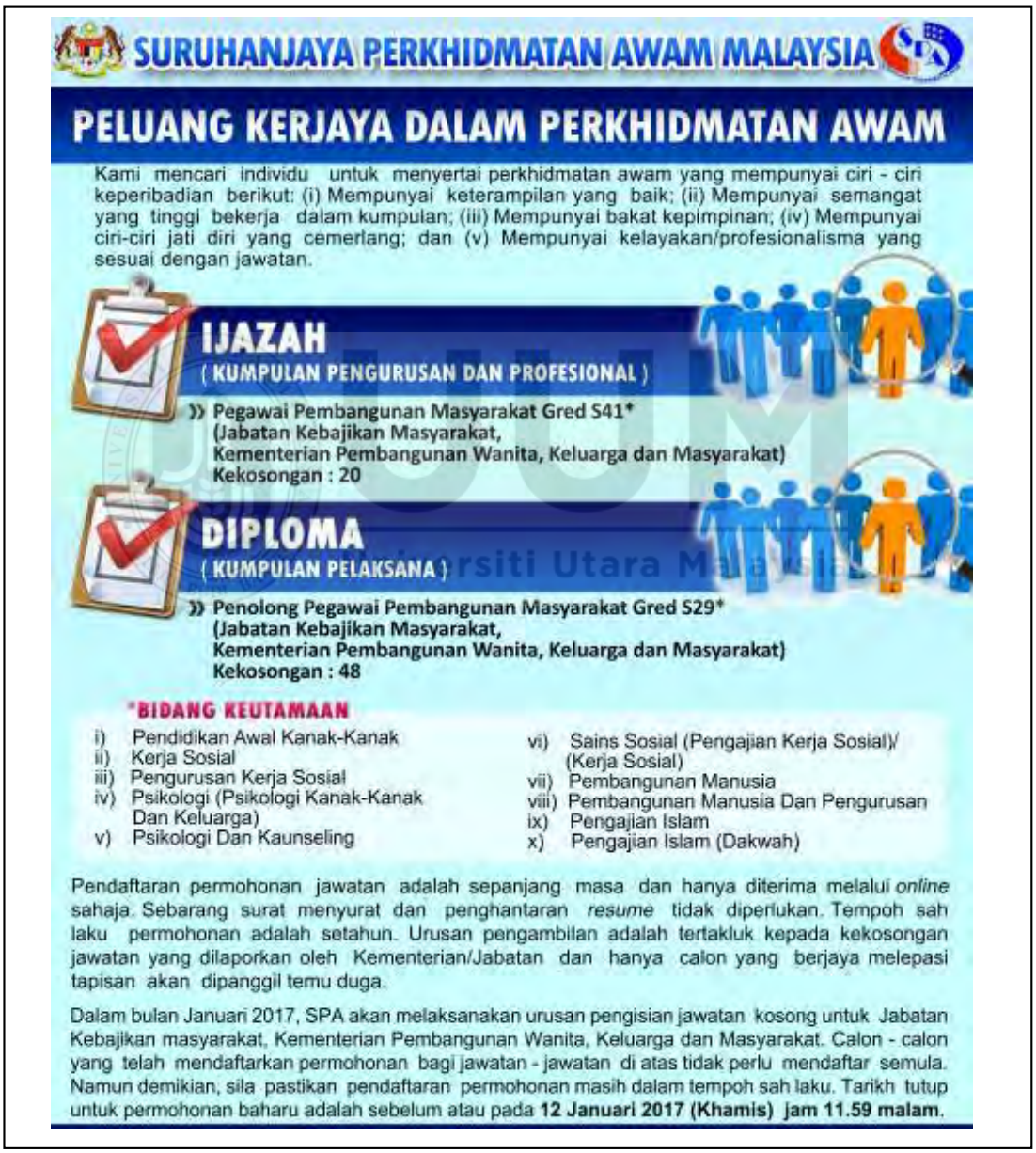

Figure 6.1. Adverstisement for Job Opportunities related to Social Work (Source: http://www.e-jobsmalaysia.com/2017/01/JKM.html)

6.2.1.7 Losing out to Counselling in Obtaining Professional Legislation

After all the efforts, social work is still seen as lower than other fields, for example, Counselling which has been regulated through legislation by the government. This view is shared by Dato' Shamsiah who saw that Counsellor gained higher status when there is an Act that support the profession, while Amy Bala highlighted that social workers were not accepted as registered counsellor because the social work qualification is not being recognized by the Act as a counselling program.

> "Somebody who insisted that counselling must be done by a qualified person. Now because of the Act they cannot already. But I don't know how it started but one the reasons was to stop everybody calling themselves counsellors…Even now, when you talk, when you say you are a counsellor, it is like wah...one up!". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

> "Ummi Kalthum (MASW President at the time) fought for social workers to be exempted but they refused to accept because we reiterate the fact that it is a tool we use. But they said we were not trained in it. They wanted people with qualification. They meant professional means qualification. Accreditation means qualification so we cannot be exempted or accredited. So they said we didn't have the qualification". (Amy Bala)

Furthermore, Dr Denison Jayasooria vented his frustration that other fields such as early childhood education and counselling has either been given accreditation or being regulated by the government, but social work is still seen as a volunteering activities due to the lack of similar measure by the government.

> "There is a change for pre school education, there is even a change for counselling, but social work is often confused with volunteers doing activities". (Denison Jayasooria)

In short, remarks given by all the respondents have indicated that social work continues to struggle in its quest for professionalisation in Malaysia. Much efforts have yet to be done in order for social work to be accepted by both the general public and the government as a profession.

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6.2.2 Professional Monopoly over Specific Types of Work

The second feature is that the professionals will have full control or monopoly over a specific scope of tasks or work which can only performed by those are sanctioned to do it. The profession needs to be able to perform differently and better from others in order to bring changes to people they serve. There are six (6) sub-themes that has been identified related to the issue of professional monopoly in this study as discussed in the following.

6.2.2.1 Practitioners Need to Know the Professional Practice of Social Work

The most important thing for a social worker is that he or she must really know and understanding the professional practice as highlighted by some of the respondents.

> "Social worker is not just holding people's hands (*pegang tangan orang*). You are also DIY element! You are not 'Jack of all trades, master of none', no! You must be 'Master of all trades' and better than your client". (Sayed A. Rahman)

As Dato' Sayed A. Rahman reflected that a social worker must be independent, be in command of their responsibilities and, at the same time, be able to act more intelligently based on the situations faced by the client.

> "That's why I always tell our officers then, if you are a social worker, you must act as a social worker. There is a difference. If you don't act as a social worker, then people will think everybody can take up your job. There must be a difference between you and another person that you can do, the other cannot do. Being a social worker you can do it but another person cannot do it. You have to show. They don't have to show". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

In addition, Dato' Shamsiah also insisted that a social worker must demonstrate his or her ability above the regular manner so that people will be aware of the specialized skills possessed by a social worker. As such, the social worker must know very well their responsibilities which can portray the professional practice.

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6.2.2.2 Clarity of Area of Practice for Social Work

Some respondents looked at fields or areas of concern where social workers normally deal with, for example relating to child protection, youth delinquency, drug addiction, financial problem, and family relationship issues. Social workers are seen as expert in dealing with social problem as laid out in the following views.

> "You have problem - family problem, relationship problem, financial problem, health problem, you have to come to social work, you see, to help you out. Children problem - *anak-anak nakal atau jahat apa semua*". (Mohamad Hussain).

> "I remember when I was PKMD Kuantan, we used to get a lot of girls brought in from the brothels who're 18-19 so we took them to court and we were like magistrate for the girls, calling the police...we did the inquiry but I don't think they do it any more (after the abolishment of the Women and Girls Protection Act 1973). We were trained how to do inquiry". (Dato' Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

> "…immediately come to my mind child protection it should be our area. Immediately you know like there is an area people would say, 'Ah! This is social work area!'". (Ling How Kee)

> "I think at the moment in order for social work to be seen as a profession, I would rather we focus on what is a social worker can do. So I think in terms of like emphasizing that social workers are skilled when it comes to child protection, may be youth, those earlier issues that I said that our university were concerned about youth delinquency, drug addiction and family issue, capitalise on that kind of area". (Ling How Kee)

Two respondents have highlighted the three methods of social work practice namely casework, group work and community work as the professional approach of social workers in their daily dealings.

> "I thought at that time by bringing in officers from social welfare (to Ministry of Youth) who I noted incline in youth work, then we can expand the number of professional, trained people, in youth work because we have casework, group work and community work. This is group work. It is an extension or rather a part of social work. So I thought". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

> "…in terms of having a pool of social workers who are well qualified, able to do casework thoroughly and professionally, not to mention group work and community work". (Ling How Kee)

In this regard, the clarity of specific type of work for social workers was not so apparent although the participants have clear idea of what social workers suppose to be as experienced by Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda in his efforts. Professionally, all social workers have the capability to conduct casework, group work, and community work competently as mentioned by Dr Ling How Kee.

6.2.2.3 Organizational Context of Social Work Practice

As a new social worker in an organization, normally he or she starts with casework practice. Along their career path, they will eventually be promoted and will be more involved in administrative duties as shared by Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda.

> "All (social work) graduates perform casework function. As you go up the ladder you will take over administrative work but everybody starts right down there". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

This is in line with the professional education of social work where students are trained not only to do casework, group work and community work, but also in the area of administration and policy advocacy.

6.2.2.4 Overlap with Other Professions

On the other hand, professional responsibility of social workers may often be misunderstood by the public as they are familiar with other similar professions such as counsellors or lawyers. This can be seen in cases dealing with children such as child protection work and child marriage issues.

> "…we keep telling our people, like Child Protectors (*Pelindung Kanak-kanak*), that you are still the caseworker and the counsellor is your resource to help you out with the case. So the counsellors, whatever they do they must report back to you because you are the main person…But you are caseworker because the counsellor is just look into certain aspect…The Counsellor supposed to give you the feedback of what they found out from the client, and then it's for you to

work out the next step because you are a social worker". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

"There are some areas where our work overlap with other profession. For example, when we come to child marriage, I felt we could say a lot more but they would not consult us instead they would consult the lawyers". (Ling How Kee)

As a result, much of the roles of the social workers are overlook when certain cases are seen better handled by other professions. However, there are cases where the role seems to be overlapped with that of caunseling and advocacy work.

6.2.2.5 Inability to Assert Professional Boundaries

The element of professional boundaries was raised as an indicator of professional monopoly. In this regard, the professional boundary of social worker should be precise, however, it is not evidenced as in the communication with Elsie Lee. She praised the quality of work of the medical social workers during her time.

"...there were already social workers who were well trained, very professional the way they practice. They have established a reputation already for working as a professional. They were consulted in case management, at administration level…I read their report, very detailed, very thorough, volumes you know. The recording was good. The reporting was really of a standard because every time we send out our replies on the referrals it goes through the head of unit". (Elsie Lee)

"...at that time the hospital gave us money every year. There's a fund which we could tap. It was given to us. We could use it to help patients to pay for bus fares, taxi fares, train fares to come for treatment. We could also use it giving them for food if they were short of food, things like that. So we were using that fund. It was controlled by the Head of Unit in the sense that there was also that system of providing waiver slips. We assess the case and if we feel that they can't afford the hospital fees that we would send a waiver slip to them and they would waive the charges for the patients". (Elsie Lee)

The examples quoted by Elsie somehow was not adequate to demonstrate the elements in the professional bounadries of social work, for example in handling financial aids.

Therefore, this will continue to be a struggle for social work to define its professional boundaries in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, the control over certain type of work or division of work can be regulated through legislation. Social workers who have been exposed to counselling skills in their training and education, and have also integrated counselling in their professional practice became the casualty of professional boundaries claim when counselling was legislated through the Counsellors' Act 1998. Social workers were suddenly told not to conduct counselling if they were not a registered counsellor. It created a lot of unhappiness and tension between social workers and counsellors, especially after the Board of Counselors turned down the request from social workers to be recognized but being exempted from registration. Both Elsie Lee and Dr Ling How Kee saw the practice of counselling have been separated and became the territory of the counsellors due to the enactment of the Counsellors' Act 1998.

> "There this very clear line drawn like social workers cannot do counselling. Counsellors are saying that this is their field of work. So it actually created very unhappy, almost hostile feeling. I had feedback from some of the medical social workers that they were practically told off when they are saying that they are doing counselling…It has come to that like as if is my field, you are not supposed to come in that field. There was that kind of thing in the hospitals like you cannot touch my case, this is my area, professional rivalry…So that's another sad part, division of work when it comes to counselling". (Elsie Lee)

> "I don't know whether in that way it set us back, if I would say in terms of the boundary. Because after that social workers will say, well community development officers would say, "We can't do counselling any more because that's the job of the counsellor". In fact, that move, if you look at it now in retrospect, it set the profession back you know…Because by professionalizing Counsellors, then they set a boundary and "social worker, no, you don't do counselling any more'. But yet I know, we did a lot of training courses at that time counselling for drug dependent and also we did (other) counselling courses…There were a lot of emphasis on counselling, training social welfare officers to do counselling. But this is where suddenly (social workers were) marginalized". (Ling How Kee)

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In this issue of professional boundaries, it is a disadvantage to the social work profession which does not enjoy the protection of their area of work through a legislation such as what was given to the counsellors through the Counsellor Act 1998.

The inability of the social work profession to assert its professional boundaries is also being attributed to the lack of representatives to champion or to defend for the exlusive rights of the profession. This is evidenced in the response below:

> "As far as we are concern, maybe there was no fighter then to say that, "No! That's ours!" To me that's a big area which I think we fail to behold the whole needs of welfare within certain period of time". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Dato' Sayed further emphasised that the social work professionals working in the Department of Social Welfare were not able to exercise their professional views or forsee the overall needs of the welfare services during those years.

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6.2.2.6 The Elitist Element of the Profession

The last sub-theme that emerged from the discussion on professional monopoly of specific type of work is that the profession has to be seen as distinctive or having the element of elitism which differentiate them from other people involved in voluntary or charity work. With this elitist element, the profession would be sought after or recognized as a source of reference when people need professional help. One of the scenario is equating social worker to a medical doctor in solving social and family problems as suggested by Dato' Mohamad Hussain.

> "You have problem - family problem, relationship problem, financial problem, health problem, you have to come to social work, you see, to help you out. Children problem - *anak-anak nakal atau jahat apa semua*, so we are like the medicine, medical officer in terms of human welfare. So you go to doctor if you are sick. You have cough they give you medication. But if you have relationship problem, *anak nakal, anak jahat, gaduh* husband and wife, so you have to go to

see doctor, welfare doctor... Anything about relationship, social problem you have to see social doctor, social welfare officer". (Dato' Mohamad Hussain)

"Partly because we haven't achieved that kind of status where people recognizes that this is your professional boundaries, this is your field. And partly there isn't anybody that stand out and people would say, 'Ah! We should ask MASW…'. (Ling How Kee)

"You give opinion people will come to you. Opinion seekers will look for you, "What's your opinion for this bla bla bla..." So you give... That's the elitist touch". (Sayed A. Rahman)

At the same time, Gill Raja sees that the social workers are not just ordinary helper, but they need to set higher standards in professional help.

"I supposed as social worker you desperately up to it and person receiving it, but you are also trying to set standards and bring peoples up". (Gill Raja)

Nonetheless, the weakness or failure of the social work profession to dominate its area of work was attributed to its emphasis on generalist practice instead of being specialist or elitist in its entry qualification at the undergraduate level (Gasker, 2018; Miley et al., 2004; Trevithick, 2012). This issue has been debated in the past (Trevithick, 2012), yet the social work profession has maintained its generalist approach in educational program to meet market demand in some countries, as acknowledged by some of the respondents.

"Another thing there was some transitions between specialization and generic work. At the university of course we were given generic, everything we learned from A to Z". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

"Basically there was a debate in the late 60s and early 70s whether welfare should be generalist or specialist. They took this step of combination of both. I would say they were more generalist". (Sayed A. Rahman)

"…we do theory and method, we do counselling skills, we do community work, we do social policy. I mean we do more the generic social work practice". (Ling How Kee)

"To me, learning from US social work education, that's why they call it advanced generic, partly the rational is to cut costs in terms of coming up with so many expert people. If you look at specialization is endless: gerontology,

> cancer, children, women and all that. It is a lot easier to teach social work knowledge, values and skills to work with individual, group, family and community…While at the PhD level or maybe now currently Master level, you can specialize. I think at the undergraduate level it is better to focus on generic approach". (Ismail Baba)

However, Prof. Dr Ismail Baba pointed out that specialization can be done at the postgraduate level like what is being practised in the US, where the postgraduate studies are already matured and advanced in terms of specialization (Blom, 2004; Dakin et al., 2015; Jamal et al., 2022). Contrary to the US, social work education in Malaysia has not have that advantage of having specialization and still can be considered at its infancy where majority of the social work programs are concentrated at the undergraduate level.

By virtual of positioning itself as generalist, social work couldn't portray itself as an elite with expertise, therefore not visible to the general public when come to addressing or tackling social issues. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman gave a critical analysis into the drawbacks of the social work profession of failing to positioning itself as elite group.

> "This is visibility. No elitist element then you are not there…Ya (elistist is) missing in social work. So you must have somebody... you are the elitist component of the whole structure. You cannot be generalist all the time and who is the leader?". (Dato' Sayed A. Rahman)

> "So, you see, in any of the organization you must elitist element in championing this course. The problem is we are so generalist, we take for granted. If I say, "Which is the elitist, the elite group of welfare officers? Elite division". Tell me who? …So elitist element is missing in welfare". (Sayed A. Rahman)

In summary, the social work profession in Malaysia has not been able to monopolize the specific area of work. As a profession, a social worker needs to demonstrate some standards in executing his or her responsibility. Although the respondents are able to pinpoint casework, groupwork and community work as their professional practices, and

to identify several types of work, for example, child protection, youth delinquency, family relationship, and so forth as the area of practice of social work, but they do not have control over their core business. One is that there is still the issue in overlapping of tasks among similar professions where social work is having difficulty in distinguishing its own professional boundary. Consequently, this lead to the issue of elitism where the generic practice is still emphasised in the professional social work education, thus not positioning itself as an elitist profession.

6.2.3 Professional Autonomy of Action

Professional autonomy of action can be defined as the ability of the profession to make decision and carrying out its roles and responsibilities without its authority being questioned or challenged (Freidson, 1970; Johnson, 1972). Social workers do enjoy certain degree of autonomy if their roles in the organization or work are well defined. For example, social workers working in the DSW have power because they have been given authority by the law such as stipulated in the Child Act 2001, Domestic Violence Act 1994, Destitute Act 1978, Adoption Act 1952, among others. Even the Members of Parliament or State Assemblymen have to refer these related cases to the social welfare officers. Therefore, social workers who are working as social welfare officers has the autonomy because the department has institutional power on social welfare under the law as emphasised by the following respondents.

> "Welfare stands as Welfare Department, under all those Acts, must be enforced by the Welfare Department as long as welfare officers been gazetted as protector and as probation officer then things go on". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "I told the welfare officers on the ground you are always sparing with the *Yang Berhormat*...whichever they are…No way they can escape you. They got cases they will refer to you". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "I told my welfare officers, you got welfare power…Ok, we close welfare, you will see people begging on the streets any time - by tomorrow, by next month

> you can see on the street. You will be searching for me. That's the power of welfare". (Sayed A. Rahman)

However, the autonomy can be undermined by another higher authoritative body in situation when this higher body sees the potential in sending other officers as well to pursue postgraduate programs which were used to offer exclusively to the DSW. This is evidenced in the communication with Dato' Sayed A. Rahman.

> "There was an arrangement between our department and social work schools in Cardiff, Wales and LSE. Later on the government came in…JPA and SPA. They were more interested in different fields. Suddenly they realize these are good fields then they took over the whole arrangements. So we have to go to the normal process of interviewing…so the chance is as good as gone…Then they give PTDs also can do social planning". (Sayed A. Rahman)

The advantage of having exclusive arrangement for career pathway for social workers in the DSW is now being reduced as the allocation has to be shared with officers from other ministries or departments. Due to this situation, it is also a disadvantage to social workers who want to make these fields of study as their specialization since the opportunity could not be enjoyed exclusively.

