



Role and Contribution of Social Work Practice in Court Setting and Its Support System:

The Case of Lideta Federal First Instance Court Addis Ababa

By

Seble Ayalew

A Thesis Submitted to Addis Ababa University Graduate School of Social Work in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Social Work.

Addis Ababa University

Graduate School of Social Work

September 2016

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Thesis Approval

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Seble Ayalew, entitled *social work practice in court setting: The Case of Lideta federal first instance court* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts (Social Work) fulfills with the regulation of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

APPROVED BY THE EXAMINING BOARD

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Acronyms

ACRWC African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

CCTV Closed Circuit Television

FDRE Federal Democratic Republic Of Ethiopia

IFSW International Federation of Social Workers

MOW Memorandum of Understanding

NASAW National Association of Social Workers

UNICEF United Nations Children Fund

UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children

Abstract

This study explored social work practice in court setting. With 4 in depth interview, 4 key informant and 2 client participants the research has made an effort to explore the overall practice of social work in courts by talking Lideta federal first instance court as an example. The study tried to recognize the role contribution and challenges of social work practice and the available resource in relation with the support system of the practice which is the referral system. In depth interview participants were social work practitioners and key informant were higher official in the president office of lideta federal first instance court, a judge, higher officials in child justice project office. And client participants were service users of social work in custody bench. Qualitative case study research method was implemented to undertake the study. And thematic analysis method approach was used for data analysis. The research finding indicated the baseline for social work practice in courts is best interest of the child which emanates from CRC and FDRE constitution. And social work practice in courts work towards safeguarding and promoting rights and benefits of children in contact with the justice system. Social workers give intermediary, case management, guidance and mediation services for victim children, children under cases in custody investigation and children in conflict with the law consequently. They also assist the court by preparing expert recommendation and by making the court child friendly to help the court find the truth. Another role of social workers is to facilitate additional support for clients through the referral system, which is a huge resource for the practice. Main challenges for the practice are, luck of regular training for social work practitioners , limitation on accessibility of resources , miss perception and low attention given for therole and contribution of the practice ,and luck of stress management mechanism for practitioners. Contribution of social work practice for clients and the court, resource potential in the referral system and challenges of using the referral system are also included in the research.

Key words: court, social workers, referral system, child justice project office, role, contribution and challenges

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Though children are human beings who are endowed with human dignity and inalienable human and child rights, the means and method of protecting and ensuring their right in the practical life of a society is always a mystery that need cultural, social, legal and judicial solutions. Children are the most precious and vulnerable member of the family, for that reason almost all nations in the world including Ethiopia, give special protection to family simply because family is the natural and fundamental small unit of the society. (Art 34 of FDRE constitution) where children raised and nourished.

Dissolution of a family and divorce are widespread challenges furthermore essence and application of the existing law, religious, moral and cultural values of communities living in the country all affect children. This multifaceted problem obliged children to face the various problems i.e. force children to separate each other, to grown up with single parent or with the close relatives of either of their parent, to went out of the house and started to live in the street. These eventually make them to encounter neglect , followed by physical, mental and psychological attack and abuses .which result their fear and animosity towards both or either of their parents, their close relatives and the society as a whole. Therefore fulfillments of the rights of this vulnerable group of a society (children) protecting them from any crime and safeguard and promote best interest of children including custodial issues is not simply a legal issue. The issue can't be fully addressed by the application and interpretation of relevant laws by the judiciary. It needs to work more than that since it has a multifaceted moral and social problem. Therefore the rights of children who are members of the dissolved family and victim of any crime pose social and legal implications.

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It seems that not a single day goes by when courts are not full of people and cases. And people consider courts as a last run away for justice. People turn to courts to deal with one social problem after another. (Daniel 2003). Most of the circumstances leading to conflict held between two or more individuals that need the application and interpretation of domestic laws, be it criminal laws or civil laws have their own social roots and nature. The judges are not mandated to make a ruling on every aspect of problems manifested in the society. Judges are only mandated to adjudicate and decide cases which are justifiable by the very nature and brought to them by fulfilling the requirements set out in the legal established procedure. (Art 37of FDRE constitution). Moreover, even in entertaining and deciding those justiciable cases, like child custody and upbringing judges might not be capable of understanding what mental, psychological and social impact their decision will have on children whose right has been a point of dispute in the court of law.

However the principle of best interest of a child, by its essence obliges the judges to understand the mental, psychological and social impact their decision on the wellbeing of the child. Thus to discharge their constitutional duty judges from the very out set need to work hand in hand with social sectors, psychiatrists and other disciplines so that they can address the whole complex issues and needs of their venerable clients (children). Otherwise in the absence of such intersectional cooperation the whole justice intervention would miss the opportunity of supporting a sustainable change in people's behavior, circumstances and environment. UNICEF report, (2013).

As Children are one part of the justice system and dealing with cases which involves children needs special emphasis this is when social work services intervention is needed. As Wilson, M. (2010), documented social work profession has a lot to offer in the justice system in

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regard to psychosocial services aimed at preventing re-arrests and recidivism through offering evidence-based models for effective psychosocial service delivery to lawbreakers and victims of crime which will help to achieve the objectives of the criminal justice system.

Expected Roles and Activities of social work in court are, Counselor which includes psychosocial counseling, mediation, group counseling, Case manager or liaison working on linkages to services, research & evaluation, legislative level advocacy and Expert Witness participate in court testimony. From this we can see that the role of social worker in court setting is diverse and very essential. Maschi et al., (2009)

The main goal of social work practice in court setting is to safeguard and promote best interest of the child by supporting the court practice with cases which involves children. (NASAW, 2004). Therefore Social workers involvement provide support for the court and children by creating child friendly atmosphere for children in the court room and by delivering expert recommendation to the court to bring psychosocial aspect of cases through assessment .

As I am a social work student in children, youth and family concentration beside the topic relate with my concentration and the practice main target are children, our integrated social work II instructor invited a social work supervisor in court setting as a guest and the experience she shared with us was the main inspiration for selecting social work practice in court setting as my research area.

Therefore the main purpose of this study is to explore the overall social work practice, its role and contribution, challenges and resources in relation with the support system by taking lideta federal first instance court as example.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Social services and the justice system are in many ways two distinct spheres and invariably the responsibility of separate ministries, but the occasions and ways in which they could and should interface and cooperate are numerous and important for the implementation of the justice system goal and people's rights. (UNICEF report 2013). This is because service in the justice system has multiple features and needs of service users cannot be fully covered only by the legal services as most of the cases have social and psychological features.

