



UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI

FIRST SEMESTER MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER, NOVEMBER 2019

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

COURSE CODE: SWK105

TITLE OF PAPER: THEORIES OF SOCIAL WORK

TIME ALLOWED: 2 HOURS

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**Instructions**

1. This paper consists of six questions
2. Answer any three (3) questions
3. All questions carry equal marks

*Candidates may complete the front cover of their answer book when instructed by the Chief Invigilator and sign their examination attendance cards but must not write anything else until the start of the examination period is announced.*

*No electronic devices capable of storing and retrieving text, including electronic directories and any form of foreign material may be used while in the examination room.*

**Special Requirements**

None

**Additional Material (s)**

None

**DO NOT turn examination paper over until instructed to do so.**

## QUESTION 1

Case study: James

James is a 46-year-old single parent of three, who works as a university professor. He recently lost his wife, Rebecca, to suicide. He has been struggling with the meaning of the loss of his wife. He believes that if only he had been a better husband and provider, she would not have taken her life. He states that he has lost all interest in work. Further, he is struggling to take care of his three children, Evan (3), Tim (7) and Susan (10). He feels he is failing as a parent because he is only meeting his children's basic needs and is not helping to deal with the loss of his wife. James's mother has moved in to help care for the house and kids. While his mother has provided James with encouragement, James feels that his life is out of control and is no longer sure that he wants to keep working at the university, particularly as that is where he met his wife who was also an employee in his department.

- a) Describe how you would work with James from a person-centred approach.
- b) Highlight strengths, weaknesses and ethical considerations when working with a client from a person centered approach.

## QUESTION 2

Case study: Alison

Alison is a 23-year-old single mother of two children, Asia, 4 years, and Nadia, 3 months. Alison has recently been referred to children's services by her general practitioner (GP) who is concerned that Asia and Nadia are being neglected by Alison. The referral states that Asia and Nadia are unclean, underweight and Asia has repeatedly had ear infections that have not been properly treated. The GP believes that Alison is not following through on the medication for Asia's ear infections, which could lead to hearing loss for Asia. Alison has had prior involvement with children's services, when Asia was first born, for suspected domestic violence by Asia's father against Alison. During children's services involvement, Alison and Asia had moved away from the father and into an apartment on their own. Children services closed the case shortly after Alison moved. At that time, Alison did not have any contact with her parents or family members as they disapproved of her relationship with Asia's father. The referral reports that Alison is currently unemployed and the GP believes she might be experiencing post-partum depression. You receive this information from the referral form and are planning to go visit Alison and her children in their home.

- a) Using examples, describe how you would utilize the social systems theory in conducting the assessment and identifying possible interventions with Alison.
- b) Using examples, describe how you would utilize the ecological perspective and the life model of social work practice with Alison.

### QUESTION 3

Case study: Toby

Toby is a 16-year-old male, who has been having trouble in school and with his family. Toby's mother reports that he has been spending too much time with his friends engaged in 'illegal activities.' His mother believes that Toby is using marijuana and other illegal substances. Toby admits to using marijuana, but states that his passions are for football (he wants to be like John Terry from Chelsea Football Club) and fixing cars. Toby does not like school and believes that he should join the workforce. Toby still lives with his parents, but hopes to move out soon. He does not think that school is a priority and wants a job. He has tried to apply for a few jobs, but has been unsuccessful so far.

- a) The strengths perspective is based on the fundamental belief that focusing on individual strengths, versus deficits or limitations, is the true avenue for therapeutic progress (Weick et al., 1989). Discuss the case above.
- b) Describe the strengths, limitations and ethical considerations when utilizing the strengths perspective.

### QUESTION 4

Case study: Julia

Julia is a 26-year-old black British female who has voluntarily entered a drug and alcohol treatment programme to address her heroin use. Julia has used heroin irregularly since she was 14 years old after experiencing molestation from a neighbor. Julia has two children, Aliyah, 8, and Joshua, 3, both of whom have been in foster care for the past three months due to alleged neglect by Julia. Julia had increased her heroin use over the past two years after her boyfriend left her for another woman. On at least one occasion, Julia left the children home alone and did not return for three days, leaving Aliyah to care for Joshua. Children Services have informed Julia that her children would not be returned to her until she addresses her drug use and have threatened Julia with placing her children up for adoption. Julia's parents have not spoken to her since Children's Services became involved and have threatened to seek custody of the children. Julia reports feeling alone and reports that she feels like the worst mother. Julia reports she will do whatever it takes to get her children back, but often feels overwhelmed with all that her social worker from Children Services wants her to do.

- a) You are a social worker at the drug and alcohol treatment agency. Discuss how you could employ the empowerment approach in your work with Julia.
- b) Discuss the strengths, weaknesses and ethical considerations when using the empowerment approach.

## QUESTION 5

Case study: Sam

Sam is an 18-year-old Asian male who has entered hospital for overdosing on sleeping pills in an attempt to end his life. Sam attempted suicide because his girlfriend, Ellen, had just ended her two-year relationship with Sam to pursue a relationship with another male. Sam is due to attend his first year at university in one month, but states he now wants to withdraw, remain in his hometown and get a job at the local factory. Sam's parents are devastated that Sam has attempted to take his life and are more concerned that Sam will 'throw away' the opportunity to attend university all due to his girlfriend breaking up with him. As a hospital social worker you find yourself in the middle of Sam's crisis and his parents who see no other way but to discuss continually with Sam the negative consequences of not attending university.

- a) Discuss how can you approach this situation from a social constructivist framework?
- b) Highlight the strengths, weaknesses and ethical consideration in utilizing the constructivist framework.

## QUESTION 6

Case study: Kim

Kim is a 30-year-old female who is employed as a pharmacist academic at a prominent university. Kim has recently been divorced for the second time and is experiencing feelings of guilt, loneliness and depression. Kim's parents and siblings have reported disappointment in Kim for divorcing and continually question whether she will ever get remarried so that she can have children. Her family often make comments about how much Kim spends at work and they question whether she is choosing a career instead of creating her own family. Kim is beginning to question whether she should attempt to reconcile with her ex-husband in order to please her family. Kim comes to see you as she reports being confused about what to do and her feelings of guilt, loneliness and depression are beginning to affect every aspect of her life.

- a) Describe how you would utilize feminist theory and practice in your work with Kim.
- b) Discuss the strengths, weaknesses and ethical considerations when using feminist theory.