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6.2.4 Possession of a Distinctive Knowledge Base

Welbourne (2009) has noted that a profession possesses special skills which are distinct from other occupational groups. In this study, the respondents highlighted the importance of social workers acquiring professional knowledge and skills, and, at the same time, appreciated the importance of supervision and field placement as part of the professionalism of social work.

6.2.4.1 Social Work Knowledge and Skills

Dato' Mohamad Hussain claimed that social workers have specialized knowledge and skills in handling human and social problem which is equivalent to medical doctors in the human services to a certain extent he coined the term 'social doctor' for the social worker.

> "You have problem - family problem, relationship problem, financial problem, health problem, you have to come to social work, you see, to help you out…so we are like the medicine, medical officer in terms of human welfare…So we are as good as medical department in terms of social, social relationship... Anything about relationship, social problem you have to see social doctor, social welfare officer". (Mohamad Hussain)

Similarly, the social work profession also possesses special skills and knowledge that are useful in bringing development and change to the community, as well as highly sought after in the job market, as indicated by one of the respondents.

> "Using our social work knowledge on how you get development, how you get change, how you get communal that we have to". (Gill Raja)

> "…because they (social work graduates) are problem solvers, conceive, assess, you know the core skills of social work are things that the market would pick up". (Gill Raja)

On certain occasions, when dealing with clients, social workers need the skills to see the situation and may use negotiation skills and guide the clients through the difficult time as suggested by Dato' Sayed A. Rahman.

> "That I am, as you said, always move...negotiating the wave...You don't need to follow, you just negotiate. And principle of social work, we just say we guide you and try what you do". (Sayed A. Rahman)

In addition, social work knowledge and skills learned from university social work program makes a lot of difference for practitioners to perform more professionally utilizing those knowledge and skills acquired as explained by Dato' Norani Hashim (2018).

> "There's a lot of difference. You gain very good knowledge to help guide you to prepare your work. When I went in (to USM) I already heard about social work but not really sure what social work is all about…I went there and I was given additional knowledge to help me in my work. To place and to prepare me well as a service provider". (Norani Hashim)

One respondent stated that training in social work is essential for a social worker to do a proper job with relevant skills and knowledge where the key is not about what to do but instead must be on how to do it correctly.

> "When we developed the ISO, for example, the ISO of getting the case done, first you must interview the client. How do you do the interview? If you have gone through the training, you would interview differently compare to those who don't have the exposure to that kind of training. Like a doctor, they say operate, but how to operate? They have already studied how to be a doctor. For us, it has to be that way. Interview, you must learn how to interview through your social work training. So it is not procedural". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

On the other hand, another perspective from a respondent is that social work is still very weak where its technicality, namely the skills and knowledge, is not at par with other established professions.

> "With due respect, social work is very weak because of technicality. Your substance is not there…you are distance with other professional body". (Sayed A. Rahman)

Therefore, this weakness can be overcome if the social workers are not just thinking about getting the job done, but strive to instill the professional skills into their delivery of services.

> "My only concern is that our people just want to get their job done. To instil social work skills is very important". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

In summary, social work knowledge and skills are essential for the social workers to undertake their tasks effectively. While these professional skills are deemed important, one reservation is about its depth and distinctiveness when compare to other established

professions. There is a valid point to explore, nonetheless, the discussion on the technically of social work knowledge is beyond the scope of this study.

6.2.4.2 Importance of Social Work Supervision

However, by obtaining a degree in social work is inadequate for the person to carry out the task as a social worker. The knowledge obtained during the tertiary education is not sufficient. Hence, it has been proposed that supervision is the key element where an experienced prctitioner can guide the new social work graduates to enable them to shift into the real work environment smoothly. The importance of supervision is supported by the experience of Dato' Shamsiah getting through her job in the early days.

> "I think although I was trained in social work, I was really guided by my seniors how to handle the job. It's not that easy from the university you just go without experience just want to do the job. You still need some guidance. That guidance is crucial to ensure that our people can do it". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

In addition to the need of supervision by a senior staff, it is also vital for the organization to established a formal supervisory structure. This structure will enable a suitable and qualified person to supervise accordingly as the examples shared by Dato' Shamsiah and Elsie Lee below.

> "That time was the *Penyelia Latihan* (Training Supervisior). It's always with the *Timbalan Pengarah Negeri* (Deputy State Social Welfare Director). In fact, during my time, we even called people who will be sitting for their exam, give them a little bit of tutorial by the Training Supervisors. I think at that time the *Penyelia Latihan* was very concern because the *Penyelia Latihan* then was all or mostly social workers, diploma graduates from Singapore. They wanted to make sure that these people really do their work and instil social work skills". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

> "Ms Sushama came in she established the proper kind of system already. She had the opportunity to go to overseas for 13 months before she set up the unit. She learnt from that and when she came back she was able to, really put in place all the policies, procedures and she had this supervision system where she met with social workers at least once in two weeks. We also have case conferences every Saturday where we presented cases we thought we had difficulty working

on. That kind of supervision, mentoring, and that kind of caring attitude...people just happy to work together, it was really helpful". (Elsie Lee)

It has been demonstrated that social work possesses its own knowledge and skills which need to be strengthened by effective supervision. These two entities are the core elements that build up the uniqueness of the social work profession.

6.2.4.3 Importance of Field Placement in Social Work Education

Field education or field placement is considered an integral part of professional social work education (Bogo, 2010; Caspersen & Smeby, 2020; Hay, Dale & Yeung, 2016; Wayne, Raskin & Bogo, 2010) and there's no exception in Malaysia as indicated by respondents who were social work educators like Prof Ismail Baba and Dr Ling How Kee, as well as Dr Denison Jayasooria who initiated the short-lived Diploma in Social Work at Universiti Malaya. Dato' Shamsiah, the practitioner's perspective, sees the importance of field placement as transfer of knowledge and skills from academic into the real world for the students.

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"Because now we have 3 years' program and 4 years' program. Then practicum is the obvious one, USM has 3 practicums, other universities only 1 placement…feedback that I got from the various organizations, they prefer to have students with a long-term placement. USM, the strength is that students are exposed to different type of social work methods". (Ismail Baba)

"We first started when it was a four years' program, we actually have a longer...what we call industrial placement (latihan industri), and then two fieldworks. The first one was one day a week and then the second one is two days a week, then the two months' placement which is not unique to social work program which is the university, UNIMAS program for all courses. Because that is...experiences of the work world so to speak". (Ling How Kee)

"There were six modules, it was taught over the weekends, it was one-year level course with requirement, placement and things like that". (Denison Jayasooria)

"I suppose social work you have to do practical placement. You learn theories without the practical placement, very difficult. You cannot transfer that training into practice unless you are exposed to it". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

The field placement is vital in helping the students to link knowledge that they have acquired at the university to the work place. It is an important learning process for the students to be exposed to various actual social problems and to different practice methods to strengthen their command of social work skills.

6.2.4.4 Lack of Local Academic Journals, Publications and Research in Social Work

In Chapter Five and Six, there were several local social work publications being identified. The earliest attempt was by the MASW through the publication of its newsletter 'Tinjauan' which the first issue came out in June 1975, followed by the second in 1976. The first journal on social welfare was *Jurnal Kebajikan Masyarakat* published by the DSW in June 1980 (Jurnal Kebajikan Masyarakat, 1980). When asked why USM didn't attempt to publish a journal in social work, Dr Ismail Baba gave the following explantions which includes the lack of capacity of the social work educators at that time:

> "USM memang tak boleh buat because the University doesn't encourage because we already have Journal Social Science developed by University Malaya. So I think that's enough. Again, for that reason, we didn't want to come out…becasue we may not be able to". (Ismail Baba)

At the same time, the MASW newsletter were not published regularly, and subsequently moved from an aspiration of becoming a professional publication for members into more of a newsletter that disseminate news and events of the association to its members when the name changed to 'Berita Ahli' or News for Members in 1984, and later to 'Berita PPSIM' or MASW News in 1987. Although not being explained explicitly by Elsie Lee, the lack of capacity of the Executive Committee of the MASW can be the main reason for the infrequent publication of the newsletter.

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> "Even in the committee, we say we can't expect just one person to take everything up so we divide the tasks - membership, newsletter, whatever, but in the end nothing happens. It's happening again with this committee now. They are saying take care of this, take care of that, but...hopefully with the younger ones in now things will move. It's not like as if we didn't try it before but somehow it has not taken up. As leader I feel like, sometimes, embarrassed. Nothing to show". (Elsie Lee)

When the lack of capacity due to the small number of people in the social work program at USM and the Executive Committee of the MASW is attributed to the lack of publications in social work, the Jurnal Pembangunan Masyarakat which has the backing of a much bigger and better resourced organization in the form of the DSW does not fare better. However, idle attitude as well as difficulty in getting relevant and quality articles was cited by Dr Ismail Baba as main obstacle for the publication of journals like Jurnal Kebajikan Masyarakat and Journal of Social Development of UUM.

> "*Macam lepas batok di tangga*[56]. It is not really like...they have problem getting articles, and again our social development (Journal) also struggle to get articles. (Ismail Baba)

Actually, the Malaysian Journal of Social Work (*Jurnal Kerja Sosial Malaysia*) was introduced in 2002 by UKM with the publication of its first volume in June. However, there were disputes to the qualifications of the editor and the composition of the editorial board, as well as the articles accepted and published in the journal. Prof Ismail Baba, whose was one of the members of the editorial board explained as follows:

> "Because we didn't want to recognize that, right? Because the person who started it, Lukman, is not a social worker. We looked at the materials, some of them were not related to social work. We didn't want him to continue leading and trying to mislead the profession. Also the editorial board not people from social work. We did not want that to happen". (Ismail Baba)

[56] A Malay proverb that means doing one thing but not until the end or to be completed.

A further investigation, it was found that in the minutes of the 6th MASW Executive Committee meeting dated 30 November 2002, it was mentioned that there was request from UKM to collaborate with the MASW on the Malaysian Journal of Social Work. However, the Executive Committee made a decision not to proceed as they were disappointed didn't receive any replies from both the editors.

> "2.8 Social Work Journal: Elsie said she had repeatedly sent e-mail to the Department Head, Lokman and Khaizir, and spoken to Lokman before he left for his studies, about arranging a meeting to discuss the collaboration on the journal but has not received any concrete appointment. She has sent another e-mail, expressing disappointment and dissastisfaction with the situation, but they have not replied, so it was agreed that the arrangement to co-publish the journal was not viable at this point". (MASW, 30 November 2002)

Both Prof Ismail Baba's explanation and the minutes of the MASW showed that there were efforts to publish a social work journal in Malaysia but it could not last probably due to the lack of trust. One is because the key people were not from the social work profession, and the MASW deemed the editors were not serious in engaging the professional association as co-publisher. Another reason maybe not mentioned probably is that Prof Ismail Baba was sceptical with the curriculum of the Master of Medical Social Work at UKM which was introduced in 2000.

> "UKM (undergraduate) I'm not sure but I was involved for UKM Medical School but they don't want to listen to us (on its Master of Medical Social Work)". (Ismail Baba)

The premature death of the Malaysian Journal of Social Work didn't deter the dream of having a social work journal in the country one day. Prof Ismail Baba stressed the importance of having key stakeholders supporting the journal and the quality of the publication is a priority.

> "I really like to see Journal of Social Work that involves MASW, IPT and JKM. I think it is good to have one good journal on social work for Malaysia rather than having one coming out but the quality is not there. But to bring all these institutions together is not easy but it is not impossible". (Ismail Baba)

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The publication of social work books by the local universities, especially in Bahasa Melayu, was seen as not enough as Prof Ismail Baba acknowledged.

> "Compare to social work publications, UUM has done more compare to other universities. I think I must give credit to UUM for that. Even USM also didn't come up with that. We also felt that to come out with a really good social work publication is not easy. Sometimes the knowledge that we get from our own research through journal is much faster to share as compare to writing books. But again our students are really looking forward to material in Bahasa in social work, one thing that is lacking at USM and maybe other universities". (Ismail Baba)

Similarly, social work was seen of struggling to secure research grants to conduct research. Prof Ismail Baba, having the experience of teaching at USM and UUM, sees the different priority in Research University (RU) and other universities in grant allocation for research.

> "USM at one point has many grants as a Research University. Unlike other universities which are not RU, maybe they have less grant and have to fight for a bigger cake. Last time when I was at USM, I didn't have problem even to get like half a million ringgit to do research on HIV/AIDS related issue to social work. There was a lot of money so it depends on the individual social work educators". (Ismail Baba)

> "I don't have grant at all (when I was at UUM). My colleagues of course have to struggle. To them, there's no specific grant been given to the school to come out with the research but like USM is different at the time because there was plenty of money to do research. But it is always a struggle, our colleagues at UUM, to get grant". (Ismail Baba)

As a summary, the themes of the knowledge base of social work in this study are related to the importance of social work knowledge and skills in practice, the significance of supervision and field placement to support the learning of practitioners and social work students, and the lacking of a social work journal, publications and research in social work in the country. While the themes emerged here are not a direct reflection or

deliberation of the knowledge base of social work, it can be seen an indicator of the overall capacity of social work education in Malaysia.

6.2.5 Professional Education Regulated by Members of the Profession

The introduction of professional social work education at the tertiary level in Malaya and Malaysia has been deliberated in Chapter Four and Five respectively. The establishment of the NJCCSWE as a response to the concern of the quality of social work programs and credentials of lecturers, and its limitation as voluntary advisory body has also been discussed in Chapter 6. It is, therefore, evidence that the lack of regulatory power by both the MASW and the NJCCSWE indicates the lack of direct regulatory control of social work education by the profession.

Despite facing limitation due to the lack of regulation power, Prof Ismail Baba stressed that social work educators at his university have always strived to maintain the quality of its education through linkage with international social work educational body like the International Association of School of Social Work (IASSW) which has publised global social work education standards, and having visiting scholars from abroad to ensure the program meets the international standards.

> "The university they have to abide to the international standard of social work training. I think is very much related to the development of the profession. Definitely I think, to me, to follow the minimum standard of social work education, and if you have the right resources, talking about human resources and all that, I'm sure we can improve the standards of social workers in the country". (Ismail Baba)

> "When it comes to quality we tried not to compromise. Even though there's still a lot of limitations, we tried to…Of course at the very beginning we have already joined the IASSW so we get a lot of visiting lecturers, people like John Spores. And these are the people trying to let us know what are the standards on competency that we must hold on to in regards to social work. With all these people from international, I suppose, social work educators, we would be able to sustain that quality". (Ismail Baba)

One of the implications in the lack of regulatory control is that the social work educators would not be able to run its program to the full professional educational specifications, especially in deciding the format or infrastructure of student's practicum against the policy of the university or resources allocated by the university, as revealed by Mrs Gill Raja and Prof Ismail Baba.

> "I have no problems with that (curriculum), except because how the university was structured - only block fieldwork that we had been allowed. And during the second, while I'm don't know if it's second year but it meant second last what to do. So we had the one-day week fieldwork because it is still not enough but we got a little bit more in. But into the dilemma was trying to fit a social work into a rigid university system we were always the odd one out, you know...we always wanting different things to the other courses so that can make things difficult". (Gill Raja)

> "But we are facing constrain and limitation so we are not able to...Again we also need to set up infrastructure in terms of practicum. There's a lot of areas need to be improved in that". (Ismail Baba)

Another aspect impacted in social work education is the inability for the social work program at the universities to employ those with relevant social work qualifications to be the social work educators as the NJCCSWE is not a formal entity that has regulatory power under the law. Even the National Policy and Educational Standards for Social Work in Malaysia (2007) prepared by the NJCCSWE and presented to the MOHE can only be used as a guide without enforcement of a law as viewed by Dr Ismail Baba.

> "I'm looking at it (NJCCSWE) that since it is just as an informal *Jawatankuasa*, we should formalize it then it would be recognized…I think if we can formalize this *Jawatankuasa*, we have to make sure that all social work programs in this country must have at least 70% social work educators. We have to make sure they are trained, maybe advocate on their behalf through the VC that these are the standards required. Maybe with the Social Work Bill is recognize it will be easier to advocate". (Ismail Baba)

> "As a guideline. I'm not sure about their (MOHE) response because Azlinda was involved. I think Azlinda presented the report. I noticed some of the write-up was like coming from my paper". (Ismail Baba)

More critically, there seems to be a gap between what the professional body aspires and what the educators pursues. Elsie Lee, for one, expressed her frustrations over the lack of interest among social work educators towards the activities of MASW, and without the collective voice, it would be difficult for individual social work educators to influence or to convince their respective university of introducing important element of social work practice, such as the competency standards, into the education syllabus. Her sentiment is shared by Dr Ismail Baba that both MASW and NJCCSWE need to work more closely as the NJCCSWE on its own is not active enough to carry out activities.

> "I think universities are not really giving MASW much space. They don't give much priority to MASW except for Azlinda who consciously will try to pull us in because she is in the committee… But other than that I feel most of the lecturers are working on their own without connection at all. Don't feel them...if they are members because it is for their KPI or whatever. It's for selfish reason...that's what I mean, we don't get that kind of support from our members. The few who are supportive, you can count…Other than that I feel so disconnected from them". (Elsie Lee)

> "Disappointed when Pauline ran one workshop with all the academics on competency based education which I thought was so interesting. I really enjoyed the session. So much we can do! Immediate after also not much interest in it. I mean I can understand there're lots of hurdles for the lecturers. If you don't get your VC, your Senate all to approve also is difficult. People like Azlinda already pushed. She is more active, she advocates more. Some areas still very weak. If you want to push social work education further...is not moving...not really moving". (Elsie Lee)

> "Yes. Not frequent enough. I think we should have a regular kind of thing. Maybe MASW and NJCCSWE should work together". (Ismail Baba)

The inability of the social work profession to control and determine the criteria of its professional education, besides as a form of occupation control as discussed earlier in 6.2.2, was being criticised as lack of professionalism when compared to the Counselors by Dato' Sayed A. Rahman.

> "Even counsellors, we define...1,000 hours...I was the drafter of that. So I said, "No. You do not come to that 1000 hours of counselling, with practicum, even

> you have PhD overseas, you cannot practice here". This is the kind of criteria you maintain, upgrade the professionalism. So this is where social work is not". (Sayed A. Rahman)

To sum up, the social work profession has yet to obtain the regulatory power over its professional education. Neither the formal organization of MASW or the informal grouping of the NJCCSWE has the authority to control the professional education at tertiary level, and is further compound with the lack of cooperation between the two as a collective force.

6.2.6 A Professional Organization

The next key feature of professionalisation is having an organization that represent the grouping. Professional association is formed for affiliation and recognition. However, as this study revealed in Chapter Four, the forming of such organization does not come automatically or just happen naturally. It requires someone who feel passionate about getting professional recognition to initiate. In addition, the forming of a professional organization also does not mean it will run smoothly or effectively. More crucially, a professional organization does not guarantee desired power enjoyed by the profession. In this subsection, these sub-themes emerged during the discussion on the MASW as an effective professional organization representing the social workers, i.e. proaction of key leaders, consistency and relevancy, and the regulatory power (or lack of) as an association.

6.2.6.1 Proaction of Key Leaders of the Association

Rank and Hutchison (2000) has identified five common aspects in defining leadership in social work: Proaction, Values and Ethics, Empowerment, Vision, and Communication. Some of the characteristics of proaction include "to motivate, organize,

take risks, facilitate change, mentor, display courage, innovate, be entrepreneurial and persistent' (p. 492). The founding president of the MASW, Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda, exhibits characteristics of proaction in organizing, motivating, and persistent in establishing the association almost single handily as shown in the following excerpts:

> "So I felt that there should be something. We have our in-service training but in-service training it is for functional purposes. But to be recognized as a profession, and at the same time we are competing, more or less, with anybody and everybody who call themselves social workers… I felt there must be an alternative with this. So that's the idea - so ok why don't all social workers come together forming an association?"

> "...So I said while I do on other people what about my own profession? Why don't we get together? That's how I started to think about it and talked to a few friends. The immediate people that I talked with were those in the Culture, Youth and Sports because I was still there, but they were a bit lukewarm. They have lost interest because they are now focusing on culture and sports".