Human service delivery system provides comprehensive and coordinated service for people in need. And service delivery requires integrated approaches from major help- giving systems for their clients Saber (1977). And these is the point where social work service and the justice system come along to provide collaborated service. Social work profession promotes social change, it also has a role of problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance their well- being. Blewett (2007).And one of social work practice which involve divers' aspects of people's life and relation is the service in the justice system.

Social work service in courts has a very broad and significant role. In Ethiopia the actual practice of Social work service in courts focus on cases which involve matters of children and their families. This include children who are victims of any crime and children who come to courts as witness, children in conflict with the law, in divorces cases which involve issue of custody and adoption . And Social work practitioners in courts are expected to support the court incases which involve children's matter by bringing psychosocial aspects of cases and making the court atmosphere friendly for children.

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Professional social work practice is a new phenomenon in Ethiopia which has a history less than a decade. And as the practice is new there are very limited literatures in the area.

One of the local study about social work practice in courts Marshet Abate (2013) *Social Workers Practice in the Court with Sexually Abused Children*. The study tried to explore the role of social workers in the court with sexually abused children and the collaboration that social workers have with other legal professionals. And the study findings showed the divers roles of social workers their challenge and interdisciplinary involvement with legal professionals.

Another local study in the area is Mubarak Leulseged(2013) *Exploring the Role of Social Workers on Child Justice Administration in Different Federal First Instance Court Benches*. The study tried to investigate opportunities of social workers, their challenges and achievements the practice bring in the child justice administration.

The researcher didn't come across with the study on the contribution of social work practice in court and resources of social work practice in view of the available support system which is the referral system. And because of the limited literature available in the area one cannot see clearly the contribution the field is providing. Therefore the researcher problematizes / identifies this as the knowledge gap to be addressed by the study, in the assumption of extending the result of previous studies.

The researcher explored the overall social work practice in the selected court and the support system for the practice .In general the study tried to provide the up-to-date information about the overall role and contribution of social work practice in court settings its challenges and available resources with the emphasis of magnifying the support system to the practice, which is the referral system by taking Lideta Federal First Instance Court as example.

1.3. Objective of the study

1.3.1 General Objective

The overall objective of this study is to explore the role and contribution of social work practice in court. On the focus of identifying the challenges, and resources of social work practice in view of the available support system specifically in the case of Lideta federal first instance court.

1.3.2. Specific objective

- To explore experience of social work unit in delivering service and the roles and contributions of social work practitioners in court setting.
- To identify target groups of social work service under court setting.
- To explore main resources of social work practice in court setting.
- To explore the support system for social work practice in courts and its practical relevance.
- To identify main challenges of social work practice in court setting.

1.4. Research questions

1. What is the practical experience of social work unit in delivering service and the roles and responsibilities of the social workers in court setting?
2. Who are the target groups or service users who get social work service under court setting?
3. What are the main resources for social work practice in courts?
4. Is there support system for social work practice and what is its practical relevance?
5. Are there main challenges that hinder social work practice in court setting?

1.5. Significance of the study

Social work practice in courts is a new phenomenon in Ethiopia and very little research has been undertaken on the area. The practice need more research and promotion as it is contributing an enormous job for the court and the justice system as a whole.

This study is significant because lack of literature and promotion on social work practice in court setting is one gap in the practice. Conducting a research on the area will also help to provide information for other researchers who want to conduct related and further research. It also give incite for policy makers to mitigate the problem of social work practice in court ; and for any interested party who wants to work and is currently working towards social work practice in court and wants to give or is already giving support for practitioners on the area.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

Even though social work service has been and is given in other courts of Addis Ababa, all other practices are not attempted to be covered in the study. The study didn't go beyond Lideta FederalFirst Instance court practice. Therefore the only experience and practice covered by the study was the selected study area and the findings cannot be generalized to the larger service of social work practice in courts of Addis Ababa.

1.7. Limitation of the study

Even though much can be said on the role and contribution of social work practice in courts, the study only focuses on the practice of lideta first instance court. Another limitation of the study is the limited number of client informants. Since the main targets of social work participants are minors except the family involved in custody. Therefore interviewing client participants' face some difficulties because of time constraint and most of the custodial parents are not volunteers to participate in the interview and the minors are not capable to understand the

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questions. As the research is conducted only in Lideta Federal First Instance Court social work practice in adoption bench is not covered since the service is only provided in *Bole* court.

The other limitation is lack of related literature. As social work practice in courts is new, and much research has not been done on the area, the literature review mostly depends on foreign literatures, and very few local researches.

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1.8. Operational Definition

Court; Courts are the judicial branch of government that has the responsibility for conducting fair and impartial trials that determine the innocence or guilt of accused persons.(Working Together to Address Issues Concerning Persons with Developmental Disabilities” 2nd Edition, 2006)

Court settings;forthe purpose of this study court setting are judicial branches where court proceeding’s both criminal and civil proceedings takes place.

Court Social worker:For the purpose of this study Court Social worker / social work practitioner: work in victim, children in conflict with the law and family benches and give mediation, intermediary, guidance and case management services for client and give expert support the court in promoting best interest of the child.

Human service; the term human service is conceptualized as the provision of comprehensive and coordinated services to people in need (S. RICHARD SAUBER)

Human service delivery system; human service delivery system is therefore the system which provide this coordinated services.

Integrated service; the term service integration means many things to many people. For some it is a process, the process of implementing strategies in order to integrate services; for others it is a condition, where client services are integrated; for others, it is both. *Program integration*, in which program rules are changed to harmonize programs, is often associated with service integration. (Mark Ragan, June 2003)

But for the purpose of this study Mark Ragan ‘s definition of the term seems more appropriate Service Integration — Streamlined and simplified client access to a wide range of benefits and services that bridge traditional program domains.

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Integrated human service delivery system; is therefore working together within human service organizations, by integrating different professions and professionals to their services in order to provide effective and efficient service.

Support system: in practice the support system for social work practice in courts are the governmental and non-governmental organizations encompassed in the referral system.

Referral system: is the system built to provide integrated service to the justice system under federal first instance courts by the collaboration of different governmental and non-governmental organizations, and the legal system is bind by memorandum of understanding signed between these organizations.

Service users; for the purpose of this study service user in court setting are children in contact with the justice system particularly the court and their families both in criminal and civil cases

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the definition of best interest of the child , itsinternational legal aspect and its implication and implementation in Ethiopiaincluding the country's legal instruments , History of Social work practice in Ethiopian courts, social workers role among different countries in court setting which have strong relationship with practical experience of social workers role in Ethiopia and Significance of working in collaboration and holistic knowledge of social workers including benefits and responsibilities of social workers using referral system were also included.

2.1. Best interest of the child

Before talking about the rights of children and their best interest we should define what child means. CRC in article 1 defines a child as a person below the age of 18 unless the law of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger.