> "I talked to Sockanathan. He was the DG...He said yes why not. You have been organizing people you organize this. I said thank you very much with your support. So next thing was I looked around what have we got - the Almoners Association. The Almoners are after all social workers; the only thing is that they are doing medical side.
>
> Why don't we get together? My first thought was we joined them but then they are small in numbers and we (social welfare officers) are big in numbers".

> "So never mind I said let's talk with them - Sushama, Zaharah, Grace. Sush and Zaharah they were the main. I went to see them. I was overwhelmed by the ladies. They were all...you know Zaharah is a fighting cock you know? So she said we are small and at that time there was no likelihood that the number of almoners will increase and you social welfare officers are more and will swallow us. I said no, what are you talking about? There's no question about that. We are together. We have to fight together. You are small. We are small but if we combine ourselves we will be stronger. I think about more than 6 months. I started to work on it in 1972…Finally we launched it".

> "Yes I would think so (as the main person pushing for the association). They (Sushama and Grace) were waiting but I was the one who mobilize".

It is clear that if Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda didn't have the proaction characteristics, he would have not taken all the trouble to talk to colleagues and trying to convince them of the idea of forming a professional organization. He would have

given up with the lack of support from his fellow colleagues and the resistant and distrust of the medical social workers of his motive. Yet he shouldered on until the association was launched.

Not only that, Datuk Abdullah also demonstrate proaction in promoting the association as well as in saving the association at one point. Getting the MASW to be member of BIM is the first step being recognized as a professional association. Making a comeback to lead the association in the 1980s was to rescue and to revive the association as illustrated by Datuk Abdullah in the following excerpts:

> "In my time I promoted, in many ways, as soon as I came back (from UK) I joined BIM, reason is I want to push social work to be recognized as a profession". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

> "MASW was nearly deregistered…1982-85…before 82…Neglect. There were no activities. No report, didn't submit anything to ROS…I came in second time…Yes I came in because it took a long time to get it going, I don't want it to go under…Yes because of that. Because I think all the trouble to create it, to get it going and after that because of negligent, because of disinterest the whole thing was going under. I quickly saved it". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

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Another President seen as dynamic was the late Anthony Tan because he also demonstrated the proaction leadership. It was revealed by Elise Lee (2017) that she could see the differences of praction Anthony brought to the Association both locally and internationally as compared to his predecessors and successors.

> "What I saw when Anthony came in, he was from an NGO. He was the first one outside the government. You could see the difference. He was much vocal, proactive and he actually did push the boundary further for social work. One of those things I thought was very significant was his role in starting the Commonwealth Organization for Social Work being one of the founding members. He played a big role in building elationship with the international body, with the Association of School of Social Work. To me, he was quite a dynamic leader. He pushed quite a few issues forward. Unfortunately, his term ended and then it went back again to JKM. Later it went to academic. During that term, nothing much happened. Not much development. Unfortunately, somehow the two person in leadership somehow didnt see eye to eye. So things were sort of in the limbo for a while. To have meeting was also not easy. They

were also not based in KL. Both of them were based up North, so that made it more difficult". (Elsie Lee)

The other President who have demonstrated similar trait in proaction was Elsie Lee who transformed the MASW from a seminar organizing role into a social work training provider role as she shared her initiatives and vision in the following transcript.

> "I remember we were more into national activities. We had like national seminars, conference that kind things…When I took over as President in 2001...I felt a very strong need for the Association that they could contribute in providing training. From that time even I just felt that was one way we to be of significant use. It was actually to promote training for social workers and NGO workers, even for government welfare workers…Between Amy and me, we managed to persuade JKM Negeri Sembilan that time to run a course on mental health. That was the first kind of thing we did to introduce training program into the Association activities". (Elsie Lee)

> "My dream has always been that MASW will finally set up a training institute, run all those professional development courses, be able to enhance the skills of the NGO workers". (Elsie Lee)

Ms. Elsie also took the initiative to invite Dr Pauline Meemeduma, a social work expert from Australia to collaborate with the Association in developing competency standards for social work practice although she only happened to meet Pauline for the first time inside a lift.

> "…later part of the year that I met Pauline. I met her at the Kuching conference, advancing social work education conference. I was introduced to her in the lift. As I was talking to her I found out that she had been doing this competency standards thing with Seychelles Islands. So I said why don't you come over. At that time also I think the ICSW was going to hold a conference here in 2004. They were looking for people to run some workshop. I think in 2004 we already started talking about the thing. Pauline was supposed to come and help run one workshop. I just ask her. I said since ICSW is asking MASW to run a workshop. Abdullah Malim Baginda was the President of MAKPEM then. He asked us to take one workshop so I was thinking what do we do. So when Pauline talked about this (competency standards) I said, "Pauline, why don't you come and talk about this competency standards thing at this workshop?" So she agreed and after she did that, we got her to come and meet us, and run two workshops on it". (Elise Lee)

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Finally, it was during Elise's presidency and her praction that the MASW finally operates in a permanent and functioning office, and brought stability to the association until today.

> "We need to have some kind of survey result to show why we need the competency standards (after the ICSW workshop). So Pauline even agreed to help us draft the questionnaire and all that… Because of that, DIGI gave us the funding to set up office. Dato' Shamsiah gave us about 30 or 35 thousands that we could set up an office. That's how we rented the room that we have now. We bought 2 computers, printer". (Elsie Lee)

Datuk Abdullah Malim Baginda, Anthony Tan and Elise Lee have demonstrated that leadership is needed in forming and running a professional association like the MASW. It is not coincident that they were only among four out of fifthteen Presidents who have held the MASW's presidency for more than a term. Although the main trait fo leadership showcased among the three was proaction, other traits like vision and communication can also be seen. Not only that the leaders must keep the association running, they also have to make sure that it runs consistently and stay relevant as discussed in the following subsection.

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6.2.6.2 The Relevance of the Professional Association

As an effective organization, the MASW not only needs to stay active, it has to be the leading organization for the profession, not just for its members. In this regard, it has played a leading role in fighting for the justifiable salary for social workers according to Ms Elsie Lee in the 1970s and 1980s.

> "at that time the Association was fighting very hard to get professional recognition, to get that degree salary. I remember there was a lot of reviews of salary at that time, and many groups were fighting to put on the degree's scale. There were the Suffian salary review[57], Cabinet salary review, and Ms Sushama

[57] The Royal Commission Report on Salary Review and Terms of Service in the Civil Service 1967 (Suffian Report 1967)

> really put up a strong advocacy boasting the image of medical social workers especially. She went for all the hearings, put up papers after papers". (Elsie Lee)

In addition, the MASW has also advocated for the interest of the DSW on two occations by writing to the Minister of its disapproval. First incident was in 1990 when the Ministry of Social Welfare was dissolved and the DSW was put under the Ministry of Unity and Social Development. The second incident was in 2011 when the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development appointed a PTD officer as the DG of the DSW. Ms Elsie Lee said the MASW wrote to the Minister to express support for the positions of the DSW who were also disagree with the decisions in both occation.

> "That was one stage when JKM no longer became a Ministry but put under Ministry of Unity and Social Development. That we didn't agree I think. We did write in I think. Anthony (Tan) I think did write in didn't agree with that". (Elsie Lee)

> "Ya. We supported JKM with that (disagreed to appoint a PTD officer as DG). We did support them. They themselves put up a paper also". (Elsie Lee)

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Apart from supporting fellow social workers and the DSW on social work matters, the MASW also plays a role linking the DSW, social welfare NGOs and the social work educators in capacity building as observed by Mrs Amy Bala.

> "…you can see that during that period, MASW were very involved with working on the competency training. It's not JKM but we also opened up a lot to the NGOs, which is one of my forte working with NGOs, so we also empowered the NGOs into the competencies. They also came in as trainers which was good because they came as partner. That's the time we linked to the universities. The very first training, we have universities that came for the training". (Amy Bala)

As a professional body, the MASW is not serving the interest of its members, but it plays a much bigger and crucial role in advocating for the social workers as a professional grouping, in supporting and pushing the DSW as a leading social welfare and social work service agency, and in linking the government, non-government and

university to enhance the capacity of social work practitioners in the country. However, it still has its limitation as we discuss into the most crucial part – the lack of statutory power as a professional body, in the next subsection.

6.2.6.3 The Absence of a Statutory Organization

Although the MASW sees itself established as a professional body representing the social workers, as well as affialiated with BIM locally and the IFSW internationally as member organization, it's power is confined as a non-governmental organization or society being registered under the Registrar of Society. How the MASW plays its role as an NGO as well as a professional body as a same time, however, is not straight forward as can been seen in the different views between Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda and Dato' Norani Hashim.

> "A professional association is different from NGO as such. If you have the opportunity, feedback, it is not NGO as such. This is to enhance and to promote the profession to which you belong". (Abdullah Malim Baginda)

> "Certain things you can say many things about social work. Anything under the sun, then indirectly you are also making MASW strong, making MASW visible…make MASW a respectable NGO, besides being a professional NGO, a respected NGO". (Norani Hashim)

Dato' Abdullah sees the primary function of promoting the profession makes the MASW different from other type of NGOs. His view maybe different from Dato' Norani because he was the architect behind the formation of the association. Dato' Norani, on the other hand, see that the MASW can gain more respect and influences, perhaps like many other NGOS, by making more comments and stands on social work matters.

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Indeed, the MASW may gain more influence by being more vocal and visible on social issues and professional matter. By doing so, it may push the government or social welfare sector to improve services. Yet, it won't change the fact that the MASW is still has no statutory control over the accreditation of social workers in the country as pointed out by Dr Ling How Kee and Ms Elsie Lee.

> "We know there is MASW and then we also know that MASW is not a, unlike medical doctors, nursing, accountancy, architect and all that, a statutory accreditation body. Because there isn't that structure on the part of the Malaysian Association of Social Workers so there isn't like a recognition that to train social workers, they must meet the kind of standard set by anybody because there isn't such a body". (Ling How Kee)

> "MASW doesn't have that kind of authority. Unless the Government says that they give MASW that...but I don't think they willl do that. Unlike Singapore, they give the authority. Ya. They gave the authority to the Association to register social workers. If they give us that, then ok! But I doubt this government of ours will do it". (Elsie Lee)

There are two scenarios how the MASW can have statutory body. One, as pointed out by Dr Ling, is through a Parliament Act giving statutory power to the profession to regulate, similar to other established professions, on the qualification of social workers. This will also address the lack of regulatory power on social work education as discussed in section 7.2.5 ealier. Another one, as mentioned by Elsie Lee, is the government gives administrative power to the MASW on registration of social workers like Singapore.

A professional legislation, including the proposed Social Work Profession Bill (Teoh and Fuziah, 2017), will give power to the profession represented in a statutory body to undertake, among other things, the tasks of registration, licensing, complaints and discipline, continuing professional education and professional development of social

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workers. The professionalisation of social work in Malaysia would progress better, supported by the government, with a regulatory power for the profession.

6.2.7 Codified Ethical Standards

The code of ethics is important for any profession as it is "a body of guiding principles for professional organizations to set the standard for good practice in relation to service delivery, client and professional relationship, and relationship between the professional and other occupational groups" (Thomas & Pierson, 1995: 140), and 'expresses the values and responsibilities that are integral to, and characterize, the social work profession It is intended to assist all social workers, and social work students currently enrolled in an accredited social work program collectively and individually, to act in ethically accountable way in the pursuit of the profession's aim' (AASW, 2020: 5).

The earliest of the MASW Code of Ethics that could be traced was as early as 1980 (Appendix 10), six years after the registration of the association. It listed 5 ethical conducts that are relative to the client, the agency, colleagues, the social work profession and society. It didn't mention any references but upon inspection, its orientation of the five ethical conducts is similar to the 1979 NASW Code of Ethics (NASW, 1979) except it didn't have the major principles or values.

The 1980 MASW Code of Ethics remained unchanged for the next three decades until the first revision in 2011 (Appendix 11). One of the tasks of the Technical Committee in Enhancing the Professionalism of Social Work in Malaysia formed in 2010, apart from working on the six-point memorandum approved by the Cabinet, was to look at

the definition of social work and code of ethics that can be used when the regulatory body is formed.

The MASW started the revision of its code of ethics in late 2010 and early 2011. The revised code of ethics adopted and incorporated the 2004 IFSW Statement of Ethical Principles (IFSW, 2004) by adding the core values and principles of social work, as well as the definition of social work. The ethical conducts were renamed to ethical responsibilities and finetuned with one additional ethical responsibility to the professional self. The revised code of ethics was endorsed at the MASW 38th AGM on 30 April 2011 (MASW, 2011).

Soon after the revision of the MASW Code of Ethics, the DSW also revised and updated its code of ethics (JKM, 2011). Although it doesn't specifically mention or link social work in the code, it listed the 2011 MASW Code of Ethics as one of the reference. Nevertheless, the social welfare officers at the DSW will still refer to social work ethics in their practice as stated in the DSW strategic plan 2016-2020 (JKM, 2016) and as indicated by Dato' Norani Hashim in the following transcript.

> "They must understand because like ethics, JKM also have their work ethics. Kod Etika Pekerja JKM… Now that we have diversified, we still maintain the social work ethics through the most important methods.". (Norani Hashim)

At this stage, the social work code of ethics in Malaysia is mainly used as a declaration of commitment of the profession (Siporin, 1975), or as reference and guiding principles in official documents, for examples, the Educational Policy and Standards for Social Work Education in Higher Learning Institutions of Malaysia (NJCCSWE, 2009), the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice (2010), Pelan Strategik JKM 2016-2020 (JKM, 2016), Manual Sistem Pengurusan Kes Kerja Sosial Jabatan

Kebajikan Masyarakat (JKM, 2017) and Pelan Strategik Kerja Sosial 2018-2020 (JKM, 2018). The code of ethics is not legal binding and therefore not enforceable.

For example, the MASW is only a registrated society and its membership is voluntary. They do not have any jurisdiction over prohibiting anyone, members or non-members, from practicing even if they receive complaints of malpractice of social workers. At the same time, social workers working in the DSW and other government agencies are bounded to Peraturan-Peraturan Pegawai Awam (Kelakuan dan Tatatertib) 1993 when comes to conduct and disciplinary matters.

In brief, the social work code of ethics has been formulated in Malaysia since 1980, and efforts haven taken by both the three stakeholders to revise and to keep the code of ethics up to date, especially since 2010. However, it has not reached the point to where the code of ethics can be enforced as Malaysia yet to have a law to regulate the social workers.

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6.2.8 Prestige and Remuneration Reflecting Professional Standards

Lastly, according to Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2009), professionals are normally being accepted by the general public to undertake higher standards job, and that will also, in return, reflects in the status and remuneration that the professional groups received by rendering their professional services. This study looked into the wages of social workers in the public sector and non-governmental sector.

In the public sector, the social welfare officer's position in DSW was seen as a lower rank position compare to other graduate posts, especially after 1970 where more and

more graduates were recruited in the department. This is, however, not because social work qualification is being looked down to, but rather due to the fact that the Diploma of Social Studies was not seen as equivalent to a university degree. Therefore, the salary of the social welfare officers then was fixed according to a diploma level salary. Dato' Sayed A. Rahman and Elsie Lee shared what transpired for social workers in the DSW and government hospitals during the 1970s.

> "My salary dropped when I joined as Social Welfare Officers in 1972. 500 dollars. Graduates about 650 dollars. Because they considered this a diploma holder kind of position. That was then. They don't look at graduates' kind of pay…People say why you join welfare". (Sayed A. Rahman)

> "…at that time the Association was fighting very hard to get professional recognition (for medical social workers with the Diploma in Social Studies), to get that degree salary… there was a lot of reviews of salary at that time, and many groups were fighting to put on the degree's scale… that was the time actually they were fighting for the salary but it went into the 70s,…welfare officers started getting degree's pays. So that was the time we also said why can't medical social workers in University Hospital and other teaching hospitals also be recognized as degree holders. So in the 70s and 80s they were fighting for that. Eventually it was given to us". (Elsie Lee)

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Eventually, the social workers with the Diploma in Social Studies successfully fought their case and were given a degree level salary in the public service. As the Diploma of Social Studies in Singapore stopped in 1974, those who join the DSW or hospitals with a degree in social work subsequently will enjoy a degree level salary like other degree holders in the public service. Hence, the salary scheme for social workers working in the public sector is not able to reflect status or remuneration due to professional standards of the profession.

One the other hand, the wages for social workers working in the non-government or non-profit sector could be lower than their counterparts in the public sector as revealed

by Mrs Gill Raja of her students working in the NGO setting and not linked to quality or performance.

> "(Salary is) low. So we have our students in NGOs. Those are good students". (Gill Raja)

One reason why workers in the NGO setting are being paid lower is because the limited financial ability of these organizations. Dr Denison Jayasooria who have worked in this sector for many years also explained that the NGOs would hire non-graduates as measures of cost savings.

> "…for majority of the organizations, the workers were mostly post Form Five people, rather than first degree holders because they didn't have the money to pay the basic salaries". (Denison Jayasooria)

This study could not determine the prestige social workers enjoy in terms of remuneration received rendering their professional services as none of the respondents in this study were in private practice, and not in position to explore if the public would pay for professional service of a social worker. The more obvious finding is that social workers working in the public sector will enjoy a more stable and comparable salaries with other professionals than social workers working in the non-profit and non-governmental organizations. This disparity is not associated to their abilities or qualifications but the nature of the non-profit settings where workers are willing to donate part of their labor, mainly by accepting lower wages (Valentinov 2007) or are willing to work for lower wage and extrinsic benefits because they associate with the organization's culture – beliefs, values, and mission (Benz 2005; Emanuele and Higgins 2000).

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6.3 Occupational Professionalism Vs Organizational Professionalism

The next theory discussed is the thesis on professionalism by Evetts (2003, 2013 & 2014) from the occupational and organizational perspective. To recap, occupational professionalism represents the aspirations of the occupational groups that included professional values, collegial support and public sanction, occupational control of the work, professional education and training, and guided by professional ethics monitored by professional associations. The professional traits (Weiss-Gal and Welbourne, 2007 & 2008) discussed earlier reflect the professionalism that social workers strived to achieve.

In contrast, organizational professionalism integrates discourse of control used by managers in work place, hierarchical structures of authority and decision making, standardization of work procedures and external forms of regulation and accountability measures such as target-setting and performance review. Organizational professionalism appeals to employers and managers as means to promote change and impose regulation of practice.

Evetts's thesis of occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism has shown some interesting indicators on how the professionalisation and professionalism of social work have taken place in Malaysia particularly after 1990. The examples of occupational professionalism can be found in the previous analysis and discussions using the framework of Weiss-Gass and Welbourne (2007 & 2008). The organizational professionalism, on the other hand, can be seen from the long standing issue of hiring non-social work qualified person into the the DSW, the expansion of social work education in the 1990s, follows by the competency standards in social work practice

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project in the 2000s which then leads to the approval of the Cabinet of the six-point memorandum in enhanching social work in the country.

For years the DSW has depended on in-service training to train social work knowledge and skills to its social welfare officers and welfare assistants, instead of hiring qualified social workers. This arrangement can be seen as an approach that embraces organizational professionalism that the ability to carry out tasks 'professionally' regardless of the qualification of the staffs is preferred to hiring the right professionals to carry out tasks in the organization. Dato' Shamsiah noted the DSW during her days placed great emphasis in training to overcome the shortage of qualified social workers.

> "Training is the core…and make sure it is in line with what we want to do. I think Training Division is so important. I think that's why those days, although you have people who are not trained in social work, but the Training Division is the one that really ensure people are properly exposed to social work…they use a lot of practical experiences because the trainers are all those from the field. When you go to the state, your supervisor will ensure you are exposed to the services properly". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

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Although DSW wanted to professionalise its officers by upgrading the positions of probation officer to degree level, at par with the district social welfare officer, it's proposal was rejected by the PSD who wouldn't allow any government agency to have officers who are in the same rank in terms of level of educational qualification with the district social welfare officer (PKMD) who is the chief officer in the district. In this instance where the district social welfare officer whose post is a university graduate post of S41, the other subordinate officers in the same office cannot be of the same rank of S41, therefore can only be at a lower level qualification which is a non-graduate diploma which is S29 in the government scheme. Dato' Shamsiah claimed that was how DSW have to accept the recruitment criteria in order to get more manpower into the service.

> "I remember PKMD was a degree holder. When we worked with JPA, we wanted the probation officers all that also a degree holders but JPA didn't agree because they said "You cannot have the same grades in district because you don't know in terms of authority, it's difficult. A bit problem". So they decided to have the Penolong Pegawai, so I think that's why the Penolong Pegawaicame in. But I think the Child Act came first, the structure came later. Maybe because we do not have enough people, so the Penolong Pegawai was brought in". (Shamsiah Abd Rahman)

That JPA ruling, putting greater emphasis on organizational structure than qualified person for certain professional tasks, is also a reflection of organizational professionalism. The DSW has to compromise occupational professionalism to organizational professionalism by creating a new position in assistant social welfare officer which is set at a diploma level but to carry out the tasks as probation officer and later child protection officer as stipulated in the Child Act 2001.

Next, the expansion of social work education in the 1990s was not so much the drive from within the profession, but more from other external factors, hugely as a response to government's Vision 2020 and social issues linking to the challenge of establishing a caring society. These evidences can be found in the transcripts of Dr Ling How Kee and Mrs Gill Raja on how the social work program started at UNIMAS, and a bulletin article written by Haji Azmi Shaari, the program coordinator of the social work program at the time, on the motives behind the introduction of social work degree at UUM (Azmi Shaari, 2000).

> "I got to know that they (the university top management) were interested in social work because I think they see there is a need to address some of the current issues, …maybe I thought for the top management although they see that there is the need for social workers, they probably not quite aware of that there is a professional body of social workers in this country". (Ling How Kee)

> "UNIMAS was wanting to make sure that their program was quite relevant to the work needs…they are more geared to produce graduates who could be out

there in the workforce, but then when you are actually wanted to help build professional based, I was reminded that it was not". (Gill Raja)

"*Memandangkan masalah-masalah sosial yang semakin ketara dan membimbangkan, khususnya dalam usaha mencapai Wawasan 2020, Sekolah Pembangunan Sosial mempunyai tanggungjawab untuk melahirkan bakal-bakal graduan yang boleh mengurus masalah-masalah sosial yang berbagai bentuk. Oleh itu, Sekolah Pembangunan Sosial mengambil langkah yang proaktif agar masalah-masalah sosial yang melanda masyarakat pada masa kini dapat dielakkan dari terus berlarutan…Program Ijazah Sarjanamuda Pengurusan Kerja Sosial dengan Kepujian ditawarkan*". (Azmi Shaari)

The introduction of the social work program at UNIMAS and UUM was different from how the social work program at USM started as discussed in Chapter 5 where the practitioners were the initiators. For UNIMAS and UUM, the idea came from the university and school who were not from the social work field but who see the need to produce skilled manpower (organizational professionalism) through social work as a response to the challenge of Vision 2020, rather than aiming to raise the professional standing of social work (occupational professionalism) in the country.

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Second, although the issues on training, recruitment, professional recognition and professionalism of social workers in the country have been raised by the practitoners in the past, whether through writings (Baba, 1992, 1998, 2000b; Sushama, 1992a; Zaharah, 1992; Jeshurun, 1995), forums such as the "Social Work at a Crossroad – What Prospect for the Practitioner?" in 1998 (MASW, 1998), or even the formulation of the National Social Welfare Policy in 1991, didn't yield much progress for the social work profession nor uplifting the recognition of the profession. It was through the competency standards project started by the MASW in 2003 (MASW, 2004; Lee, 2010). Ms Elsie Lee recalled how the Minister at that time, Dato' Seri Sharizat Abdul Jalil, was excited over the competency standards as it was seen as a way to improve the image of social welfare which is under her portfolio.

> "Pauline came back to run a feedback session with stakeholders in the following year, Feb 2005. We fine tuned the standards and made the presentation in April to the Secretary General. She said that this is good so she arranged for us to present to the Minister in the following month. Sharizat actually took it up... She even said, "This is God send!" She took the document and said, "This is God send! This is what Welfare need!"". (Elsie Lee)

It was clear that the proposed competency standards met the Minister's idea of organizational professionalism, more towards address the capacity of its workforce and raising the image of the DSW, then prompting her to see the need of recruiting qualified social workers (occupational professionalism). Subsequently, it was also through the competency standards project that highlighted the gaps in competent social work practice and child protection work (occupational professionalism as the profession perceives competent practice as protection of the clients) that attracted the government to act as it meets the needs and objectives of service delivery (organizational professionalism).

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It took approximately five years after the start of the competency project that the profession (through its members holding key positions in DSW and the MASW) to convince the Ministry to consider having a legislation to regulate social workers and its practice. That eventually translated into a six-point memorandum that the Ministry forwarded to the Cabinet for approval in 2010 as discussed in Chapter Five.

From the examples above, it appears that raising practice standards as way of improving service delivery (organizational professionalism) is easier to be understood and accepted by the authority than raising the professional status of social work (occupational professionalism). At the same time, while the aspiration and appeal to professionalism are somewhat different between the profession and the government,

both parties found a common aim in raising the competency standards of social workers in the country which sparked the efforts in enhancing social work professionalism.

The Malaysia experience, to an extent, supports literatures that highlighted government's significant influence and impact on shaping the profession (Evetts, 2003, 2013; Svensson and Astrom, 2013) and that the government may have different views on professionalism (Noordegraaf, 2007, 2015 & 2016). Nevertheless, without a law that is specifically for social work, the professional body and academics have had difficulties in convincing the authority to give due recognition to the needs of the profession. While the practitioners and academics look at the Bill as an essential to establish social work as a profession (occupational professionalism), the government is more concerned about the practicality and enforceability of the law once it is passed (organizational professionalism). In this regard, instead of being in a conflict situation, a better understanding of the different views of professionalism will be helpful for the profession to strategize its efforts to enhance better professional standings. It also pushes the profession to the forefront working more closely with the authority in addressing service needs and gaps, and to gain the confident and trust of the public on the importance of social work.

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6.4 Discussion of the Theoretical Analysis

Thus far, the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia has been analysed through the professionalisation theoretical framework of Weiss-Gall & Welbourne (2007 & 2008) and the thesis of professionalism of Evetts (2003, 2013 & 2014). Both theories are useful in explaining what has been accomplished, what has yet to achiev, the

struggle, as well as the dynamics of the three main stakeholders in the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia.

Interestingly, the flow of professionalisation of social work in Malaysia fits the trend of theories being used in the studies of of profession, professionalisation and professionalism. As stated earlier, the theoretical framework used by Weiss-Gall & Welbourne (2007 & 2008) is a combination of trait theories which was popularly used in the 1950s and 1960s, follows by the semi-profession theories and power theories which was commonly used in the 1970s-1980s, and subsequently theories on professional boundaries and jurisdiction in the 1990s. This framework explains quite well the development and professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from late 1960 until early 2000.

From the trait theories we see that the development of social work in Malaysia shares similar features with many other countries in the study of Weiss-Gall and Welbourne (2007 & 2008), which is through the establishment of professional organizations, formulation of a code of ethics, and development of a specific body of knowledge and placement of social work training in tertiary education. From the semi-profession theories, the power theories and the professional boundaries and jurisdiction perspective, we see that social work in Malaysia has yet to enjoy a monopoly over fields of practice, lack of public understanding and sanction, lack of control over education and training, and also lack of legislation for entry into the profession, title protection and enforcement of the code of ethics. Again, these shortcomings are not unique to the professionalisation story of Malaysia alone.

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Hence, by utilizing the theoretical framework of Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2007 & 2008), we can conclude that social work in Malaysia has exhibited the basic professional characteristics yet it has not reached the point of a full-fledged profession that enjoys recognition from the public and the government. It is still struggling to establish social work as an occupation as the term 'social worker' is still not widely used as an occupational position in both the government and the non-government sector. Moreover, with the absence of necessary legislations and regulations, social work in Malaysia continues to struggle to protect its professional boundaries due to weaker occupational control (Weiss-Gal and Welbourne, 2008) and occupational closure (Harrits, 2014).

When it seems that professionalisation of social work in Malaysia is heading to be idle by the end of 1990s, mirroring the decline of the trait theories and power theories being used in the study of profession during this period of time (Evetts, 2003; Nolin, 2008; Cribb & Gewirtz, 2015), the interest into the concept of competency and managerism as a form of professionalism has ignited a new lease of life for social work in Malaysia, paralleling the rise of professionalism theory in the study of profession after the turn of the millennium. What can we learn from this phenomenon?

First, the trait theories and power theories are still useful in setting the baseline or parameters for understanding the position of a profession. This maybe one of the reasons why researchers like Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2007 & 2008) use these two theories to conduct comparative study of the professionalisation of social work in different countries. The characteristics and level of occupational control of the profession can describe the professional standing of social work of any country. It is

worthy in telling the efforts taken by the profession and its members in the quest to attain high professional status.

In this study, these theories can clearly describe the efforts taken by the three stakeholders – MASW, DSW and social work educators, in promoting the profession. However, they are insufficient to pinpoint why these efforts have not reached its objectives and not being recognized widely. In essence, these theories are more inward focus, i.e. more on that one particular group of people without addressing the external factors and environment these people are in. Without addressing the external factors or environment, the efforts of professionalisation may reach some points but still clueless of where it is heading to achieve its full potential.

In addition, it is also worth noting that the power base of the MASW, DSW and social work educators respectively has a big impact on the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia. It has been argued that the MASW's position as a registered society does not give much authority to the association in occupational control such as determining the qualifications and employment of social workers. Likewise, the DSW, despite being the largest employer of social workers in the public service, do not have full control over determining the positions and recruitment of qualified social workers into the department, nor in the training of its personnel when the government centralized the training under each Ministry. Its power base is also further weakened by the residual position of social welfare in the government's priority, as well as in its deterioration from a full Ministry to becoming one of the departments under a Ministry. In this regard, it does not help the professional standing of social work and the MASW, which for many years, strongly tied with the DSW. Last but not least, due to the small numbers

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of social work programs and educators in the institutions of higher education, the grouping, under the loose network of the NJCCSWE, has not been able to exert greater influences on the public, the university and the policy makers in seeing social work as both a profession and academic discipline that is distinctive and vital in combating social ills in the country if given the resources to expand.

Second, the professionalism thesis of Evetts (2003, 2013 & 2014) have guided our attention beyond the professional group. It is not adequate just to know what the professional group strives to achieve, but one also needs to know what is the aspiration of the environment, particularly where this group of people is working or being employed. The aspiration of the professional group is represented by occupational professionalism while the organizational professionalism represents the aspirations of the employing organizations such as the government.

In this study, the thesis of occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism has aptly described the dynamics of not only between the MASW and DSW, but also involves the larger organization where DSW is in. The state, consists of the federal government, the ministry and even the minister, have a higher authority over the DSW when comes to the final decision making like funding, human resources and law making. It was within these different dynamics that the occupational professionalism advocated by the profession being accepted as it meets the organizational professionalism of the state. That has also motivated the social workers in the DSW to embrace the professionalism project as it is to the benefits of its own organization.

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Therefore, when we combine both the theoretical perspecives used in this study, one thing stands out – we cannot ignore the roles of the government in shaping or even creating the profession, especially for a profession like social work which does not have the backing of a free labour market (with consumers' demand) nor strong bureaucratic labour market (with organizations' demand) (Freidson, 2001) for social workers in the social welfare sector. The regulatory function of the government is essential when the enactment of a Parliament Act is required in the Malaysia context. In this regard, the DSW is only one small part of the government administration. What we have revealed in this study calls for the social work profession, whether they are active players in the MASW, DSW or universities, to strategies their moves in engaging and convincing the key people and agencies within the complex bureaucracy of government and the politics of federal-state relationships.

Third and finally, using these theories, we can also affirm that social workers in the different era have focused on different agenda on profession and professionalisation, in line with the agenda of the government, and thus achieved different outcomes. The professionalisation of the profession, despite the current trend of emphasising on professionalism, is still an on-going project for social work where efforts are and will still be taken by the three stakeholders to strengthen the professional standing as well as the professionalism of the profession in decades to come. The following Figure 6.2 summarizes the pushing factors, achievements and setback for professionalization in different era of this study as highlighted in Chapter Four, Five and this chapter.

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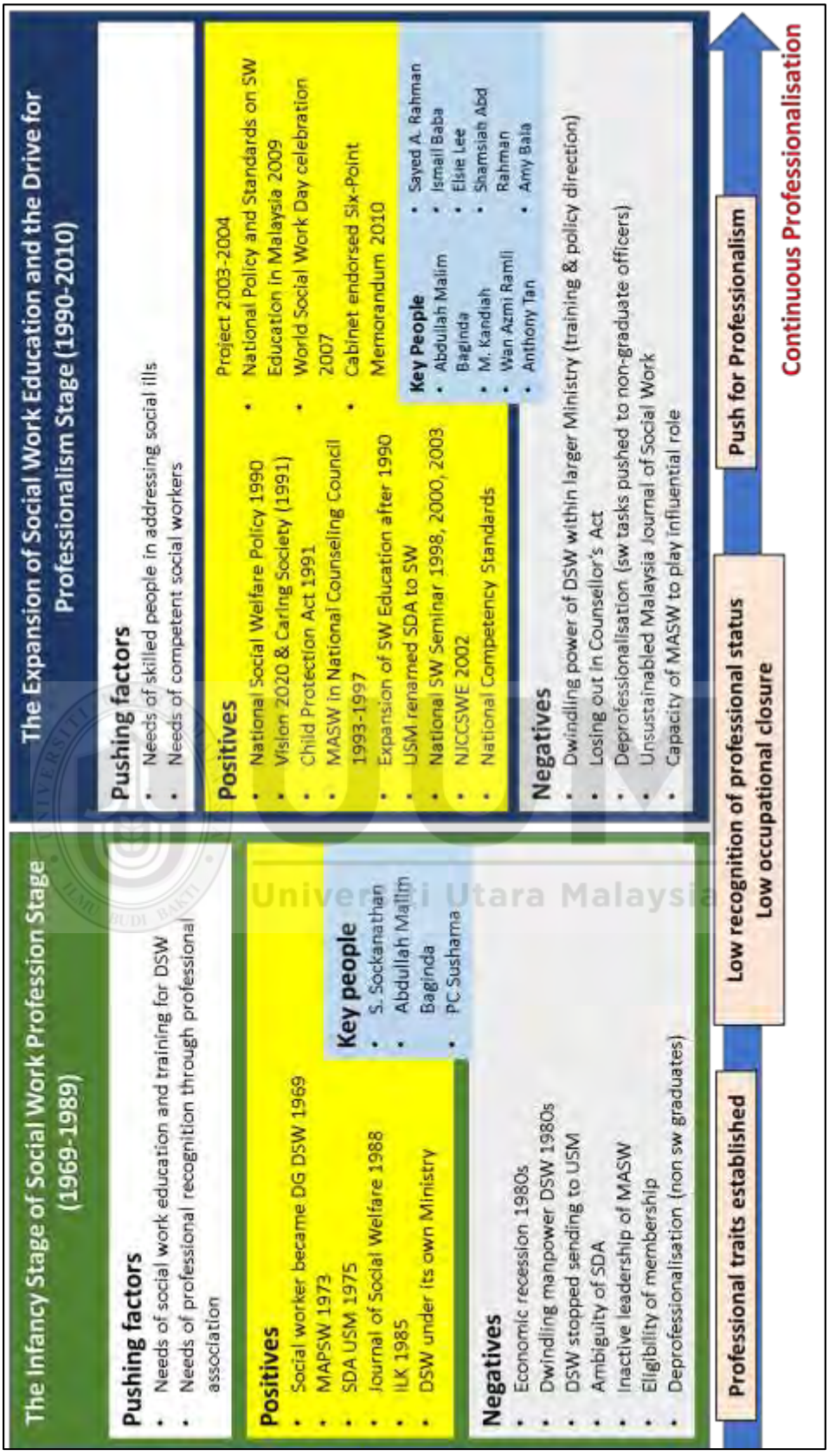

Figure 6.2. Summation of the Professionalisation of Social Work in Malaysia 1969-2010

The issues that remain to be a concern for the social work profession in these two different era are low public recognition of social work as a profession and low occupational control. The first era of 1969-1989 as discussed in Chapter Four has seen the professional traits of social work being established in the form of a professional association with a code of ethics and social work education at tertiary level. Nonetheless, the profession did not gain much professional recognition due to the dwindling manpower at DSW in the 1980s as well as the inactiveness of MASW in advancing the profession. As the lone social work education program with very few educators in Malaysia for nearly twenty years, the SDA program at USM was not able to carry the profession forward. This era was much led by practitioners at DSW as both the MASW and the SDA program were very much in their infancy. There was closer collaboration between DSW and the SDA program in teaching and training but the role of the MASW was not significant.

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That period also saw the first wave of deprofessionalisation when both DSW and hospitals started recruiting graduates without social work qualification into the service. The deprofessionalisation was mainly caused by the creation of positions for undergraduates when social work degree was still not available in early 1970s. However, this has instigated the dispute over the eligibility of membership of MASW, as well as created difficulty for social work, as a young profession in making, to monopolise the service which led to low occupational control for decades to come.

The next era of 1990 to 2010 witnessed a more vibrant development but in two distinct phases as highlighted in Chapter Five. The period of 1990 to early 2000 saw the

expansion of social work education due to the aspiration of Vision 2020, while the period of 2000-2010 saw the push for professionalism in social work practice. MASW became more active with leaders like Anthony Tan and Elsie Lee who strucked a closer working relationship with DSW and the social work programs. Therefore, the NJCCSWE was formed with the composition of representatives from all social work programs, MASW and DSW. With many of the newly established social work education programs needing to focus on teaching, and DSW facing further dwindling of power within the larger Ministry in relation to training and policy direction, MASW has played a leading role in engaging DSW and social work educators in the social work competency standards project as well as facilitating the drafting of the national policy and standards for social work education with the assistance of Dr Pauline Memeeduma. In short, MASW, DSW and social work education programs would not achieve much for the profession if they continue to work in silos. The synergistic collaboration between leaders from the three stakeholders has brought the profession forward to the stage of the Six-Point Memorandum in 2010, which indicates that professionalisation is a continuous process that has moved towards the issue of professionalism although the outstanding issues of professional status remain unresolved.

The theme of deprofessionalisation continues in the 1990s where the tasks of social welfare officers being delegated to assistant social welfare officers through the Child Act 2001 and subsequent legislations under DSW after 2001. The increment of the workforce at DSW after 1996 were mainly for the non-graduate positions. It was highlighted that the concern over the competent practice of the social workers and social welfare workforce has driven the DSW and MASW to undertake the national competency standards project. Nevertheless, the issue of deprofessionalisation and

managerialist versus practitioners' debate seems not existence in the literature during that period of time. Although the issue of eligibility of membership of MASW among social welfare officers at DSW in the 1970s and 80s can be seen an indicator for managerialist versus practitioners' debate but it was addressed through broadening the eligibility criteria by MASW. On the other hand, the concern post 1990s was to ensure more social work graduates can be employed in the service, and the existing workforce without social work qualification to be equipped with social work training. It could also due to the fact at the early begining DSW did not employ fresh social work graduate but to employ non-graduate into the service before sending them to do their social work qualification from 1950s to early 1980s. When came the 1990s, the non-social work qualified workforce at DSW has already out-numbered the social work qualified personnel.

In addition, the literature on the managerialist versus practitioners' debate only began to appear after middle of 1990s in the west where social work has long established as a profession (for example, see Ackroyd et al. (2007), Banks (1995), Dominelli (1996), Exworthy & Halford (1998), Harlow (2003), Harris (1998), Healy (2009), Lymbery (1998)). Therefore, that may explain why there were no discussion or writings about this debate by social workers and social work educators in Malaysia during that period when social work was still struggling to assert itself as a profession. Interestingly, the study by Zulkarnain et al. (2014), despite the flaw in defining professional social workers and functional alternative social workers, was perhaps the only local study that can give a glimps on why the managerialist-practitioners debate was still premature in Malaysia when they could not find much differences in ability between both group of social workers.