When we come to the definition under Ethiopian law, "Ethiopian laws make use such terms to children as minors, infants, young workers or young persons". (Girmachew PhD& Yonas, 2014 page 23). And the Revised Family Code defies a minor on article 215as; *a minor is a person of either sex who has not at wined the age of eighteen years.*

The concept of best interest of the child is not new it was already enshrined in the 1959 declaration of the rights of the child (General comment No. 14,2013). But now a days the concept become popular in countries all over the world .Therefore countries start operating towards promoting best interest of the child and for this end different international laws have been signed between countries.

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There are number of international legal instruments that specifically provide for best interest of the child as a legal norm. And as part of international community Ethiopia also ratified the two most important international laws, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. These two instruments are comprehensive treaties which recognize civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children (Girmachew PhD &Yonas, 2014).

Besides devoting one whole article on children's right on article 36, FDRE constitution emphasize on the recognition to international laws on article 9(4) as follows; *all international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land.*

Even though Ethiopia ratified CRC and ACRCWC and include them as fundamental parts of the law of the land, the country didn't promulgated CRC and ACRWC in its official law Gazette, the *NegaritGazeta*. And the frailer to publish these international instruments in the official Gazette has been the cause or stumbling block for their enforcement before the law. (Girmachew Alemu PhD, and Yonas, 2014). And this is because in order to be applied in domestic level these instruments should be published in *Negarit Gazetta*.

As courts are the upper guardians of minor children the cassation bench of Federal Supreme court passed a landmark decision on November 6, 2007which solve this dilemma. The court based its argument on Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), when revising the decision passed by lower courts on a certain child custody case. "The cassation court has set precedent by recognizing the principle of best interest of the child as the fundamental standard to be considered when deciding the issue of child custody and other concerns affecting the welfare of children". (Press release by children's legal protection center

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Feb. 15, 2008) and children's legal protection center recognized this judgment a mile stone for best interest of the child.

By the virtue of proclamation 454/2005 as interpretation of the law by Federal Supreme court decision with not less than five judges carries the force of law. By now the cassation bench of federal Supreme Court has rendered various decisions relying on these international instruments. (Girmachew PhD&Yonas, 2014).Therefore courts of law at federal and regional level are following the lead of this land mark decision. And after this decision based on relevant provisions of the CRC and ACRWC different courts argued based on best interest of the child to pass their decision

Even though the country doesn't publish these international laws in *Negarit Gazetta* it doesn't mean the country doesn't made legal reforms concerning children. Significant number of reforms were made in the domestic laws of the country which affect rights of children, these are revised family code in 2000, labor proclamation in 2003(proclamation 377/2003)and criminal code in 2005.

2.2. Employment of best interest of the child

Convention on the Rights of Children insures best interest of a child on art3, par.1 *in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration.*

In the same manner FDRE constitution also articulates principle of best inters of the child as a primary consideration in matters of children. Article 36(2) *in all actions concerning children undertaken by private and public institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or*

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legislative bodies, the primary consideration shall be the best interest of the child. In general the concept of best interest of the child is aimed at insuring both the full and effective enjoyment of the rights recognized in the convention and the holistic development of a child which are physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development. (General comment No. 14,2013).

“As a member of state to international treaties like CRC and ACRWC and others Ethiopia has been taking various measures to ensure the realization and observance of the rights of children as protect under these laws”. (Girmachew PhD& Yonas, 2014 page 23). The country is taking various steps to include the provisions of different types of child rights under these international treaties in order to give these rights legal effect in Ethiopia. And establishment of social work service in courts is one of it.

2.3 History of Social work practice in Ethiopian courts

Ethiopia ratified different international laws concerning rights of children including CRC and ACRWC and others. Based on this many reforms have been implemented in all sectors including the court system to ensure best interest of the child. Hence Social work unit in courts is established to safeguard and promote the rights and wellbeing of children. The guide line to social work practitioners in courts(2013 page 7) states all social work practitioners in courts should consider the four basic child right values under CRC when providing any service; therefore basic principles for social work practice in courts are based on the four fundamental rights of children(pillars).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child are anchored on the four general principles which are principles of fundamental importance for the implementation of the whole Convention. (General Committee

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No14 2013). Therefore, principles of non- discrimination (Article 2), the best interests of the child (Article 3(1)), the right to life and maximum survival and development (Article 6) and respect for the views of the child /which is child participation (Article 12). These four principles have been identified as principles of general application and of cardinal importance for the interpretation of the provisions in these instruments by the General Committee No14 (2013) on the Rights of the Child.

Practice of social work in court setting in Ethiopia was started in 2004/2005 in Lideta Federal First instance court in which the only child friendly court was existed. The practice was started by training nonprofessional court employees to provide social work service for victim children to work as intermediary in CCTV room. In 2008/2009 the social work unit was established to provide professional social work service by including professional practitioners (guideline for social work practice in courts,2013 page 1) and by now the service has advanced its quality and scope in three benches, victim, children in conflict with the law and custody and the practice become one of the court systems.

2.4. Roles of social workers in court setting

As IFSW (2004) stated in the preamble “beside the actual practice and experience of one country it is very important to see and be aware of the internationally agreed acceptable forms of social work and what it is designed to accomplish”. Social work has been carried out in many different places and with many different groups. But the professional practice and standard is guided by national association of social workers NASAW. Since the value of the practice is similar the rule of conduct has also be similar. (NASAW,2004)

“The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people with particular attention to the needs and

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empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty”.(NASW 1999 preamble) .What makes social work practice in court setting different is its main target are children. Which is one of social work practice forces, vulnerable people.

Social workers had a distinct role in providing service to large number of individuals since the inception of the profession in 1904 (Roberts & Springer, 2007) .Social workers working under legal setting have the leading role in safeguarding people who may be socially excluded, at risk of abuse or neglect, or who became vulnerable for other reasons. Social workers are also expected to work alongside with other professionals by taking the lead in helping children adults and Families to improve their life’s and gain control to provide divers and multidisciplinary service as they are collaborative professionals. Moriarty et al (2015).

Even though the practice can vary from one country to another according to social workers are expected to involve in child protection service which leads to working with children and their family. Social workers in courts involve in cases concerning family caseslike custody, child neglect which involves child care and protection and cases involve victim children.