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What this study has revealed in Chapter Five that the managerialist-practitioners debate may appeared in two forms. One is the tension between the administrators (PTD) at the Ministry level and the professional groups (P&P) at DSW level. The replies given by the respondents seems to pinpoint to certain personality rather than the whole system of administration. Nonetheless, the weakening power of DSW within the Ministry as compared to its early years of having own Ministry should not be discounted although it does not link directly to the managerialist-practitioners debate. Second is the concern over some district social welfare officers were seem to focus more on managerial tasks as head of the office than taking up cases which need to bring to the court by caseworkers. Administratively, they could not be faulted because the legislations allow non-graduate assistant social welfare officers to be gazetted as child protection officers and probation officers. Perhaps future studies on the roles and tasks actually undertaken by the district social welfare officers can provide a clear picture on reasons why some of them choose more managerial tasks over casework practice.

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6.5 Chapter Summary

The chapter has discussed the development of social work in Malaysia from the professionalisation and professionalism theoretical framework. The professionalisation theories have shown that social work in Malaysia has progressed and exhibits many of the professional features but is still lacking in some areas. The areas which Malaysia have achieved quite positively are having a professional association with an up to date code of ethics, and social work education programs are available at tertiary level. Nevertheless, the profession is still being poorly or wrongly perceived by the public, have no control or monopoly over fields of practice as well as not able to establish itself

as an occupational position. The professional association has no full authority over education and training, entry into the profession and title protection, and enforcement of the code of ethics.

Despite not able to achieve its full potential as an established profession, the professionalisation of social work carries on, and is better explained through the professionalism theoretical perspective, particularly the interaction and synergy between the profession, the government and the educators, as well as the proliferation of emphasis on competency and professionalism after the turn of the millennium. The different perspective of occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism does not mean both sides are disagreeing nor heading oppositie directions. The expansion of tertiary social work education, the competency standards project and the subsequent measures, including the drafting of the Social Work Profession Bill, in enhancing the professionalism of social work validates the dynamics of interchange of occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism in Malaysia.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the main findings according to the three objectives of this study, follows by discussions on the implications and contributions of the findings on social work in Malaysia, the three stakeholders, and the study of professionalisation and professionalism. Next, the limitations of the study and suggestions for improvement in future study are deliberated.

7.2 Main Findings of the Study

The summary of the main findings is arranged in accordance with the three main objectives of the study as shown in Chapter One.

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7.2.1 Analyze the Professionalisation of Social Work in Malaysia from 1969-2010

The first objective of the study is to analyze the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from 1969 to 2010. For this purpose, this study divided the analysis into two phases namely (i) from the early beginning until 1989 (Chapter Four) and (ii) from 1990 until 2010 (Chapter Five). This study has found that social work in Malaysia has yet to achieve the professional status or a recognized profession as envisioned by its members despite having attained several key profession features in the framework by Weiss-Gal and Welbourne (2007 & 2008). Social work in Malaysia has successfully in forming its professional organization MASW in 1973, formulating its code of ethics in 1980 which last revised in 2011, and placement of social work training and education in tertiary education which expanded from one program in 1975 to six programs by

2010. Social work education in Malaysia has indeed progressed slowly but steadily to established itself as a discipline at the universities.

Therefore, from the chronological perspective, the researcher in Chapter Four concluded and named the period from 1946 to 1968 as The Beginning of Social Welfare Services in Malaysia because despite that social work education was introduced in1952 as the essential training program for social welfare officers, the focus in that two decades was mainly to equip the social welfare workforce with necessary skills to run its services, not on making social work as a profession. In the same chapter, the researcher named the period from 1969 to 1989 as The Infancy Stage of Social Work in Malaysia in Chapter Four. The formation of the MASW in 1973 and the introduction of the SDA program at USM in 1975 marked for the beginning of the idea of establishing social work as a profession but it remained an elementary one as the MASW was neither active nor growing as a professional association, and the SDA was the lone social work program available in Malaysia for almost two decades. While things were looking bright at DSW with trained social workers taking the leadership roles in 1969, the expansion of the deparment was severely affected by the government decisions to downsizing due to economic crisis. Lastly, in Chapter Five, the researcher named the period from 1990-2010 as The Expansion of Social Work Education and the Drive for Professionalism Stage as these two decades witnessed the growth of tertiary social work programs during the 1990s, and the push of professionalism in social work practice by the MASW, DSW and the educators after the millennium.

Nevertheless, like in many countries in Weiss-Gal and Welbourne's study, social work in Malaysia has yet to enjoy any monopoly over its practice in the field of social welfare,

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lack of control over entry into the occupations, no legislation on title protection, practice and professional education, and continue to face misperception and low recognition by the public as a profession as discussed in Chapter Six. Specialist programs at the postgraduate level are still lacking in social work education, and social work continues to be perceived as voluntary activities by the general public. Furthermore, employment of qualified social workers is still not definite in the social welfare and social service sector. There is also no clear government policy or legislation in developing or regulating the social work profession as neither the National Social Welfare Policy 1990 nor the National Social Policy 2003 provide any direction as discussed in Chapter Five. Thus, it can be concluded that social work in Malaysia is still expanding but has yet to establish itself as an occupation nor achieved its full potential as a profession.

7.2.2 Identity the Efforts of Stakeholders in Advancing the Professionalisation of Social Work

The second objective is to identify the efforts taken by the DSW, MASW and social work educators in advancing the professionalisation of social work. This study found that the DSW have contributed immensely to the professionalisation of social work, especially from 1969 until 1980s as shown in Chapter Four. Social workers at the DSW had taken the initiative in forming the MASW and leading the association up until the 1990s. They have also established many new services and initiatives in the DSW utilizing their knowledge and skills in social work, publishing the *Journal of Social Welfare*, formulating the National Social Welfare Policy, as well as setting up in-service social welfare training institution. However, their efforts in professionalizing social work were affected by economy crisis in the 1980s and limited government funding which resulted in the reduction of social welfare officer positions for more than 10 years

until the turn of the millennium. The position and power-base of the DSW within the government bureaucracy was seen further eroded after 1990, as discussed in Chapter Six, when the Ministry of Social Welfare was abolished and the DSW was placed under the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development, before being placed under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development in 2004. It also lost the control of its in-service training when the training function was placed under the Ministry, and its own training institute when it was abolished and replaced by ISM which was under the direct control of the Ministry.

The MASW's efforts in advancing the professionalisation of social work started rather positively, as discussed in Chapter Four, by affiliating itself with professional organizations like the IFSW and BIM, and represented the social workers with the Diploma in Social Studies qualification from Singapore in the fight for degree level salary. However, it faced issues of memberships and inactive leaderships from 1980s until 1990s where it did not produce impactful contribution in bringing the profession forward, apart from partnering local universities in organizing seminars. Nonetheless, some of its members have been active in addressing social issues and the need for social workers. Its close association with the DSW also enabled it to be appointed as member of relevant national advisory councils, as well as having discussions with representative from the PSC to put social work qualification as recruitment criteria for social welfare officer positions in the public service. Furthermore, as deliberated in Chapter Five, the MASW was also actively involved in the drafting of the Counsellors Act as a way to professionalizing social workers as counselling has been part of the social work practice. However, the profession suffered a setback when it was not being recognized as one of

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the disciplines for professional counselors when the Counsellors Act was passed in 1998.

No doubt, it was bitter and disappointing for those who were directly or indirectly involved in the process. However, when revisiting the whole episode by taking into consideration that social work was still in its infancy stage and social work education was insignificant with only one program at USM until early 1990s, the profession was not in best position to argue its case of distinctive knowledge base, jurisdiction or professional boundaries (Abott, 1988). For the researcher, the social work leaders then should have asked the government to regulate the social work profession instead of being recognized through the Counsellor's Act when the education and training of both disciplines, while looks similar, are in fact different in many ways.

Despite these impediments, the MASW became more active as the leadership shifted from DSW focus to a broader base social work service as discussed in Chapter 6. The competency standards in social work practice project initiated in 2003, with the help of Dr Pauline Memeeduma as consultants, elevated the position of the MASW as key organization in advancing the social work practice standards particularly in child protection work. It is sufficing to say that the competency standards project injected a new purpose and direction for the DSW to convince the Ministry of the need to revive the professionalism as well as professionalizing its social workers. The subsequent related training workshops, seminars and meetings has led to the decision of the Ministry to submit a Six-point memorandum in enhancing the professionalism of social work for the country to the Cabinet in 2009. The Six-point memorandum received the

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Cabinet's approval in April 2010, paving the way forward in continuing the professionalisation of social work.

The findings from the social work educators' perspective has shown that social work education at the tertiary level has been developing slowly from 1975 until early 1989 but was expanding rapidly from 1994 onwards until 2010. This rapid expansion has injected new enthusiasm for the social work profession with cautious concern over the qualifications of the academics and the quality of the curriculum, which eventually brought to the formation of the NJCSSWE in 2002 and the National Educational Standards for Social Work Education in 2009. However, the social work educators remain a relatively small and young group within the larger tertiary education system and has yet to demonstrate the ability to influence policy and practices through their research and academic publications. In addition, the active participation of social work educators in the MASW was deemed to be weak as not many of them are willing to take up the leading roles. There is indeed hugh potential for social work educators to take leading roles in advancing the profession through MASW but they must be willing to step out from the comfort zone of the ivory tower and devote more times in learning how to run an association effectively.

7.2.3 Recommend Strategies to Enhance the Professionalisation of Social Work in Malaysia

Therefore, for the third objective of this study, this study would like to propose three strategies in advancing the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia, namely (1) Establishing social work legal and policy framework to reinforce the profession of

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social work, (2) Strengthening social work education curriculum and professional training, and (3) Generating positive public perception of social work.

(1) Establishing social work legal and policy framework to reinforce the profession of social work

The Six-Point Memorandum in Enhancing the Professionalism of Social Work in Malaysia paved the way for the social work profession to chart their own future and that has to be utilized fully. First, professionalizing social work through legislation. In Malaysia, the recognition by the government of any profession is through a Parliament Act such as the medical profession, legal profession, engineering, accounting and even nursing. The enacting of the Social Work Profession Bill has actually started in 2010 but the process has not been smooth sailing (Sarawak rejects Social Workers Act, 2014; That downright stupid Act, 2014) but those involved in the drafting of the Bill must persevere, and must continue to convince the policy makers that this is the right thing to do to protect the rights and well being of vulnerable people of competent professional social work service.

For the type of regulating a profession, the researcher has explored the concepts and terminologies of credentialing, certification, registration and licensure elsewhere (Teoh & Fuziah, 2017a). It is clear that registration and licensure are the main methods used in countries that regulate social work profession and Malaysia can look into the pros and cons of legislation by making reference to the more recent approaches used by countries like UK (GSCC, 2012; Pugh, 2005), New Zealand (Beddoe & Duke, 2009; Beddoe, 2013) or even China (Gao & Yan, 2015; Wang, 2011) to see which model is more suitable to Malaysia. At the same time, getting

experienced social work practitioners but without social work qualification being recognized through grandparenting provision (Cohen & Deri, 1992) should not be overlooked as their experiences are valuable to inform and to enhance indigenous social work practice in Malaysia.

Second, by having an Act alone is insufficient. It needs policy direction which looks into the manpower needs in the social welfare sector which includes the number of social workers and their specialization in facing societial challenges. DSW and other social service agencies ought to see the importance of social work as the lead discipline for their department, as well as increasing the number of qualified social workers in their workforce. In this regard, the effort by DSW in producing its *Pelan Strategik JKM* 2016-2020 (JKM, 2016), and *Pelan Strategik Kerja Sosial* 2018-2020 (JKM, 2018) is commendable and is indeed in the right direction in strengthening the social work profession. However, this effort should not be shouldered by DSW alone but be expanded to other agenices like Ministry of Health, Ministry of Rural Development, Malaysia Prison Department, National Anti-Drugs Agency, Social Security Organisation, as well as by the NGO sector. The social work regulatory body established under the Social Work Profession Bill should consist of social workers from various agencies and settings to ensure the holistic progress of the profession.

In addition, the social work profession in Malaysia should seize the opportunity through The Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive

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and Responsive ASEAN Community (2020)[58] and The ASEAN Roadmap for implementing the Hanoi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community (2022)[59] in establishing a national policy on the development of the social work profession which includes its education, training and employment for Malaysia. Learning from where the National Social Welfare Policy and the National Social Policy failed to be implemented without any plan of actions, the national policy must also be followed by drawing up a plan of actions to ensure each stakeholders are accountable in implementing the targets set accordingly.

(2) Strengthening social work education curriculum and professional training

With the formation of the NJCCSWE and the publication of the National Policy and Standards for Social Work Education in Higher Learning Institutions in Malaysia, the social work education at the bachelor degree is more or less standardized. However, there is still much to be done to strengthen the quality and availability of social work education and training. First, the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice must be amalgamated into the social work curriculum to ensure that all social work graduates acquire the essential competencies upon completing their studies as compared with other non-social work graduates. This will ensure greater occupational control (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008) and occupational closure (Harrits, 2014) as far as social work positions is concerned, as

[58] https://asean.org/ha-noi-declaration-on-strengthening-social-work-towards-cohesive-and-responsive-asean-community/

[59] https://vovworld.vn/en-US/news/asean-promotes-hanoi-declaration-on-social-work-1094242.vov

well as benchmarking social work education and training towards competent practice.

Second, is to make social work education more readily available especially for practitioners without social work qualification to upskill themselves without leaving their job. This means that tertiary social work program should look at offering social work education in part time mode or through distance learning (Collins, 2008; Vickary et al., 2018) while not overlooking structural and ethical challenges in such learning mode (Pelech et al., 2013; Reamer, 2013). The researcher believes this will increase the number of qualified social workers in Malaysia in a faster phase and can convince current employers to take in qualified social work graduates when there is vacancay in social work positions. Third, in making social work a regulated profession through legislation, the profession must begin to work on Continuing Professional Education (CPE) (Cervero & Daley, 2016; Smith et al, 2006) or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (Halton et al., 2015; Lombard et al., 2010) courses or activities for social work practitioners. For many professions, it is required for the practitoners to attend training and accumulate CPE or CPD points for renewal of registration or licensure. In this regard, all social work training providers, including MASW, social work programs at the universities and ISM, must be ready to offer CPE or CPD courses for working practitoners that are inline with the National Competency Standards at an affordable price. All the social work training providers must also enhance closer cooperation and coordination to come out with a calender of training courses each year.

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Last but not least is for the social work educators to come together in publishing a social work periodical. The journal should be a joint effort under the MASW like what has been practiced in the US and UK where the professional body is the publishing body. Publishing once a year online can help to minimize the costs. As a start the journal may not be highly regarded as other more established journals but it is crucial in positioning social work as an academic discipline in Malaysia as well as enriching the knowledge base of indigenous social work practice.

(3) Generating positive public perception of social work

To overcome the public misconception and negative perceptions of social work, it is crucial for the profession to respond actively and regularly. In relation to this, all those in the social work profession including the DSW, MASW and social work programs should organize public campaigns, through the mass media and social media, to clarify the roles, functions and mandates, and qualifications of social workers in the various settings they are serving, as well as the impact and positive changes they brought to vulnerable people and communities. Besides having ready made promotional materials ready for dissemination physically, these materials must also be available online and constantly updated if necessary. The profession should also produce more audio-visual materials in forms of videos, animations and podcasts that can be disseminated and shared through social media like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Tik Tok, etc., to reach more people. The practitioners and educators must also increase their presence in the public sphere by voicing out through appearences on televisyen or radio programs, writing more regularly or better still having coloumns in newspapers to respond to pressing social issues and challenges, and provide insights and solutions to social ills. All these efforts must

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not only centred in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur but must also reach out to all other states in Malaysia, and the usage of the term social work and social workers especially in Bahasa Melayu must be more intensified to make it more familiar to the local people and community. Social workers themselves must be willing to step up and being seen as significant references and resources that the public can turn to. In other words, social work needs names and faces that the public can relate to. Only then the image of social work will be elevated.

As a summary, this study has found that the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia has not been able to progress just by the efforts of the practitioners who was pushing for professional recognition and not for any high prestige or remuneration, nor the establishing of social work education that has expanded yet still relatively small in terms of number of faculties or academics within the field of higher education alone. This is because the general public does not see social work and social welfare as a field that requires specific skills or knowledge, and the government has not thought of professionalizing it, for example professionalizing counsellors but not social workers who have existed since the starting of DSW, until recently. Hence, more concerted efforts are needed to be taken, especially by DSW, MASW and the educators, in enhancing the profession through formulating of policies, legislation and plan of actions; strengthening its education and training; and uplifting the profile and public image of the profession.

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7.3 Implication of the Study

The researcher sees the findings of this study has implication to the three stakeholders – MASW as the professional body; universities as the keeper of high quality social work education; and the DSW as the lead agency for social work in the government.

7.3.1 Implication to the Professional Associaiton

The findings of this study has indicated that by just forming a professional body, although is important as a profession feature, is not the direct answer to the successful professionalisation of the social work in Malaysia. It has to have two crucial elements: effective leadership with clear directions for the profession through the professional body (Rank & Hutchinson, 2000), and activities or programs that are relevant in advancing the profession towards its goals. This study has shown that the issue was not the leadership quality of the MASW, after all majority of the leaders from 1970s until 1990s were senior officials at the DSW where many of them eventually became Director General, Deputy Director General, or Director of divisions, but rather leadership in running the association as a non-government professional body. It required the dynamism of the likes of Dato' Abdullah Malim Baginda, the late Anthony Tan, Elsie Lee, and Amy Bala who see the roles and responsibilities of the MASW in advancing the overall professional status and professionalism of social work, and not from the DSW perspective. This can be seen from the activities organized by these leaders during their tenure as president of the Association.

Besides leadership, the MASW has to ensure that their scope of work is relevant to the practitioners. They need to strategize and set practice standards and code of conducts that encapsulate the National Competency Standards in Social Work Practice as

discussed in Chapter Five and Six which also fit for the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religion society of Malaysia. They also need to push for greater public recognition by working closely with the government to enact the Social Work Profession Bill although the Cabinet has endorsed the Six-Point Memorandum in 2010 because the input from the profession is crucial for the drafting as it is led by the legal team of the Ministry which may not have any understanding of social work at all. Furthermore, under the Federal Constitution, social welfare is placed under concurrent list where both the federal and the state government have shared responsibilities and powers. It means that the Social Work Profession Bill has to get endorsement from all the states before it can be considered to be tabled in the Parliament. It is a daunting tasks for the Association but it has to take up the challenge because without a legislation that regulate the profession, the MASW has limited power or authority to push the professionalisation project further.

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Nonetheless, the professionalisation of social work will not stop even when Malaysia finally has its own professional social work law. In fact, this study has indicated the important role of the MASW as custodian of the profession. Therefore, it is crucial for the MASW to up its ante and play a leading role in the regulatory body established under the law once it is enacted. The MASW must seize the opportunity to mobilize social workers to use the law to advance the profession traits as discussed in the theory of profession and in Chapter Six through registration and licensure, the enforcement of the code of ethics, code of conducts and competency standards, introduction of the Continue Professional Education or Development (CPE or CPD) courses or programs to enhance the social workers' capabilities and competencies. These steps need to be taken to ensure tighter entry into the profession, creating social worker positions,

prevailing over its field of work through higher level of expertise and competencies, and at the end closing the gap of occupational closure which the profession is currently lacking.

7.3.2 Implication to the Social Work Education

Although this study did not go in depth into the curriculum and quality of the social work education programs of the universities, the expansion of social work education after 1990 indicates the importance of social work, at least to the eyes of the intellectuals at the universities, as a potential discipline to address social issues in the country. Today, the social work education in Malaysia has grown with seven public universities offering undergraduate degree in social work, one with minor program in social work, and two private colleges offering diploma in social work. There are three postgraduate programs by coursework, namely USM, UUM, and UKM (Master in Medical Social Work).