In United Kingdom when social workers work with children and families, they involve in child protection and child care proceedings in courts by acting as a case manager. In providing these services social workers work towards identifying family difficulties within his/her family and provide relevant service for their difficulties to create convenient atmosphere for the child. In doing so social workers are expected to deal with families difficulties at early stages. At times child protection might include child assessment order from the court. “Child assessment is enabling an assessment of the child’s health or development or of any kind in which s/he has been treated, to be carried out where significant harm is suspected”. (Statutory guidance on court orders and proceedings 2004, page 29)

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When creating a convenient atmosphere for the child within the family by addressing the difficulties of the family is not possible and the social worker believes the child is better off from the family the professional will arrange a stable place for the child to stay.

Brown and Ward indicated (as cited in Dickens & Judith Mason 2014) Social workers have to make a rigorous review of decision whether to provide support for the family to care for their child at home or if separation is necessary because of immediate risk or because the change cannot be made easily.

Court social workers also involve in divorce cases with custodial issues. As Mantle et al (2008) documented some parents who separate or divorce are able to make arrangements themselves about where their children will reside and how the children's contact with the nonresident parent will be. And some solve the issue by getting assistance in the court based dispute resolution service in this case social workers involve to investigate which parent will better provide for the best interest of the child. And social workers prepare welfare reports to assist the court to come to the right decision regarding residence and contact. Besides helping the court to reach in the decision safeguarding best interest of children social workers help children acknowledge the reality of their situation. And should work to enhance communication within the family as a whole for their future relation. Mantle et al (2006b) indicated social workers also supposed to educate parents about the danger of under influence not to caught their children in the middle.

And they also have to go beyond the service they give to address their clients' diverse needs according to individual circumstances in order to safeguard best interest of the child and have to use referrals to social services departments. This will be addressed by using the referrals in social service departments.

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Anderson, Weston, Doueck & Krause stated (as cited in Marshet 2013) another social work practice with family and children is the case of sexually abused children. This involves a comprehensive intervention by providing therapeutic treatment. As working as a net worker social workers help the child and his/her family get multidisciplinary services and help in using the referral service.

In the cases of victim children social workers work with the family in providing therapeutic treatment for the child and for the family to give skill how to treat the victim child and how to own their emotion and accept the fact. (Dickens & Masson, 2014)

In USA social work practice has been involved in the criminal justice system as an essential component starting from the beginning of the practice, 1904. And the practice performed in various juvenile and criminal justice systems like criminal justice social worker, correctional social worker or forensic social work. Wilson, M. (2010)

And role of social workers in courts working as criminal justice social worker is to balance the conflict between the public need to safety and needs of the offenders to address their bio –psychosocial needs. Here the ethical challenge for social workers is to weight the need of society and the justice system against those of the offenders. Wilson, M. (2010)

As IFSW stated one of social workers role is to engage in problem-solving service in human relationships, whether interpersonal, interfamilial, within the wider community or vis-à-vis the authorities and their agents. In the same manner in case of juvenile delinquents as Robert and Springer (2007) documented if the judge decide alternative correctional measure other than deprivation of liberty the child might be sent to social worker for mediation service. And if the

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social worker is successful in creating smooth relation between the victim and the child in conflict with the law the judge will close the case without passing penalty.

As Parker (2006) documented social workers role in the case of victim children is to help victim /witness children testify about the crime by making the court less formal and friendly. This helps children to express what has happened in their level of understanding as an intermediary social worker is expert in the area. Involvement of social workers help children to understand the questions come from the court room presenting the formal legal proceedings in a simple words which can easily understood by children .

Pled documented (as cited in Mubarak 2013) involvement with victim children in courts has multiple contribution for both the victim child and the court.in such cases involvement of social workers assist both by helping the victim child to extract the truth about the allegations as intermediary between the court and the victim/witness children . In addition social workers also protect the child not to face secondary victimization or trauma in the court room.

2.5. Significance of working in collaboration and holistic knowledge of social workers

As Brownstein (1984) strongly argued Society has become so complex that a comprehensive and integrated coordination of varies human service is required, and for this reason workers in each human service system required knowledge of all other systems and disciplines. Better planning and greater coordination can fill such gaps in the human service delivery system. Otherwise failure to address Clients needs of any human service system is failure of many complex factors.

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Likewise clients of the court and social work service users have diverse and complex problems which need to be addressed. As no single social worker can address these complex problems social workers need to work in collaboration with multidisciplinary team. NASAW code of ethics (2009) also emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and social workers involvement in the interdisciplinary team.

As Fred Mayhew (2012) mentioned let alone one single unit like social work department in courts no single organization is in a position to successfully address the complex problems that society face by a single professional discipline .Therefore social workers need to work in Collaboration with multi-disciplinary organizations by integrating different professions and professionals to their services. This will help to provide a more effective and efficient service delivery and help to address the needs of complex and multiple problems of clients in a more comprehensive manner.

Sandfort , Miller& Ahmad documented (as cited in Fred Mayhew2012)the challenges and barriers to collaborative efforts vary at different levels within the delivery system . Therefore when the collaborative service is provided it is important to induce the nature of the relationships between different disciplines to overcome the difficulties. For this end in using the collaborated service it is important for social workers to find the way to deliver services in an innovative manner that is consistent with each clients need as their unique character.

The word Innovative represent making change in something already existing as by introducing new methods, ideas or products. (Oxford dictionary meaning). As Chen (1999) stated Promoting innovative ideas in large human service bureaucratic organizations like courts is not an easy task. Most of the time human service delivery organizations and there systems does not encourage generation of new ideas and experiments from within because of their highly

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centralized nature on their activities. And activities are carried out in a standardized routine and these routines usually taken as rules.

In social work profession every single case and problem should be treated and has to be dealt according to its unique nature. Therefore even though courts and any service giving organizations has their own way of doing things and standards for their service accomplishment, social workers has to use their innovative skill to deal with different clients and cases as their unique nature. They have to re-design and transform the routine procedures in order to be effective in delivering quality service in addressing their client's divers and complex needs.

The social work profession, from the classroom to the field, has an obligation to thoroughly understand and engage interdisciplinary practices that assure respect for the strengths and limits of social work knowledge. (Prescott, 2013). For this end ability working within a multi-professional setting is an important approach required in order to deliver services effectively. (Criminal Justice Social Work Reports And Court- Based Services Practice Guidance 2010).

Mantle et al (2015) also stated it very important for social workers to alert other agencies and use referral. Alerting other agencies means making concerned agencies aware of what was happening in the cases they are handling as a way of re-energizing their work in progress where they already involved. And using referral is sending families to statutory and voluntary agencies for foundling, consultation, work with behavioral problems, family support.

As Mantle et al (2015) mentioned in addition to their collaborative role working alongside other professionals and using interdisciplinary service social workers working under legal setting have to use an interdisciplinary and distinct range of legal and social work knowledge and skill to help people make change in their lives and to get the outcome needed.

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2.6 Theoretical framework

In viewing social work practice in court setting from different theories the researcher choose the following 3 theories to understand the role and challenges of social work practice in relation with the available resource. This part of the research will discuss system perspective, constructivist perspective and attachment theory.

2.6.1. Social constructivist perspective

According to the constructivist perspective reality is subjective and context specific. It focuses on individual stories. It also acknowledges difference and is open to new ideas and entertain new dimensions. The perspective grounded on the fact that social reality is created when actors get involved in social interaction, then they create a common understanding of their world. (Hutchison, 1999) This theory helps social workers especially in case of custody to encourage parties express their own reality and to understand the client's side of story and better. And to understand the circumstances of victim and children in conflict with the law.

2.6.2. Attachment theory

This theory is based on how the early parent-child relationship influences the development of a person. This theory provides the most useful perspective on early parent-child interaction. It recognizes and gives great deal of credit for unconscious and internalized ideas. Most importantly identifies early relationships with caregivers as major factors for personality development. (Davies D., 2011)

This theory believes the effect of separation of children from their care givers affect or defines their personality for the future. Therefore main emphasis of this theory is to keep children close to their main care givers to sustain sense of security. This theory help social

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workers work in custodial issues to give emphasis on which one of the parents the child has more attached with.

2.6.3. System perspective

The research will use system perspective model which this framework emphasizes on the interaction and inseparability of person and environment as a whole .It also tries to see all factors which has influence on the matter and helps to better understand and explain the condition in relation with social, cultural, economic, and political environments of human behavior.

System perspective sees human behavior as the outcome of reciprocal interactions of persons operating within organized and integrated social systems. And believe its roots are very interdisciplinary (Hutchison, 1999)

It also acknowledges the role of external influences and demands in creating and maintaining patterns of interaction within the system. The system perspective is much like the transactional approach, which emphasizes on the inseparability of persons and environments. This helps to see things as whole from different and multi-dimensional factors.

Since the theory acknowledge and value personal and environmental experience and give emphasis for social, cultural, economic, and factors, using this theory helps the researcher to understand the actual practice better from different direction . Understanding these theory also help social workers to be familiar with existing situation as it helps to understanding how different factors affect the situation. It also helps to consider the social, economic, and environmental contributing factors which gives better understanding for the situation by encompassing the overall factors of their clients and also how to prepare intervention.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

Exploratory research method was chosen to explore the role and contribution of social work practice in court. On the focus of identifying its challenges and resources in view of the available support system which is the referral system by talking Lideta federal first instance court as an example .

It is stated in research literature that “Exploratory study is a very important approach to explore the contemporary phenomenon from within its real life context and allows to get rich description of the phenomenon from the participants by using an in depth interview”.(Somekh & Lewin, 2005 page 15)

Since the role and contribution of social work practice in court setting and its challenges and resources in view of the available support system is a new or at least not adequately studied topic, the researcher preferred to use the exploratory qualitative method. Qualitative research of case study is found to be appropriate, as it helps to gain rich knowledge and description from multiple sources about the overall role and contribution of social work practice in court settings.

Yin (2011) also confirmed qualitative research allows the researcher to explore the identified social problem in its social context and find new things along the way. Qualitative research covers contextual conditions such as social, institutional and environmental conditions within which people’s lives take place. In many ways, these contextual conditions may strongly influence all events involved in the situation and many people around. (Kruger&Newman,2002)

Similarly Hancock B. et al, (2007) explained that it examines behavior in natural settings or uses people’s accounts as data; on reports of experience and description and interpretation that

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might lead to development of new concepts or theory or to an evaluation of an organizational process.

To this end both primary and secondary sources were used in order to gather pertinent data for the study. In-depth interview and observation were carried out to collect primary data. And as secondary sources written documents such as guideline for social work practitioners, assessment and annual reports and Memorandum of understanding of the referral system were reviewed in the study.

3.2. Selection of the Study Area

The study area is limited to Lideta federal first instance court. Which is the first for social work practice in courts of Ethiopia in general and where one of the well-organized social work practice is found in particular .Due to these the unit is more preferable to get an organized and reliable data, from well experienced informants compared to social work units in other courts which social work services are available.

3.3. Data sources and Selection of study participants

3.3.1. Data Sources

Data sources were written documents and informants. Participants of the study were primarily social work practitioners, key informants and clients of social work service in the court.

The following are the details of the cluster of data sources and informants and their significance to the study.

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1. Data sources (in depth interview informants) which are the main target of the research were social work practitioners. Here the contribution and challenges of social work practice, policy and individual challenges professionals encounter were examined.
2. The other data source were key informants, these are people who are knowledgeable about the subject matter(social work practice) because of their expert knowledge, official position, work in relation with the unit, social workers and their practice. Which were higher official in the president office of Lideta first instance federal court, higher officials of child justice project office, project officer at child justice project office, and a judge and focal person in children's affair at lideta federal first instance court. These informants gave information about the organizational and structural issues which were not very familiar for social workers and gave additional information from different side about the role and contribution of social work practice in the specific court other than the practitioners. Interviewing the key informants who have direct access to witness the role being played by social workers and its challenges and resources in the court setting helped the researcher to get diverse opinion.
3. Clients of social work service in the court the focus of examination with clients were on the service based on their expectations from the social workers, the referral system and the gap pertaining to the service they get.
4. The 4th source were written documents, the guide line for social work practitioners in court setting, the assessment reports of AAU school of social work in 2013/2014 & 2014/2015, the MOU for the referral system.

The guide line for social work practitioners helped to explore the narrative role and responsibilities of social workers in courts. The guideline was critically reviewed to

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examine whether it fits the actual practice or not, and to identify any limitations of the practice whilst performing the roles specified there. And reviewing the assessment helped to see the contribution of the actual social work practice.

3.3.2. Sampling Technique

Patton indicated (as cited in L. A. Palinkas, et al. 2013) purposive sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases. Cresswell & Plano Clark also mentioned (as cited in L. A. Palinkas, et al. 2013) purposive sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. Therefore the study participants were selected purposively social work practitioners and coworkers, who work in the court setting and in child justice protection office.

Bernard & Spradley documented (as cited in L. A. Palinkas, et al. 2013) .In addition to knowledge and experience, it is essential to note the importance of availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive manner. Therefore this purposive selection of professional informants helped great deal.

Accordingly, as the study is qualitative research the participants were selected using purposive sampling which is a non-probability sampling and best fits for this specific research. “Purposive sampling uses the judgment of an expert in selecting information rich case with specific purpose in mind and participants of the study are selected by their experience on the study issue. Krueger & Neumann (2006). Therefore purposive selection of in depth interview and key informants were based on the participants’ availability, experience and their position. And In depth interview participants of the study were selected with the help of the social work unit coordinator using inclusion criteria.