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The finding of this study has seen the growing importance of social work education and educators in advancing the profession. First, there are now approximately 60 social work educators in the country and a big majority of them with PhD. If the number of social work educators with PhD can be increased gradually, it would not be long for more universities to offer postgraduate degree in social work. This is crucial for social work to established itself as an academic discipline rooted with strong generic foundation (Gasker, 2018; Miley et al., 2004; Trevithick, 2012), as well as with different areas of specialization (e.g. Blom, 2004; Constable & Alvarez, 2006; Dakin et al, 2015; Engstrom & Okamura, 2007; Firn et al., 2021; Garbarino, 2017; Jamal et al., 2022; Naito-Chan et al., 2005; Payne & Askeland, 2016; Ramsay & Boddy, 2017; Rogowski, 2012) and advanced practice (Gamble, 2011; Welbourne, 2012), on top of

conducting more research in social work (Carey, 2017; Engel, & Schutt, 2016; Orme & Shemmings, 2010). The expertise or the elitist element of social work can only be enhanced when social work education can produce more specialists in various field of social work (eg. child welfare and protection, geriatric, mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse, disabilities, school social work, green social work, international social work) and the publication of a social work journal will be viable and sustainable when there is more social work research conducted. This is also vital to meet one strategy of the National Social Policy 2003 in developing specialist services in sectors related to social development to meet the real needs of the society as mentioned in Chapter Five.

Second, the time is ripe for social work educators to step up and be more active in the public sphere in sharing professional and expert views representing the profession as the researcher has suggested in strategy (3) earlier of this chapter. They can respond to many social issues like child abuse, domestic violence, elderly care, social injustice and human rights matters, promptly through the mass and social media. In order to achieve this, social work educators need to stay connected with issues and practices on the ground, and more crucially, perhaps, is for the educators to engage in some form of practice such as attaching themselves with local or international organizations that provide social services to vulnerable people or communities, or giving services and consultation to those in need through private practice or on voluntorary basis. Social work educators must come to the forefront in terms of providing expert views as the numbers grow and more social work educators taking leadership roles in the MASW especially after 2009. Both MASW and the university serve as good platform for social work educators to project themselves as opinion leaders.

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7.3.3 Implication to the Government

One big question yet to be answered is how much the government is willing to invest in the training and the upgrading of social workers in the country? It has been more than 10 years since the Government endorsed the Six-Point Memorandum and the drafting of the Social Work Profession Bill. Yet, until today the Bill has yet to be tabled at the Parliament when two of our neighbours Thailand and Indonesia have already passed their social work legislation in 2013[60] and 2019[61] respectively. In line with the endorsement of the Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community 2020, the government must now show greater political will in enhancing the social welfare service through the regulating of the social work profession and allocating adequate resources. After all, the aim of social work in gaining higher professional recognition is not for professional glorification but is for strengthening the ability of social workers to response to the plight of people who are constantly being excluded or marginalized in society (Lyon in Welbourne, 2009). A higher professional status does not guarantee better income. Therefore, it will be crucial for the government and MASW to have long term plan to sustain the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia.

The government, particularly DSW, must seriously study the manpower strength and need in the social welfare sector. This study has identified that the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia was affected by the downsizing of the manpower of DSW in the 1980s (Chapter Four) and the subsequent increasing of non-graduate positions

[60] https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_isn=96444

[61] https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Home/Details/122024/uu-no-14-tahun-2019

from late 1990s onwards (Chapter Five). The social work profession will never gain recognition and appreciation if the openings for graduate social work positions in the DSW, hospitals and other relevant agenices, as well as the NGO sector, remain small when hundreds of social work graduates enter the job market each year. It would be a waste of human capitals when these graduates are not being employed to do what they have been trained for in tackling the many challenging social problems such as child protection, juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, substance abuse, as well as engaging in social development approach in addressing inclusion and quality of life matter for vulnerable individuals and groups like people with disabilities, elderly, single parents, undocumented children and refugees. The Malaysian government should play a pivotal role, like the example of Sweeden (Svensson and Astrom, 2013), in making social work a profession in dealing with these issues more effectively.

The MWFCD, ISM and DSW should also increase their training capacity by reexamine the seniority of training officers in the training division. Currently the position of the training officers is rather junior as shown in Figure 5.4. The head of the training division should be a senior practitioner because that person should not play the role as coordinator of training programs, but rather must have the capacity to plan or to design suitable training programs that can enhance the competencies of the staffs including all social welfare officers.

7.3.4 Implication to the Theory and Study of Profession

This study has shown that the theory of profession, i.e. the trait theory and power theory, is still relevant to be used as a baseline when one wants to know the status of professionalisation of social work in a country. This is consistent with the approach

taken by Weiss-Gall and Welbourne (2008) in their study of the social work profession in different countries. Nonetheless, the trait theory and power theory may only capture what the profession aspires to achieve in comparing with other professions, and not addressing the power of the government in giving sanction to a profession through legislation. Thus, this study has shown the values and usefulness of the occupational professionalism and organizational professionalism perspective by Evetts (2003, 2006, 2013) in examining the dynamics of interchanges between the profession and the government until both see the common ground in promoting the profession through enhancing its professionalism in practice. However, would that translate into the professionalisation of social work through legislation guarantee? The researcher does not see that as the definite cause and effect because we have also have to consider the leadership factor at both ends of the government and the profession. At the same time, the theme of deprofessionalisation also emerges in Chapter Four and Chapter Five with the recruitment of non-social workers as social welfare officers and medical social workers, as well as the delegation of tasks and power of graduate social welfare officers to non-graduate assistant social welfare officers through some of the laws. That clearly explains Evetts' organizational professionalism perspective, as well as the idea of a hybrid professionalism within the public sector as proposed by Noordegraaf (2007, 2015, 2016) which may worth investigating in future research. Would the social work profession stop their push for professionalism even if the government is not giving priority to regulate the profession? The answer is an obvious no from the responses given by the respondents in this study. Perhaps the classic work by Freidson (2001) which asserts that professionalism as the 'soul' of profession, hence the third logic, where a group of workers with specialized knowledge and the ability to offer society with especially important services can organize and control their own work, without

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dictation from management (bureaucracy) or the influence of free market (consumerism). In the Malaysia context, this study has shown that the social work profession will keep on pushing for professionalisation and greater professionalism, not by the entire group of practitioners but through individuals who are willing to step forward because they believe the specific knowledge and skills of social work is worth fighting for.

7.4 Contributions of This Study

For the researcher, this study has three major contributions in relation to the social work profession in Malaysia. First, this study, to the researcher's knowledge, the only academic study on the development of social work in Malaysia using the professionalisation theoretical perspectives, as well as looking into the synergy of the DSW, MASW and social work education. It covers the professionalisation period over 40 years from 1969 until 2010, which has not been researched (see past research discussed in Chapter 2) in depth in terms of its history, key initiatives in professionalisation and key figures or influential personalities behind those initiatives. This will provide a clearer and more comprehensive view of the professional development of social work in Malaysia post the British administration and early years of the Federation of Malaya. It is not only important for social workers and social work students in Malaysia to understand the history but also for them to appreciate the struggles of the social work pioneers in advancing the profession and the challenges for the profession. This study also can serve as a reference for comparative study of professionalisation of social work in the regional and global context.

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Secondly, this study enhances the research on professionalisation by showcasing the phases of development of social work. In a way, the Malaysia scenario in this study echoes the trend in the field of professionalisation research which shifted from the study of profession to professionalisation and, eventually, to professionalism. Although this study did not come up with new theory or model, which it never intended at the very beginning, the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia demonstrates some similarities and differences to the professionalisation of social work in other countries. In more advanced countries where social work has been strongly established as a profession, the professionalism from the government's perspective has been viewed negatively by the social work profession as an encroachment into the profession's authority (put US, UK, Australia, NZ references) but for Malaysia, the professionalism idea has propelled the government to pay attention to the need to enhance social work as profession.

Thirdly, this study is not merely telling a story of social work in Malaysia, it also revealed the introduction and changes of laws and policies in the social welfare sector, the roles of social workers in the formulation of these laws and policies, and how these legislations might have impacted on the development of social work. This study, in this regard, can provide the social work profession an insights of the importance of legislations and policy that can help shaping the profession and its practices. It can also give the confidence to serving social workers to step up and use their knowledge and skills in shaping service delivery and advocating social change through legislation and policy.

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At the same time, this study can also provide some policy direction for the government in planning the social work and social service workforce in its services as well as for the whole country. This study has shown the fluctuation of manpower in the DSW from the 1980s to 2010 has impacted the workload of the staffs and the increase of non-graduate positions at DSW which led to the deprofessionalisation where the tasks of social welfare officers are being relegated to non-graduate social welfare officers in child protection and probation services. Thus, the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia must include the professional training and education for those non-graduate social work positions.

Lastly, this study has managed to identified active social workers who have contributed to the profession from the 1970 until 2010. While they had helped the development of social work in Malaysia, many of them remain the unsung hero even to the profession. This study in the very least can serve as a reference when people want to know who's who in social work in Malaysia.

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7.5 Strength and Limitation of the Study and Suggestion for Future Study

The combination of oral history by social workers who were active during the period of study and supported by annual reports, minutes of meetings and other related documents identified is the primary strength of this study. The respondents were the key leaders in social work during the days whose insights and experiences have added values when compares to any other social workers who are not in the leadership roles. However, the accuracy and reliability of the data collected are depending on the respondent's memory. As the respondents are required to recall what has happened way

back some 30 to 50 years of memory, and if the data cannot be supported by other source of data, then whether their memories are accurate or reliable remains unknown.

The semi-structured interview method has produced abundant, rich and in-depth data from the respondents. It also made the respondents more relax and gives them more flexibility to express their views and feelings but within the scope of this research. This method has enabled the researcher to ask follow up questions when certain incidents or points mentioned by the respondents can be linked with other sources of data which the researcher has collected.

Data credibility is also another strength of this study as the respondents were the leaders and key promoters of social work in their respective organizations. Their experiences are in fact the key history of the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia. Although a few social work leaders were missed out in the study as they had passed away, many of the respondents knew them as they were colleagues or compatriots in the profession, and would be able to cover some of the incidents involving those who had passed on.

One of the obvious limitation of this study is the data collected were analyzed manually without using any existing qualitative research analysis software like NVivo or ATLAS.ti. The researcher chose to analyze manually because the researcher has no problem keeping track of the coding across the number of interviews conducted. Furthermore, the consistent reviewing of transcripts helps the researcher to familiarize with the data, and helps the researchers to learn all the aspects of the analysis while organizing the information.

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This study has only focused on social work leaders from the MASW, DSW and social work education. Social workers employed at hospitals, non-government organizations, and other agencies were not represented. However, the development of medical social work and its contributions towards professionalisation of social work was addressed in the work of Lee (2011) and interviews with some medical social workers who are the leaders in MASW and social work educators in the field of medical social work. The researcher suggests the future study can look at the professionalisation from the frontline social workers' perspective especially in studying the jurisdiction or professional boundaries of social work (Abbotts, 1998) when compares to other similar profession like counsellors and psychologists.

The other aspect that can be studied is from the professionalism perspective. The researcher would also like to suggest that future study to look into the issues of competencies and professionalism in social work practice and social work curriculum. This will help to address the issue of non-performing social work graduates when compares to graduates of other disciplines as social workers.

This study used a qualitative research approach, which means that the findings cannot be generalized (Berg & Lune, 2012; Creswell, 2012). At best, the findings can only serve as a country case study from the international social work perspective. The reliance on social work leaders in professional organizations, social service agencies, and universities as respondents also means their views were a macro perspective compared to the views of regular social workers on the ground. Some participants have aged and may not remember the details. This study did not use archival study method

like Fuziah (2006) in her study. Therefore, the reference to the minutes of meetings from DSW and MASW is depended much on the quality of the recording and filing system. For example, not all the annual reports of the DSW or the Ministry were kept at the resource centre of the Ministry or ISM. At the same time, not all the reports which could be located have the data related to social work and manpower. Similarly, the annual reports and minutes of meeting of the MASW were not able to be traced in full despite the researcher have spent days searching at the MASW office. Nonetheless, efforts have been taken as discussed in Chapter Three in ensuring the trustworthiness of this study.

7.6 Chapter Summary and Conclusion

History is not just about the past, it is also link to the present, and to the future as we bring along the lessons learned. Social work has come a long way in Malaysia since it was introduced by the British Colonial Administration through the establishment of the DSW in 1946. The DSW has evolved several times and continues to be the main provider of social work and social welfare services in the country. Social work education emerged as a response to the need of skills training for the social welfare officers at the DSW but has since evolved as an academic discipline at the university. The formation of the MASW reflected the urge for professional identity and comradery among social workers as the number increases. However, the study of the professionalisation of social work in Malaysia from 1969 until 2010 has shown that social work has not achieve its aspiration as a full-pledged profession. The inability of the profession to gain such status was not due to the lack of efforts from the practitioners, the professional organization and the social work educators, but has to be seen from a wider structural fabric of social welfare services within the public administration. The

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synergy of the practitioners, professional body, educators and the policy makers holds the key for social work to be promoted as a recognized profession. For Malaysia, it has to start from the top.

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Appendix 1

Interview Consent Form

Awang Had Salleh
Graduate School
of Arts and Sciences
Universiti Utara Malaysia

Interview Consent Form

PhD title: Professionalisation of Social Work in Malaysia

Student's name: Teoh Ai Hua / Student ID: S96110

Interview date/time:

_____

Participant's name:

_____

Universiti Utara Malaysia

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above PhD study. Ethical procedures for academic research undertaken at Universiti Utara Malaysia require that interviewees explicitly agree to being interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the professionalisation of social work and its related issues and challenges in Malaysia, specifically from 1973 to 2013. In the study, it will investigate the efforts taken by past and present social work leaders from the professional organization (represented by the Malaysian Association of Social Workers, MASW), the government agency responsible for social welfare and social work services (represented by the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia, JKMM), and the academia (represented by social work lecturers at local public universities). This study uses historical documents research and interviews for data collection. Former leaders of MASW, former Director Generals of JKMM and social work academia which has headed or has been heading the social work program at the universities will be respondents for the interview. The proposal defense of the study has been approved by the School of Applied Psychology, Social Work and Policy on 15 February 2016.

The interview will take no longer than 2 hours. We don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop or withdraw from the interview at any time.

Would you therefore read the information below and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- the interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced,
- you will be sent the transcript and given the opportunity to correct any factual errors,
- the transcript of the interview will be analysed by Mr. Teoh Ai Hua,

- access to the interview transcript will be limited to Mr. Teoh Ai Hua and his supervisors in the study,
- any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed,
- the actual recording will be kept by Mr. Teoh Ai Hua, and any use of the recording or transcript for purposes other than as described above must obtain your prior explicit consent,
- any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval

All or part of the content of your interview may be used;

- In academic papers, policy papers or news articles
- In oral or paper presentation at academic seminars or conferences

By signing this form, I agree that;

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this study. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;
2. The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above;
3. I have read the Information sheet;
4. I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation;
5. I can request a copy of the transcript of my interview and may make edits I feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality;
6. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.

Universiti Utara Malaysia

_____

Printed Name

_____ _____

Participants Signature Date

_____ _____

Student's Signature Date

Contact Information

PhD student:	PhD supervisor:
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Appendix 2

Reports and Publications of MASW Identified

MASW Annual Reports from 1990-2000

Laporan Tahunan 1988-1989
Laporan Tahunan 1993-1994
Laporan Tahunan 1994-1995
Laporan Tahunan 1995-1996
Laporan Tahunan 1996-1997
Laporan Tahunan 1997-1998
Laporan Tahunan 1998-1999
Laporan Tahunan 1999-2000
Laporan Tahunan 2000-2001
Annual Report 2001-2002
Annual Report 2002-2003
Annual Report 2003-2004
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Annual Report 2007-2008
Annual Report 2009-2010

MASW Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Minit Mesyuarat Agong Tahunan, 24 September 1994
Minit Mesyuarat Agong Tahunan, 16 September 1995
Minit Mesyuarat Agong Tahunan, 16 November 1996
Minit Mesyuarat Agong Tahunan, 30 Ogos 1997
Minit Mesyuarat Agong Tahunan, 18 Julai 1998
Minit Mesyuarat Agong Tahunan, 11 Jun 1999
Minit Mesyuarat Agong Tahunan, 30 Jun 2000

Universiti Utara Malaysia

MASW Minutes of Executive Committee Meetings

Minit Mesyuarat, 20 Oktober 1995
Minit Mesyuarat 11 Mei 1996
Minit Mesyuarat, 3 Disember 1996
Minit Mesyuarat, 30 Ogos 1997
Minit Mesyuarat, 26 September 1997
Minit Mesyuarat, 8 November 1997
Minit Mesyuarat, 21 Februari 1998
Minit Mesyuarat, 18 April 1998
Minit Mesyuarat, 23 Mei 1998
Minit Mesyuarat, 28 November 1998
Minit Mesyuarat, 27 Februari 1999
Minit Mesyuarat, 16 Julai 1999
Minit Mesyuarat, 16 Oktober 1999
Minit Mesyuarat, 10 September 1999
Minit Mesyuarat, 23 April 2000
Minit Mesyuarat, 23 November 2000

Other documents MASW

Senarai Ahli Persatuan Pekerja Sosial Malaysia 1995 – 47 orang
Minutes of Meeting Task Force for Socail Work Education Council, 27 February 1999

Appendix 3

Examples of Interview Transcripts with Coding and Comments

Example 1

41	E	I think ya. I mean there was but I won't say that it is that really significant. I think perception of social work is like...it is really taking a long time for people to understand. Even up to today there are people who says that I never heard of this before. I didn't know there's an Association of social workers. I guess the message has not reach to...far and wide. It's like...even now I suppose when we are talking about training the NGOs, there are still a lot of misunderstanding about what social work is. Just like now we are trying to get members in, those who are applying for membership are thinking that they are doing social work when they are not. So it goes to show that they do not understand the concept of social work and they think that by doing philanthropy work or some kind of community service, some good deeds, is actually social work. So I think we are still a long way off from people understanding professional social work.	Public perception of social work: changes but not significant. Public perception of social work: Misunderstood philanthropy as social work
42	I	How did you get into MASW?	
43	E	I think when I graduated I immediately joined the association because at that time it was very much encouraged because all the leaders in the association were in my office. Sushama, Grace, Kate were all there, everybody was in the association as member, so there's no way you can say that you don't want to be a member. I was strongly encouraged. Also because at that time the Association was fighting very hard to get professional recognition, to get that degree salary. I remember there was a lot of reviews of salary at that time, and many groups were fighting to put on the degree's scale. There were the Suffian salary review, Cabinet salary review, and Ms Sushama really put up a strong advocacy boasting the image of medical social workers especially. She went for all the hearings, put up papers after papers. So it was like important for us to get to that status even tough we came out with a diploma equivalent to a degree. The thinking was that because Singapore University also supported and gave us letter, for me, for Barbara...Because I was in the last batch of the Diploma students when Singapore government decided to dissolve the program. We were the last batch. We was just got told in the first year that this is the last batch. Everything cramped into the second year and that was it! You came out and suddenly you got only Part I, but the University said the Diploma is equivalent to a Degree...they wrote letters to support us. We put that forward....to the hospital as well to get that kind of salary. There was a lot of this kind of things...making it something respectable, something that is recognized. It was a good time then. So we...the Association fought hard for it as well.	MASW, activism: Joining MASW as member The Royal Commission Report on Salary Review and Terms of Service in the Civil Service 1967 (Suffian Report 1967) MASW, professional recognition, remuneration, social work education: fought for professional recognition in terms of degree salary scale, trying to get Diploma in Social Studies equivalent to degree
44	I	The Association meant MASW then or the Almoners' Association?	
45	E	Almoners was formed in the 50s when the British ex-pats came to work. They formed it in the 50s but later changed it to Medical Social Workers in 1968. The name was changed to Medical Social Workers and that was the time actually they	Almoners changed to Medical Social Workers DSW, Recognition,

		were fighting for the salary but it went into the 70s, even when MASW was formed in 1973, welfare officers started getting degree's pays. So that was the time we also said why can't medical social workers in University Hospital and other teaching hospitals also be recognized as degree holders. So in the 70s and 80s they were fighting for that. Eventually it was given to us. That was the time when Association getting more active. In the early days both welfare department and hospitals were working very closely in that sense. I got involved in MASW after being...just as a committee member initially for a few years. Then slowing you got pulled in to take up positions.	remuneration: Social welfare officers with Diploma Social Studies getting graduate pay. DSW: Close working relationship between DSW and hospitals MASW, activism: join committee member
46	I	When was the first time you came into the committee?	
47	E	I think it was in the 80s. When I came in, the President was Mohamad Hussin, and then there was Anthony, then Abdullah came back again, then Anthony came back again. So worked through different positions, until Singham was President, then when he wanted to drop out from the committee, he pushed me into it! 2001.	MASW, leadership: names of MASW Presidents MASW, leadership: Being asked to take over as President in 2001
48	I	How was MASW as a professional association before your role as President?	
49	E	Actually it was still struggling because it was new. We didn't have an office so we were like always having our meetings borrowing premises at JKM or the home of the President. I remember Anthony was very generous, hosting meetings. We were at a stage of trying to get more members in but it was quite slow moving. At the same time we were connecting with IFSW because at the very beginning when it was formed, I think members like Abdullah and Sushama, they have that kind of link with international body. Because of that they pushed the development of the Association further by getting that kind of recognition. They were quite involved in international conferences but subsequently I think it sort of less active. I remember we were more into national activities. We had like national seminars, conference that kind things although...Husin did go on some international conference overseas but we didn't have much money. They did raise some money from one conference in the 80s and that money was practically used up. So we were struggling to find ways to earn money but there wasn't so active in that sense that we didn't have big conferences. Just national seminars... What the local social workers were active about was they were promoting the Caring Society concept so there was a lot more of exposures in the local papers at that time.	MASW: MASW was struggling as a new association with no office. MASW: Membership has been slow MASW: Connecting with IFSW: members like Abdullah & Sushama made international link and get MASW recognized by IFSW. MASW: more focus nationally after Abdullah & Sushama. MASW, activism: Social workers were promoting Caring Society in 1990s