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As Marshal and Russian (1999) stated when we use non probability sampling technique units are selected deliberately from the population. The researcher tried to include mix or diverse participants with the assistance of the unit coordinator.

The inclusion criteria of study participants were based on social workers working experience both from minimum to maximum. Including practioners with minimum experience aimed to assess the experience and knowledge of junior practioners and including senior social workersas study participants for their knowledge and capacity to articulate about the practice. The other criteria is including practioners from allthe three benches, victim bench, children in conflict with the law bench and custody case managers in family bench. It also includes practioners from both project and court employees.

Key informant participants werehigher official from both lideta first instance court and child justice project office. Key informants from the court were higher official in the president office of lideta first instance court and a judge and a focal person in children's affair, they were selected purposefully for their expertise and direct involvement on the practice and their exposure to witness the role and contribution of the unit. And key informants from child justice project office were higher officials in the project and were selected for their direct involvement on the practice and their knowledge and experience on the matter. And client participants were service users of social work practice in the court and they wereselected on their willingness to participate in the research and to be interviewed.

3.3.3. Inclusion criteria

As the main objective of the research was to explore social work practice in courts, its role, contribution, challenges and resource in relation with the referral system social work practitioners of lideta federal first instance court were in depth interview participants. There were

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seven social work practitioners in Lideta federal first instance court during data collection. Even though the court had hired new professionals, at the time of data collection they didn't join the practice yet. Therefore the researcher selected four social work practitioners from all the three benches, from all types of work experience from least i.e. seven month to maximum of 5 years and as social workers in courts are both project and court employees both project and court employees were included as participants.

In addition a judge at lideta federal first instance court, and child justice project office and court higher officials were selected as key informants of the study since they have direct contact and supervision role on the practice.

3.3.4. Sample size

Lideta federal first instance court was taken as a sample to social work practice. And without counting the newly employed 6 professionals who didn't start to practice at the time of data collection there were 8 social work practitioners including the coordinator 4 in depth interview participants were selected from all three benches which provide social work service considering the experience from maximum of 5 years to minimum of work experience of 7 months and from both court and project employees. Other 4 key informants are high officials from the court and child justice project office who has direct contact with the practice. And as clients of the service are mostly children the only possibility to get adult informants is on custody service therefore only 2 volunteer clients were included in the interview according to their willingness. And because of time constraint a total number of 10 participants were included in the study.

3.4 .2 Method of data collection

3.4.1. Instruments for Data Collection

While conducting the study both primary and secondary data sources were used. Primary data were gathered through interview and observation methods. Secondary data source were collected from relevant written documents which are guideline of social workers in courts, assessment report by AAU school of social work and MOU between 37 governmental and non-governmental organization for the establishment of the referral system). The study uses cross-sectional study, as the data were gathered at one point in time.

3.4.2. Sources of Data

3.4.2.1. In-depth Interviews

As the study aimed to explore the role and contribution of social work practice in courts along with its challenge and resources in the view of the support system, the data was gathered from the angle of diverse informants. For this in depth interview which is qualitative data collection tool were selected to get detail and pertinent information.

According to Boyce (2006) In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique which involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation. The interview took minimum of 50 minutes to 1hour and 45 minutes. And all interviews took place at socio work unit in Lideta Federal First Instance court. The in depth interview helps the researcher to get detailed information and to explore new issues in depth. It also reliefs to get more complete picture of what happened in the program and why it happened.

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As Yin (2011) mentioned qualitative research interviews should be open rather than closed-ended questions. The researcher has to let participants use their own words, not those pre-defined by the researcher to discuss topics. Accordingly, in conducting the In-depth interviews the research was made on selected participants using unstructured type of interview which is prepared according to the objective and the general concept of the research.

The researcher use semi structured interview to capture information about the participants profile and open ended interview guide to solicit data on the subject matter of study. First the guiding instrument was prepared in English based on the research questions and then translated to Amharic to cross check whether the questioner guide address the research questions adequately and accurately ,the Amharic version of the questioner were translated to English again by third person.

3.4.2.2 Observations

In order to observe the strength and weakness of the practical service and role of social workers in the selected court the researcher observed the day to day activities of the social workers in their actual working environment as a non-participant observer during the data collection.

Observing participants in their actual place is more reliable: it is possible to see how they actually behave. In interviews participants may be asked about how they behave in certain situations but there is no guarantee that they actually do what they say they do. Therefore observation can fill this gap. Observation can also serve as a technique for verifying or nullifying information provided in face to face encounters (Beverley H. 1998).

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Based on this the researcher observed activities of participants at their actual place in the study area in order to collect a comprehensive firsthand information. The researcher took note /journal of every observation which come into attention and relevant for the study by being open for any new idea rather than preparing a check least that helps to remind key focus area of field observation.

3.4.2.3. Review of Written Documents

As secondary source of data the researcher used available written materials , guide line of social workers in court setting, assessment reports of AAU school of social work and the MOU signed between different organization for the establishment of the referral system .These documents were reviewed and analyzed in accordance with their relevance to the study.

3.5. Data Analysis Method

As M. Ibrahim (2012) mentioned Thematic Analysis is a type of qualitative analysis. It is used to analyze classifications and present themes (patterns) that relate to the data. And illustrates the data in great detail and deals with diverse subjects via interpretations. Thematic Analysis gives an opportunity to understand the potential of any issue more widely (Marks & Yardley, 2004).

Will Gibson (2008) also verify thematic analysis as the best approach to deal with data. Thematic analysis involves creation and application of ‘codes’ of the data to be analyzed. The ‘data’ being analyzed might take any number of forms: an interview transcript, field notes, policy documents, photographs or video footage. Accordingly, the data in the study were analyzed by using thematic analysis. This was useful to develop themes from primary data gathered through interviews and field notes of the researcher.

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In this research data analysis of the interview was started by transcribing the recorded interview which is collected by using interview guide line. The transcribed data was translated into English. Coding and categorizing of key words and phrases were subsequently done to see how the participants described and understand the issue according to the research question.

Coding was done by identifying central points of the data related to the research question according to their similarities and differences from different informants. The coding was selective coding, which was done by collecting the data which explain the issue best.

After coding was done the data were categorized according to the research questions and major themes were developed by summarizing the coded findings from different informants. Then major themes were developed by sub dividing the stories and giving title for the divided stories and gathering similar lines of stories in one category from different informants. Then the data were summarized to developed general themes.

The researcher tried to make sure the findings go in line with the research objective. Data analysis was conducted all the time simultaneously during the data collection. Finally the findings from the interview and observation were incorporated and presented to be analyzed in general for conceptual construction.

3.6. Process of Data Collection

The process of data collection had initially started after the approval of the proposal by the School of Social Work. After that the researcher has taken the support letter to federal Supreme Court Child Justice Project Office and lideta federal first instance court as these were the focus of the research area. Then the researcher gave the letter taken from the school to the vice president of lideta federal first instance court and child justice project coordinator. From

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child justice project coordinator the researcher got the information with whom the interviews has to be made and all written documents. And after giving the support letter to the vice president of lideta federal first instance court the researcher arranged a meeting with higher official in the president office and a judge for interview.

And after that the researcher went to social work unit coordinator. And the coordinator helped the researcher in selecting social workers who participate in the interview. The researcher also got the guide line for social work practice in courts from the coordinator.

On February 15, 2016 the researcher started the data collection from the key and in depth interview informants but because I give birth on March 10, 2016 data collection was terminated until June15, 2016 and again from June 15-June 25, 2016 data collection continued. Butbecause of the court schedule as courts don't see new cases after June the researcher could only gather a data from one in depth interview informant and two clients of social work service users and collection of data was ended on June 15, 2016.

3.7. Ethical consideration

The researcher took an official letter from Addis Ababa University School of Social Work to ease the process of gaining entry to the research field and enable acceptance in the selected court. The researcher also prepared a consent form, which explained about participant's right of continuing participation or withdrawing their consent before or during the data collection and gave brief explanation about the study. The researcher made sure each and every participants read and signed before starting the interview. The information gathered from the participants was stored and utilized in a way that make sure to respect and protect the informants and their professional privacy and confidentiality. And anonymity and confidentiality of informants was

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protected by using codes for each participant. The researcher assured the participants that the data collected during the research will only be used for the purpose of this study.

3.8 Trust worthiness

Trust worthiness in qualitative study aims to maintain the credibility of the facts being presented in the study demonstrates a factual depiction of the phenomenon .To this end, the researcher used different types of triangulation.

Data collection triangulation method was used as a mechanism to have prosperous data on the study subject. The researcher applied methodological triangulation to verify trustworthiness of the information gathered to explain or describe the phenomenon under study. For this purpose data collection method like interviewing, observation and document reviewing were used, to allow the researcher to compare data gathered using different method during data analysis and come together to provide a particular, well-integrated and more precise picture of the research questions, that can't be easily obtained by using single data collection method.

To avoid deliberate distortion participants of this study were carefully selected by using pre-determined inclusion criteria and the researcher tried to guide the participants to be focused and relaxed while responding to the unstructured open ended questions.

In addition source triangulation was used, where by besides the social workers in the court other stakeholders (direct participants of the study and key informants) were involved in the interview, different documents like assessment and annual reports were reviewed, and clients of social work practice were participated in the study to avoid deliberate distortion.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the research. It has different sections and it incorporates Roles and Contributions of social work unit for service users and the court, Challenges of social work practice and their cause, resources of social work practice in courts with a special emphasis to the Support system for the practice.

Participants of this study were mostly professionals who are directly involved in the social work practice, and customers who used social work service in courts.

4.1.1 Socio-demographic back ground of key informants

All Key informs of the study came from the backgrounds of law. There are two females and two key informants. From Key informants of court and one was court higher official in the president office and the other was a judge. And key informants from child justice protection office both are higher officials in the project office.

Table 1 Profile of key informants

Participants' code	Gender	Title	Educational back ground	Work experience on the field	Employer
Participant 1	M	Senior governmental officer at the president office of lideta federal first instance court	2 nd degree in law	1 year and seven months	Court employee
Participant 2	M	Judge and focal person on matters of children	LLB and working on second degree	9 years	Court employee
Participant 3	F	Senior official at Child justice project office	2 nd degree in law	8 years as head of child justice project office and 4 years as high court judge	Project employee
Participant 4	F	Senior Official at Child justice Project office	LLB and 2 nd degree in social work	4 years	Project employee

4.1.2. Social demographic background of in-depth interview participants

In-depth interviews were conducted with social work professionals working in the selected court. At the time of data collection, there were 7 social work professionals in lideta first instance federal court. By then, the court had hired new professionals, who nonetheless had not commenced their job. Consequently, it was not possible to include them in the data collection process. Professionals were purposefully selected from different experience categories:-from minimum and maximum working experience, from each bench and from both court and project employees. The selection was made with the help of the social work unit coordinator. The resultant total number of informants who participated in the study were 4 professionals.

Table 2 Profile of in-depth interview informants

Participants' code	gender	Job Position	Educational background	Work experience on the field	Working bench	Employer
Participant1	M	Social worker	First degree in Physiology and certificate on Para social work	5years and 6months	custody bench	Project employee
Participant2	M	Social worker	First degree in Psychology	2years	Family(case study)	Court employee
Participant3	F	Social worker	First degree in Psychology	7 months	Victim and custody	Court employee
Participant4	M	Social worker	First degree in Psychology and working second degree in social work	3 ½ years	Children in conflict with the law	Project employee

4.1.3 Social demographic background of Client Informants

In collaboration with a social work professional at the court, clients who expressed consent to being interviewed were selected as informants. Subsequently, interviews were held with two social work service users.

Table 3 Profile of client informants

Participants code	Gender	Age	Educational background	Type of service they use in the unit	Type of service they use in the referral system
Participant 1	Female	32	7 th grade	Custody	None
Participant 2	Male	38	9 th grade	Custody	None

4.2. Roles of Social Work Professionals in Court Setting

Social work service in courts is availed in three benches:-victim, children in conflict with the law, and cases in family bench which involve custodial investigation. The role played by social workers accordingly varies from bench to bench.

As per the findings held with the in-depth interview and key informants of the research, and the guideline of social workers in court setting, the following are the expected roles of social workers under different benches.

Case manager; social workers on custody bench are expected to provide detailed information about both parents and children based on the assessment they make through interviews conducted with the parents and the child / children, and if necessary , through home and school visits.

Intermediary; social workers in victim benches serve as intermediary agents between the court, and children who are victims of a crime. Social workers attempt to make the court ‘child friendly’ to children who come before the court of law as witnesses.

Guidance; this is a service given by social workers to children in conflict with the law bench. In addition to presenting assessment report and expert recommendation for the court on what type of correctional measure should be passed by the court, they provide guidance service for children in conflict with the law so that the latter do not get involved in the crime again.

Mediator; social workers who work with children in conflict with the law, also serve as mediators between the victim family and children in conflict with the law so as to smoothen their future relationship and avoid revenge between the two families and the victim and the defendant.