Example 2

21	IB:	At the same time when I was in New York, that was when HIV first started. For my master I was placed as a medical social worker at the hospital, that was when they got a lot of cases of HIV/AIDS, and I was also working in the Department of Ageing in New York City. So these are the two exposures that I...At Colombia my concentration was administration and clinical social work because of my background.	Social work field: Exposure to HIV/AIDS services
22	IB	So when I came back I set up Community AIDS Service Penang (CASP) in 1989. The NGO still...eventually we moved to Social Science, I headed the AARG (AIDS Action Research Group) Research Centre. So that's basically the history but because I feel I'm not exposed to practice, I better have my NGO so I can still provide my own practice with the NGO. So that's my background with social work. At Barry, 1995, I joined MIAMI HIV/AIDS Crisis punya organization, again doing a lot on HIV/AIDS related issues. By that time I already have some exposure in helping people with HIV/AIDS because I started the program in 1989. In 1991 I was at Barry University, Florida until 1995. I came back 1995 I joined the Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC) and met Marina Mahathir for the first time. I came back with my pony tail and Marina said 'This is a very strange Malay. You better rope him into the organization". So I have been active with the organization ever since. I was doing a lot of work with CASP.	Activism: join CASP & MAC Social work practice Importance of maintaining social work practice
23	Int:	Prof, you said you went to Canada for the first time, you were not aware of social work. So what was the public perception of social work in Malaysia?	
24	IB:	I was not even conscious about social work in Malaysia at that time. Never really until I came back to Malaysia that there is such thing of medical social work, but of course when I was in Canada, I already learned that there is such thing in Malaysia when I was a student. I have some friends her. They said that if you want to come back and work as a medical social worker, there is an opening. I know Zaharah at that time. My friend who was a pathologist at that time here at the University Hospital, he was like trying to link me with Zaharah. So when I came back I went to see Zaharah immediately.	Public recognition: Not aware of social work in Malaysia
25	Int:	So when you first started as a social worker, how was the public reaction to social work? Do they know what social work is?	
26	IB:	Public, I think they know about JKM. Basically even at that time JKM also placed their staff to work at the hospital, so called medical social workers but they are not trained. Surprisingly all the people I worked with at that time, Barbara, Elsie, Grace Ng, these are the trained social workers. We never had anybody who was not trained at that time except welfare officers from JKM but basically they are doing the intake work. Pembantu. So I think UH was the first hospital	Public recognition: Public more aware of DSW than social work. Social work, employment Medical social workers employed at UH were all trained social workers: Barbara Yen, Elsie Lee, Grace Ng.

		that really focus on medical social work, for a long time until they started hiring people like Sidek and others without social work background. That one become 'rojak' already by then. When I came back to UH for the second time they already started taking in people...like half of the staff already people were not trained. Some of the staff were started to retire also.	DSW, Social work, deprofessionalisation: DSW assistants attached at UH not trained social workers. Beginning of recruitment of non-social work graduates at UH in early 80s. Ismail's second time at UH was 1983-85.
27	Int:	Would you say that at that time...you went to McGill in 70s.	
28	IB:	76-79.	
29	Int:	That time USM have started their social work program.	
30	IB:	USM just started the program 1975.	
31	Int:	Since nobody goes to Singapore any more when USM just started the program, would you think because of the gap, you couldn't find any qualified social workers then?	
32	IB:	Also I think the Ministry of Social Welfare also changed name, kan?	
33	Int:	With Perpaduan, 1990.	
34	IB	I think the need and demand for social workers were there but we didn't have enough people so basically many hospitals started to bring in untrained social workers and at the same time they tarnish the image of social work, and I think JKM taking a lot of people not trained in social work. In the hospital, then slowly there were doctors started to complain this social workers do not know how to do their job. I don't blame them because they don't know what is social work. We have not really left a good impression of the profession at that time. So they started to hire the counsellors to do social work. So that's when JKM also started to bring in counsellors and also hospitals having their own counsellors, it becomes quite confusing for us at that time. When I was there (at UH) we never heard of counsellors doing social work or being placed in the hospitals. I mean we have clinical psychologists but never counsellors.	Social work, employment, deprofessionalisation, occupational closure: Not enough people with social work qualification. Both hospitals and JKM recruiting non-social work qualified workers. Deprofessionalisation, professional image: Untrained social workers not able to perform. Image of profession tarnished. Occupational closure: Recruitment of counsellors to do social work
35	Int:	So that in terms of organization recognition of social work, but in the general public, during your time, how do general public perceive social work?	
36	IB	I think social work, not in the medical setting, but basically people know that the Welfare Department is the place for people to get financial aid. That's the general public impression. It's not a place for people to get psychosocial intervention. Basically I think all the social welfare officers are not trained to do that even if they are trained, they are too busy to run the department or the state, so they are not directly involve in providing the psychosocial intervention to clients. Like today many of the front line workers are not trained to do casework, family intervention and group, even community.	Public recognition, image of social work: People associate social work with DSW and financial aid. Deprofessionalisation: Most social welfare officers not trained in social work and not engaging in psychosocial intervention methods.
37	Int:	Even as you joined USM as educator, over the years	

		do you see the perception changed?	
38	IB:	Yes the perception has changed a lot. I mean perception has changed in terms of there is a need to have more social work program at the IPT. Also, I think the name SDA did not help very much in terms of social work identity of this country although I have looked at the report before they set up the social work program at USM. The name that was proposed was social work from the report by the UN Economic…and I know the lady who was involved in draw up for social work was really a trained social worker from USA. I got the report somewhere. So at the end they compromised with SDA, social development and administration. The first 4 years we only taking in people from JKM, and later on we opened it up. So actually not really closed to the late 70s we only opened it to fresh students to do social work.	Social work education: Perception change at the academic level. USM, SDA, professional identity The use of SDA didn't raise the identity of social work USM, education: USM only taking in people from JKM initially (1975-79) & only opened to fresh students in late 70s - explains the shortages of social work graduates in the 80s.

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Appendix 4

An Example of Audit Trail

Date/Year	Tasks	Descriptions	Remarks/Document
February-May 2014	Starting PhD study @ UUM	Taking two papers Academic Writings Papers & Research Methods	Both papers passed
May 2014	Study leave	Applying to UUM & KPT for study leave	Approval for PhD leave from 1 September 2014-31 August 2017
June – December 2014	Literature review	On-going and continuous process where the researcher search for past literature, annual reports and related documents	Library UUM, online, library KPWKM, ISM resource centre, MASW office
January-April 2015	Research design	Discussion with supervisors on research objectives and design	Qualitative research approach identified
April-December 2015	Preparing proposal Document study	Writing the first three chapters Searching for related annual reports and publications of DSW, MASW and universities	Proposal submitted early January 2016 Visited library of MWFCD, ISM and MASW from April 2015 to March 2016
February 2016	Proposal defence	Presenting proposal to panel	Proposal defence passed
March-May 2016	Interview guide	• Designing semi-structured interview guide, interview questions and consent form • Review and comments from supervisor and experts from the field on research design and interview questions.	• Interview guide, interview questions and consent form prepared
May-June 2016	Preparing for interview	Contacting respondents for setting interview appointments – on going until early February 2018	• Interview questions sent to respondents • Interview dates set for respondents
June 2016 – February 2018	Data collection (interview)	• Conducting face to face semi-structured interview with respondents • Interview transcript prepared within 3 weeks after interview	• Interview consent form • Semi-structured interview guide • Recorder
May 2016-December 2020	Data analysis	• Analysing interview transcripts – identifying, reviewing and categorizing themes • Analysing documents and reports - identifying, reviewing and categorizing themes	• First draft of thesis completed

Universiti Utara Malaysia

		• Cross-checking facts, search for additional literature and supporting data • Writing subsequent chapters and revising chapter one to three	

Universiti Utara Malaysia

Appendix 5

Certificate of Registration of MAPSW in 1974

Bil: R.S.M. 326/73/(12)
PPP/Sel. 110/73.

(1)

(Pertubuhan 3)

MALAYSIA

AKTA PERTUBUHAN 1966

BORANG 3

PERATURAN-PERATURAN PERTUBUHAN, 1966

(Peraturan 5)

Perakuan Pendaftaran

Adalah dengan ini diperakui bahawa

PERSATUAN PEKERJA-PEKERJA IKTISAS SOSIAL MALAYSIA,
(MALAYSIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS);
d/a Yunit Perkhidmatan Kebajikan Perubatan, Hospital Universiti, Kuala Lumpur.

telah pada hari ini didaftarkan sebagai suatu pertubuhan di bawah seksyen 7 dalam Akta Pertubuhan, 1966, dan bahawa nombor pendaftarannya ialah 1387 (Selangor).

Diperbuat dengan ditandatangani oleh saya pada 28 haribulan Mac, 19 74.

SALINAN YANG DIPERAKUKAN BENAR.
(Certified True Copy)

LAU Chi Swee
Penolong Pendaftar Pertubuhan,
Wilayah Persekutuan/Selangor

MENTERI PENDAFTAR PERTUBUHAN MALAYSIA

t.t.
(KASSIM BIN HAJI MOHD. AMIN)
Pendaftar Pertubuhan,
Malaysia

Universiti Utara Malaysia

Appendix 6

MASW newsletter *Tinjauan* (1975 and 1976)

TINJAUAN

PERSATUAN PEKERJA IKTISAS SOSIAL MALAYSIA (PERPISMA)

Jilid: 1, Bil. 1. KDN: 8863 (Risalah Triwulan) Jun. 1975

Sidang Pengarang
1. Puan Sri E.N. Chong
2. Cik P. S. Sushama
3. Wan Azmi Ramli

KATA-KATA ALUAN DARI
YANG DI PERTUA "PERPISMA"

Dengan terbitnya keluaran pertama risalah 'TINJAUAN' ini maka persatuan kita telah melangkah setingkat lagi ke arah pencapaian matlamat-matlamatnya yang termaktub di dalam perlembagaan.

2. Adalah menjadi hasrat risalah ini untuk menyajikan makallah-makallah yang ilmiah yang ada berkaitan dengan masaalah-masaalah sosial yang sedang dihadapi oleh masyarakat kita di negeri ini. Selain daripada itu adalah diharapkan bahawa risalah ini akan dapat menerbitkan berita-berita dan aktiviti-aktiviti lain-lain persatuan antara bangsa yang sama-sama bergabung dengan International Federation of Social Workers. Untuk tujuan ini persatuan ini berharap saudara-saudara tidak akan keberatan menyumbangkan makallah-makallah yang bersabit dengan satu-satu projek sosial atau pembangunan masyarakat yang telah, sedang ataupun yang akan dilaksanakan di negeri masing-masing. Lapuran berkaitan dengan sesuatu penyiasatan sosial atau sesuatu masaalah sosial yang telah dan sedang di hadapi atau dijalankan adalah juga berfaedah untuk dimuatkan di dalam risalah ini untuk makiumat ahli-ahli yang lain.

3. Oleh sebab makallah ini memakan belanja yang banyak dan ianya diedarkan dengan percuma kepada ahli-ahlinya, kita memerlukan sumbangan wang daripada saudara-saudara sekelian. Bantuan ini bukan semestinya keluar dari poket kita sendiri tapi dengan jalan kita mendapatkan bantuan daripada orang-orang perseorangan ataupun badan-badan Swasta yang boleh menampung perbelanjaan satu-satu keluaran yang mana menelan belanja sekurang-kurangnya $500 sekali.

4. Akhirnya saya percaya makallah-makallah yang telah dimuatkan dalam keluaran kali ini akan mendatangkan faedah kepada ahli-ahli persatuan ini dan berharap menjadi perangsang kepada saudara-saudara sekelian untuk menyumbangkan makallah-makallah untuk keluaran yang kedua dan yang berikutnya.

(MUHAMMAD BIN MOHD. NOOR)
Yang Di Pertua.

RAYUAN DARI SETIAUSAHA

Rakan Sejawat,

Kami pekerja-pekerja Sosial Iktisas adalah keluarga yang amat kecil, hanya lebih kurang 120 diMalaysia Barat dan Malaysia Timur, Kami sangat-sangat memerlukan sokongan dari setiap rakan agar dapat persatuan kami ini bergerak dengan lebih cergas lagi. Oleh yang demikian adalah diharap rakan-rakan akan menandatangani di borang-borang keahlian yang boleh didapati dari persatuan.

2. Kepada rakan-rakan yang telah menjadi ahli tetapi masih belum membayar yuran bagi tahun 1974, saya merayu sekali lagi supaya menjelaskan yuran tersebut dengan serta-merta. Lebih kurang ¼ ahli-ahli masih belum membayar yuran bagi tahun 1974!

(K. S. Chong)

TINJAUAN

PERSATUAN PEKERJA IKTISAS SOSIAL MALAYSIA

(MALAYSIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS)

JILID 1 BIL: 3 KDN: 8863 (RISALAH TRIWULAN) MAC/JUN/SEPT. 1976

Sidang Pengarang

1. Datin Y. L. Chong
2. Encik C. S. Lee
3. Puan K. S. Chin
4. Wan Azmi Ramli

OBITUARY

We share with our fellow Malaysians the sense of grief and irreparable loss that we all feel so deeply with the passing away of the late Tun Haji Abdul Razak bin Hussein. Although only a few of us were privileged to know him intimately, the late Tun, as he was so affectionately known, was the inspiration to many hundreds of thousands in this country. He will be remembered and respected as our late Prime Minister who, by his selfless drive and devotion to the affairs of the nation, worked relentlessly and tirelessly for the economic and political well-being of the citizens of this country.

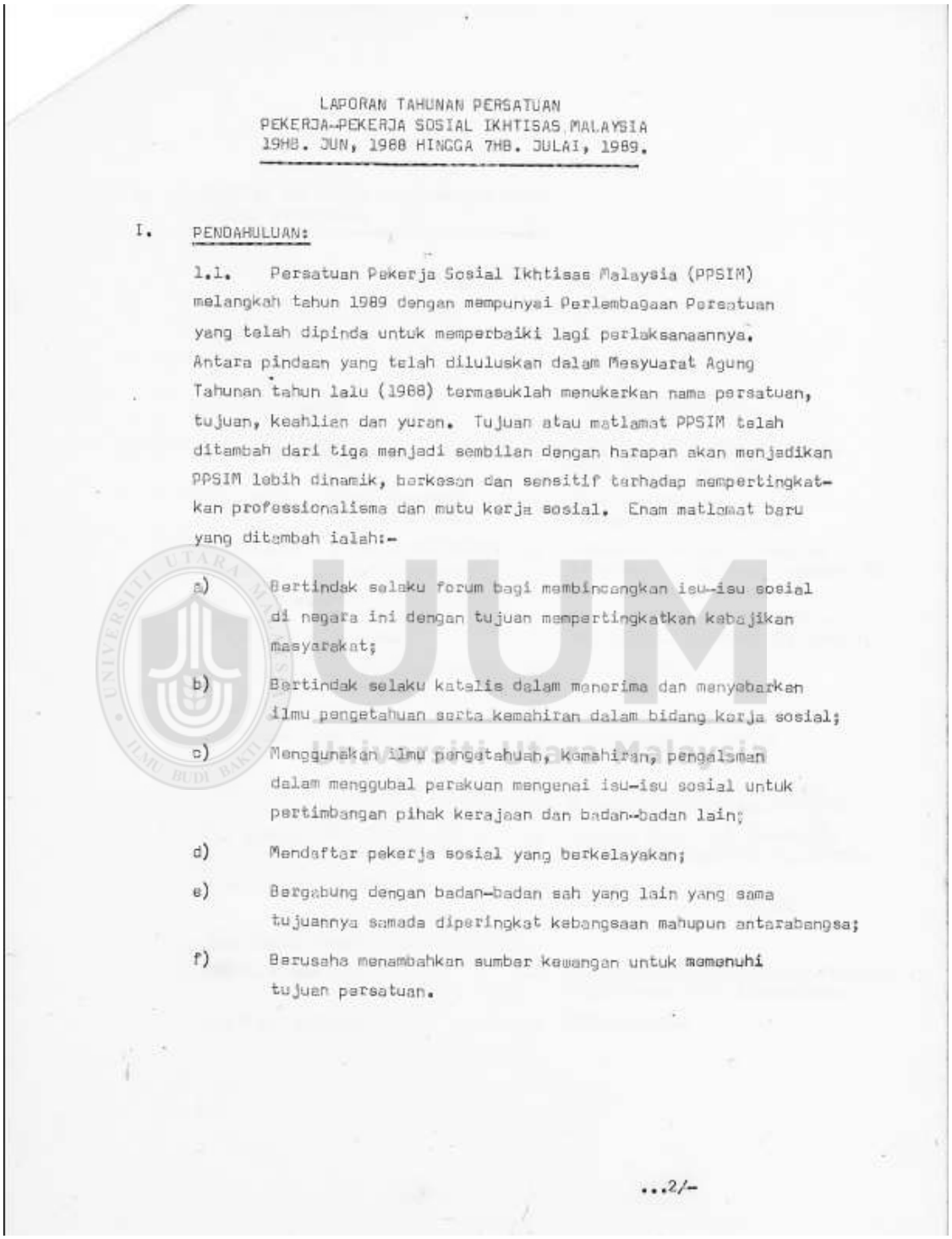
His sudden departure from us has left us with a sense of loss but even as we mourn his passing away, we are conscious of the need to carry on as a nation and to support our new Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein bin Onn, as he is now entrusted with new and onerous responsibilities in the difficult task of nation building. We extend our condolences to Toh Puan Hajjah Rahah and the family of the late Tun Haji Abdul Razak in this time of sorrow.

— Puan Sri E. N. Chong —

Pendapat-Pendapat yang diutarakan oleh penulis-penulis tidak semestinya mencerminkan pendapat redaksi TINJAUAN

Appendix 7

Records of the Change of Name of MASW 1988-1989



LAPORAN TAHUNAN PERSATUAN
PEKERJA-PEKERJA SOSIAL IKHTISAS MALAYSIA
19HB. JUN, 1988 HINGGA 7HB. JULAI, 1989.

I. PENDAHULUAN:

1.1. Persatuan Pekerja Sosial Ikhtisas Malaysia (PPSIM) melangkah tahun 1989 dengan mempunyai Perlembagaan Persatuan yang telah dipinda untuk memperbaiki lagi perlaksanaannya. Antara pindaan yang telah diluluskan dalam Mesyuarat Agung Tahunan tahun lalu (1988) termasuklah menukarkan nama persatuan, tujuan, keahlian dan yuran. Tujuan atau matlamat PPSIM telah ditambah dari tiga menjadi sembilan dengan harapan akan menjadikan PPSIM lebih dinamik, berkesan dan sensitif terhadap mempertingkatkan professionalisma dan mutu kerja sosial. Enam matlamat baru yang ditambah ialah:-

a) Bertindak selaku forum bagi membincangkan isu-isu sosial di negara ini dengan tujuan mempertingkatkan kebajikan masyarakat;

b) Bertindak selaku katalis dalam menerima dan menyebarkan ilmu pengetahuan serta kemahiran dalam bidang kerja sosial;

c) Menggunakan ilmu pengatahuan, kemahiran, pengalaman dalam menggubal perakuan mengenai isu-isu sosial untuk pertimbangan pihak kerajaan dan badan-badan lain;

d) Mendaftar pekerja sosial yang berkelayakan;

e) Bergabung dengan badan-badan sah yang lain yang sama tujuannya samada diperingkat kebangsaan mahupun antarabangsa;

f) Berusaha menambahkan sumber kewangan untuk memenuhi tujuan persatuan.

...2/-

Source: Laporan Tahunan Persatuan Pekerja Sosial Ikthisas Malaysia 1988-1989

Bil. P.P.M. 326/73 (85)
?P/

(Pertubuhan 11)

MALAYSIA

AKTA PERTUBUHAN, 1966

Peraturan-Peraturan Pertubuhan, 4966 1984

(Peraturan 7)

Kebenaran Menukar Nama

Adalah dengan ini diperakui bahawa nama bagi

Persatuan Pekerja-Pekerja Iktisas Sosial Malaysia
(Malaysian Association of Professional Social Workers)

Nombor Pendaftaran: 1387 (Selangor)

telah ditukarkan kepada

Persatuan Pekerja Sosial Malaysia
(Malaysian Association of Social Workers)

dan bahawa penukaran itu telah didaftarkan pada 9 Jun 1989

(LAU CHI SWEE)
b.p. Pendaftar Pertubuhan,
Malaysia.

/has

PERINGATAN: Surat kebenaran ini hendaklah disematkan kepada Perakuan Pendaftaran Pertubuhan.

SALINAN YANG BENAR SAYA DIAKUI OLEH PEGUAM / PEGAWAI UNDANG-UNDANG

8/5/13

Universiti Utara Malaysia

Appendix 8

Universiti Malaya Diploma in Social Work brochure (1999)

The Diploma in Social Work (DipSW) aims to equip staff and volunteers with the knoweldge, skills and values to function as competent social workers. The knowledge and skills acquired will enable the social worker in assessing and meeting social needs at the individual, family, group and community levels in Malaysian society effectively.

This course was developed in cooperation with Yayasan Kajian dan Pembangunan Masyarakat (YKPM), Fakulti Sastera dan Sains Sosial and Pusat Pembangunan Pendidikan Universiti Malaya.

The course in Diploma in Social Work will begin in March 1999.

DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL WORK

For course details and registration please contact:

Pusat Pendididkan Berterusan Universiti Malaya
(Universiti Malaya Centre for Continuing Education)
Tingkat 1, Bangunan Baktisiswa
Universiti Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: 03-4667984 Fax: 03-4667884

Pusat Pendidikan Berterusan Universiti Malaya

(University of Malaya Centre for Continuing Education)

Universiti Utara Malaysia

Course Objectives

The Diploma in Social Work (DipSW) aims to develop professional competencies in:

- Making assessment and review of social needs, problems and issues at the individual, family, group and community levels.
- Intervening and providing services (directly, by referral and networking)
- Working in partnership with service users, affirming dignity and rights and by empowering service users through self-reliance strategies
- Appreciating the micro (individual and family) and macro (society, national and global) dimensions of social work theory and practice.
- Building his/her capacity and ability to work in and as a team in carrying out social work practice.

Course Modules

There are six course modules with a total of 252 hours to fulfil over a nine-month period.

M1 - Social Work Models and Social Work Agency
M2 - Social Work Values and Social Workers
M3 - Social Work Methods - Working with Individuals and Families
M4 - Social Work Methods - Working with Groups
M5 - Social Work Methods - Working with Communities
M6 - Social Problems, Social Policy and Malaysian Society

Duration of Program

The Diploma in Social Work is a part-time course and will be held on Saturdays (9.00a.m. - 5.00 p.m.), over 9 months.

Entry Qualifications

Minimum entry qualifications is SPM with three credits and three years of related work experience as staff or volunteer.

Who Should Attend

Social Workers from Government Agencies (Social Welfare, Youth) and Voluntary Organisations.

Fees

Total course fee is RM4,500.00. Candidates from voluntary organisations could apply for partial scholarships.

Module Lecturers

Prof. Madya Dr. Raziah Omar, Lecturer, Universiti Malaya
Dr. Denison Jayasooria, Yayasan Kajian dan Pembangunan Masyarakat (YKPM)
Dr. Faizah Yunus, Lecturer, Universiti Malaya
Cik Siti Ajar Abu Bakar, Lecturer, Universiti Malaya
Cik Ng Wai Ling (BSc), YKPM
Encik Andrew Wong (BSc.), YKPM

Appendix 9

DSW Scheme of Services

JADUAL 1-1

KUMPULAN PERKHIDMATAN

Kumpulan Perkhidmatan Baru	*Gred-gred Mengikut Laporan JKK 1976*
Kumpulan Pengurusan Tertinggi	
(a) Jawatan-jawatan Utama	Tingkatan Tertinggi 'C' dan ke atas
(b) Jawatan-jawatan Gred Khas	
Kumpulan Pengurusan dan Profesional	Semua gred di bawah Kumpulan Gaji A daripada Tingkatan Tertinggi 'D' dan ke bawah (kecuali A24 dan perkhidmatan-perkhidmatan tertentu yang digolongkan dalam Kumpulan Sokongan)
Kumpulan Sokongan	Semua gred di bawah Kumpulan Gaji B, C dan D termasuk IMG.

Klasifikasi Perkhidmatan (Kod Gaji)	*Bidang*	*Skim Perkhidmatan Sekarang*	*Skim Perkhidmatan Baru SSB*
	Pembangunan Masyarakat	1. Pegawai Kanan Kebajikan Masyarakat (A22,A12,A10)	
		2. Pegawai Kemajuan Masyarakat (A22,A12,A10)	1. Pegawai Pembangunan Masyarakat (Gred S3,S2,S1)
		3. Pegawai Perhubungan Masyarakat (A22,A12,A10)	
		4. Pegawai Kebajikan Perubatan (A22,A12,A10)	
		5. Pegawai Kebajikan Masyarakat (B11,B4)	
		6. Penolong Pegawai Kemajuan Masyarakat (B11,B4,B2)	
		7. Penolong Pegawai Perhubungan Masyarakat (B11,B4)	
		8. Penyelia Ekonomi Rumah Tangga (B8,B3,B1)	2. Penolong Pegawai Pembangunan Masyarakat (Gred S5,S4)
		9. Penolong Pegawai Pembangunan Peneroka (B11,B4,B2)	
		10. Penolong Pegawai Kebajikan Peneroka (B11,B4)	
		11. Pembantu Ekonomi Rumah Tangga (C10,C3,C1)	
		12. Pembantu Kemajuan Masyarakat (C11,C3)	
		13. Pembantu Kebajikan Masyarakat (C11,C3,C1)	
		14. Pembantu Pembangunan Peneroka (C11,C3,C1)	3. Pembantu Pembangunan Masyarakat (Gred S7,S6)
		15. Jurulatih Pembangunan Masyarakat (C11,C3,C1)	
		16. Pegawai Luar Hal Ehwal Orang Asli (C11,C3,C1)	
		17. Pembantu Ekonomi Rumah Tangga Rendah (D10,D3)	4. Pembantu Ekonomi Rumah Tangga Rendah (Gred S9,S8) (dijumudkan)
		18. Pembantu Luar Hal Ehwal Orang Asli (D11,D3)	5. Pembantu Luar Hal Ehwal Orang Asli (Gred S9,S8) (dijumudkan)
		19. Pembantu Pembangunan Keluarga (D11,D3)	6. Pembantu Pembangunan Keluarga (Gred S9,S8) (dijumudkan)

Sumber: Pekeliling Perkhidmatan Bilangan 9 Tahun 1991 (https://docs.jpa.gov.my/docs/pp/1991/pp091991.pdf)

Jadual 3
Penetapan Gred Sistem Saraan Malaysia
Mengikut Kelayakan Masuk

Kelayakan	Gred Sistem Saraan Malaysia
Ijazah	41-54
Diploma/ Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia dan setaraf	27-40
Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia dan setaraf	17-26
Penilaian Menengah Rendah/Sijil Rendah Pelajaran dan ke bawah	1-16

Jadual 4
Contoh Penggelaran Semula Gred Bagi
Klasifikasi Perkhidmatan Pentadbiran dan Sokongan (N)

Kumpulan Perkhidmatan	Gred Sistem Saraan Baru	Gred Sistem Saraan Malaysia
Kumpulan Pengurusan dan Profesional	Gred N1	Gred N54
		Gred N52
	Gred N2	Gred N48
		Gred N44
	Gred N3	Gred N41
Kumpulan Sokongan (Diploma/Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia dan setaraf)		Gred N36
	Gred N5	Gred N32
	Gred N6	Gred N27
Kumpulan Sokongan (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia dan setaraf)		Gred N26
	Gred N7	Gred N22
	Gred N9	Gred N17
Kumpulan Sokongan (Penilaian Menengah Rendah/Sijil Rendah Pelajaran dan ke bawah)		Gred N4
	Gred N13	Gred N1

Pembangunan Masyarakat

1. Pegawai Kanan Kebajikan Masyarakat
   A22, A12, A10
2. Pegawai Kemajuan Masyarakat
   A22, A12, A10
3. Pegawai Perhubungan Masyarakat
   A22, A12, A10
4. Pegawai Kebajikan Perubatan
   A22, A12, A10

17. Pegawai Pembangunan Masyarakat
    S41, S44, S48, S52, S54

5. Pegawai Kebajikan Masyarakat
   B11, B4
6. Penolong Pegawai Kemajuan Masyarakat
   B11, B4, B2
7. Penolong Pegawai Perhubungan Masyarakat
   B11, B4
8. Penyelia Ekonomi Rumah Tangga
   B8, B3, B1
9. Penolong Pegawai Pembangunan Peneroka
   B11, B4, B2
10. Penolong Pegawai Kebajikan Peneroka
    B11, B4

18. Penolong Pegawai Pembangunan Masyarakat
    S27, S32, S38

11. Pembantu Ekonomi Rumah Tangga
    C10, C3, C1
12. Pembantu Kemajuan Masyarakat
    C11, C3
13. Pembantu Kebajikan Masyarakat
    C11, C3, C1
14. Pembantu Pembangunan Pencroka
    C11, C3, C1
15. Jurulatih Pembangunan Masyarakat
    C11, C3, C1
16. Pegawai Luar Hal Ehwal Orang Asli
    C11, C13, C1

19. Pembantu Pembangunan Masyarakat
    S17, S22, S26

Sumber: Pekeliling Perkhidmatan Bilangan 4 Tahun 2002 (https://docs.jpa.gov.my/docs/pp/2002/pp042002.pdf)

Appendix 10

MASW Code of Ethics (1980)

Malaysian Association of Social Workers
Code of Ethics (1980)

Introduction

Social workers carry a responsibility to help people cope with individual and social problems. This requires them to discharge their duties in a manner that takes into account the intrinsic value of the individual, the rights and obligations to society and vice versa. Professional practice incorporates accountability not only to the people who are served but also to colleagues and the agency. For professional practice, it is necessary to have guidelines and a code of ethics.

1 Ethical Conduct Relative to the Client

1.1 The social worker's primary responsibility is to the client.

1.2 The social worker will respect clients and act to safeguard their interests.

1.3 The social worker will help all clients and will not practise discrimination in any form.

1.4 The social worker will safeguard the client's rights to a relationship of mutual trust, privacy, confidentiality and the responsible use of information. The client will be informed as to the necessity and use of personal information. No information that will identify the client will be released without prior knowledge and consent of the client. Where a client cannot be responsible or where others may be seriously jeopardised, relevant information must be utilised judiciously.

1.5 The social worker will help clients to obtain all services and rights to which they are entitled, both from the agency in which he/she works and from other appropriate sources. Clients should be informed of obligations and risks associated with the provision of services. The social worker will at all times help clients to be aware of the range of alternatives available to them in working towards self-fulfilment.

2 Ethical Conduct Relative to the Agency

2.1 The social worker will accept accountability and responsibility to the employing agency for the efficient performance of duties.

2.2 The social worker will act to influence policies and practices of the employing agency in order to obtain the best possible standards of service for the client.

2.3 The social worker will make clear in any public statements or in undertaking any public activities whether he/she is acting in a personal capacity or on behalf of an organisation.

3 Ethical Conduct Relative to Colleagues

3.1 The social worker will respect the training and performance of colleagues and other professionals and extend the necessary cooperation to enhance effective services.

3.2 The social worker will respect differences of opinions and practices of colleagues, other professionals and volunteers. Any criticisms will be expressed through appropriate channels in a responsible manner.

3..3 The social worker will defend colleagues against any unjust actions.

3.4 The social worker will cooperate with colleagues to promote professional interests and concerns.

4 Ethical Conduct Relative to the Social Work Profession

4.1 The social worker will uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge and objectives of the profession.

4.2 The social worker accepts that continuing professional education and training are essential for the practice of social work. In the event that the social worker feels unable to cope with a particular problem he/she must seek appropriate consultation.

4.3 The social worker will seek to encourage the practice of the profession by qualified personnel.

4.4 The social worker will protect and enhance the dignity, integrity and competence of the profession.

5 Ethical Conduct Relative to Society

5.1 The social worker has the responsibility to help develop policies and legislation which will improve social conditions and promote social justice in society.

5.2 The social worker will strive to ensure that all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities which they require.

5.3 The social worker is committed to uphold the rights of minority groups who are being discriminated against.

5.4 The social worker will have special regard for the disadvantaged and oppressed groups and persons.

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Appendix 11

MASW Code of Ethics (2011)

2/26/2018 Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW) Code of Ethics
http://www.masw.org.my/code.html 1/2

PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

The profession of social work is committed to enhancing and restoring psychosocial functioning in people for their eventual well-being; it also seeks to develop and improve social policies, regulations, systems and services, and enhance the capacity of social work practitioners, educators, supervisors and trainers, to provide professionally competent social work services and social justice to society at large.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK

Social work is a profession guide d by a body of knowledge, values and skills, utilising a bio-psycho-social approach, to facilitate optimal social functioning of individuals, families, groups and communities. Social workers uphold a code of ethics and conduct based on the values of human rights and social justice. The profession also contributes towards social development and social change through the enhancement of social policies, legislation, programmes and services, appropriate to the needs of Malaysia's diverse socio-cultural population for a better quality of life.

CORE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL WORK

- **Respect for Persons**

Social workers respec t the inherent worth and dignity of all persons in:

1. their right to self-determination in decision making
2. their right to participation in the helping process
3. their right to confidentiality of personal information (when the safety of the individual or other persons is not at risk)
4. their right to being considered as persons having their own social and cultural environment
5. their right to securing safety, protection and well-being for themselves

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4. their right to being considered as persons having their own social and cultural environment
6. their right to securing safety, protection and well-being for themselves

- **Social Justice**

Social workers promote social justice for all persons through the practice of, and advocacy for:

1. non-discrimination in relation to ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, marital status, physique, political inclinations, race, religious or spiritual beliefs, socio-economic standing and sexual orientation
2. fair and equitable distribution of information, opportunities, resources and services

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3. changing unjust policies, systems, regulations, conditions and practices which perpetuate social exclusion, stigmatisation and oppression of those who are especially vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalised

- **Professional Integrity**

The practice of social work is based on the intrinsic values of honesty, accountability, transparency, impartiality, reliability and responsibility. Social workers demonstrate professionalism and respect for the profession by adhering to these values.

- **Practice Competency**

Social workers uphold the client's rights to receive competent social work services by:

1. providing professionally accountable and ethical assessment, planning, interven tion and evaluation of issues raised
2. being cognisant of, and sensitive to, socio-cultural diversities
3. practising within the boundaries of their competence
4. improving professional proficiency through continuing education and training
5. seeking regular professional supervision and appropriate consultation where required
6. developing and contributing new professional knowledge through research and teaching

PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

The MASW Code of Ethics is to be adhered to by any individual who is practising social work, and any organisation which is providing social work services and employing social workers. Professional social workers must be accountable for upholding the values, principles and standards of the Code while engaging in social work practice.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

- **Ethical Responsibilities to the Client**

1. Social workers' primary responsibility is the well-being of clients, with due regard to the respective interests of others
2. Social workers will safeguard clients' rights to a relationship of mutual trust, privacy, confidentiality, decision making and the responsible use of information.
3. Social workers will ensure clients understand the obligations and implications of utilising the service
4. Social workers will engage clients when re-negotiating or terminating the relationship, and respect the voluntary clients' rights to discontinue the service or engage another practitioner
5. Social workers will be responsible for keeping professionally impartial and accurate records of cases, and ensuring their privacy
7. Social workers will not practise discrimination of any kind in any form

- **Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues, Students and Others**

1. Social workers will respect the professional expertise and differences in viewpoints of colleagues in social work and other disciplines, and work in collaboration with them in the interests of clients
2. Social workers will ensure clear communication to avoid misunderstandings in the event of accepting another colleague's client.
3. Social workers will defend colleagues against any unjust actions
4. Social workers should avoid negative and discriminating criticisms of colleagues in communications with clients and other professionals

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5. Social workers have a responsibility to address confirmed professional incompetence or unethical behaviour through appropriate professional, organisational or legal channels, if direct consultation did not result in that colleague taking remedial action

- **Ethical Responsibilities to the Agency**

6.2.6.4 Social work practitioners shall be committed to the policies, objectives regulations and practices of their employing organisations, provided these do not conflict with the ethics of social work practice

6.2.6.5 Social workers will ensure that employers are aware of the obligations and implications of the MASW Code of Ethics

6.2.6.6 Social workers will act to influence policies and practices of the employing agencies in order to obtain the best possible standards of services for clients

6.2.6.7 Social work administrators should ensure policies, structures, systems, procedures and regulations will support ethical and competent practice, appropriate services and resources, effective teamwork, professional supervision and staff development

6.2.6.8 Social work educators, tutors and trainers should provide instructions only within their areas of competence based on the most current information and knowledge, and ensure fairness towards their students

- **Ethical Responsibilities to the Profession**

6.2.6.8.1.1.1 Social workers will uphold the dignity, integrity, value and purpose of the profession

6.2.6.8.1.1.2 Social workers should work towards the promotion of competency standards in social work practice and administration, and in social work education, training and research

6.2.6.8.1.1.3 Social workers who speak on behalf of the profession or professional association should accurately represent its official and authorised views and positions

6.2.6.8.1.1.4 Social workers will obtain and maintain professional membership with MASW and contribute to its growth and development

- **Ethical Responsibilities to the Professional Self**

1. Social workers should accept job responsibilities only on the basis of existing competence and experience
2. Social workers should keep abreast with emerging knowledge and new development in social work through continuing professional education and training
3. Social workers should engage in frequent reflection of own practice, have regular professional supervision, and seek debriefing when necessary
4. Social workers will ensure that their private conduct will not jeopardise their professional responsibilities, the integrity of the profession and that of the Association
5. Social workers should not engage in relationships which harass, oppress, compromise or exploit clients in any manner or form
2. Social workers should seek appropriate help if personal problems or conflict with colleagues are adversely affecting their work performance and wellbeing
3. Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed

- **Ethical Responsibilities to Society**

1. Social workers should advocate for social development to meet basic human needs and social justice for all citizens
2. Social workers should facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies, programmes, services and institutions

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3. Social workers shall be committed to uphold the tenets of universal declarations on human rights, the rights of children, women, older persons, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV/AIDS, and the rights of indigenous people

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