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As the guideline for social workers in courts stated in the custody and children in conflict with the law benches, social workers conduct individual and family assessment / evaluation with the children and their families to prepare report with expert recommendation. In doing so, they should assess their situation, capabilities, and problems, to determine what kind of measure and supports is required.

In the custody bench, the role of social workers is to safeguard the best interest of the child by giving expert recommendation on who should get custodial right and who should get visitation right.

With regards to children in conflict with the law, social workers role is preparing assessment report with expert recommendation as to what type of correctional measure should be taken by the court. And give guidance service for the child in conflict with the law.

Another civil case which social workers provide service for is in paternity cases. In cases where there is a paternity investigation, social workers get involved in the cases to facilitate financial support through the child justice project office. Furthermore, social workers accompany the father to be, or the person under investigation, to the health center where the DNA test is under taken. There, their role is to ensure that the investigation goes well, and that the paternity test is made on the right person.

Aside from the service social workers give they also provide additional supports by sending their clients to the referral system for additional supports like maintenance, counseling, economic and other supports when necessary.

4.3. Guideline of social work service in courts

The roles and responsibilities of social workers are enlisted in the guideline prepared in August 2013, by the federal first instance court research and study center. The guideline includes social workers job description, working procedures and disciplines to guide social work practitioners in courts.

The guideline has three parts which lists the roles and responsibilities of social workers in each three benches and how social workers ought to execute their job. As per the guideline, social work practitioners in court setting may be assigned to work in the following court benches - children in conflict with the law , adoption, victim, and family dealing with divorce cases and issues of custody and maintenance. However, adoption social work service is only given in *Bole* court, therefore as the data collection was only conducted on Lideta federal first instance court and the service was not given there it was not possible to discuss that strand of service in this research. Moreover, a job description of the adoption bench social workers, is not included in the guideline.

The preamble asserts that the guideline is equipped with the standard and quality service expected from the profession and ethical disciplines expected from professionals. The guideline is divided in 3 sections which separately illustrate the role and responsibilities of social work services provided in the three aforementioned benches.

4.4. Contributions of social work unit for service users and the court

A review of documents and the data generated from the in depth interview and key informants reveal the following findings pertaining to the social workers' contribution to the court, children and their families.

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Social workers make significant contribution in increasing the quality of service courts provide by foregrounding psycho- social aspects of cases. Involvement of social workers upgrade the capacity of the court by adding social implications on cases and promoting best interest of the child. Contribution of social workers can be demonstrated focusing on the service they provide in the three benches. These are contribution of social works in victim bench, contribution of social works in children in conflict with the law bench, contribution of social work service in family bench with custodial issues, and contribution of social work service in paternity investigation.

4.4.1 Victim's Bench

In victim bench social workers contribute in creating smooth interaction on the trial, as they assume an intermediary role between children, and the judge, public prosecutor, and the defendant.

Court rooms are frightening for everyone, let alone for children. Therefore, social workers make the trial less formal and friendly for children. In addition, involvement of social workers guard children from secondary victimization and trauma as social workers protects children from unnecessary language and accusations arising from the defendant. Social workers start their role first by building a rapport with the child. After making the child free and relaxed, they then present questions of the court room by neutralizing potentially unpleasant and complex expressions contained in languages into expressions children can easily understand.

The involvement of social workers in the victim's bench contributes to the court by assisting the judge to reach on the right verdict by receiving genuine testimony of children. Children can only tell the whole truth in convenient atmosphere, and for people they think that

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can be trusted. Social workers are supposed to play this role by building the rapport before the trial starts.

Therefore, the involvement of social workers protects children from fear and frustration which consequentially enables avoidance of distortion of facts and evidence. Using the CCTV room also help children to feel safe and protected. CCTV Room is a class separated from the unusual and main courts room for children who give testimony using Closed Circuit Television it helps children to feel safe and enables intermediating situations between the court and children.

As legal experts such as public prosecutors and judges may not have the expertise on how to extract information from children , social workers are supposed to get important information about the crime by making children feel comfortable and hence, enabling the child(ren) to be focused and articulate what happened.

4.4.2. Children in Conflict with the law Bench

In children in conflict with the law bench, social workers contribute to the court by providing expert recommendation. Social workers assist the court by providing expert recommendation as to what type of correctional measure the court should follow. Social workers prepare expert report and recommendation based on the findings of their assessments. Among others, social workers assess the interaction of the child with his/her environment, the child's intention while involving in the crime, gravity of the crime, and the cause which drove the child to commit the crime. Following the assessment, social workers' recommendation will incorporate what type of correctional measure or penalty would be appropriate for correction and rehabilitation effect.

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All this information helps the court to decide what type of penalty or correctional measures should be passed on the child. In general, social workers assistance and expert recommendation allows the court to gain detailed information about the child in conflict with the law, and helps to pass appropriate correctional measure. Involvement of social workers in children in conflict with the law also contributes for the child on trial, as social workers strive to assure the best interest of the child by bringing all necessary information to the court which can help the child's case.

Social work service makes a contribution in cases of children in conflict with the law, by providing guidance service. After presenting the expert recommendation to the court, and correctional measure have been passed by the judge, social workers provide guidance service for children in view of preventing the child's involvement in another crime. Moreover, if necessary, the social worker also facilitates additional support from the referral system.

Another contribution of social workers for clients in children in conflict with the law bench is that they provide mediation service. Social workers also contribute in creating smooth interaction between children in conflict with the law and the victim family by acting as mediator to prevent revenge.

4.4.3. Family Bench

In the family bench social work service involvement is only in cases with custody investigation, in this bench social workers' contribution to the court is bringing the psycho-social aspect of the case and providing a clear image about the family under custodial issue so that the court can reach on the right decisions which promote the best interest of the child. As the court doesn't have time and expertise to investigate all the necessary detailed information, an assessment report is conducted by the social worker. The report equips the court with all the

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pertinent data about the family in deciding which parent should get custodial right, and which one should have visitation right.

Although divorce of parents has negative impact on children, the social worker's involvement enables the child to grow with the 'better' parent that can better provide for their best interest, for physiological and physical growth of the child.

In addition to presenting assessment report for the court as to which parent should get custodial right, if the social worker believes that family should get additional support he/she will send them to the referral system for further support. For instance, if economic problem is the cause for disintegration of the family, the social worker will send the family to the referral system for economic support. The economic support they get can help in saving the family from disintegration.

Another contribution of social workers through the referral system involves recommending parents to counseling services in cases where they believe the marriage couldn't work due to lack of smooth interaction amongst the parents. If such problems are detected during assessment social workers will send parents to the referral system for counseling service. Even though the marriage couldn't work such actions enable creation of a conducive and healthy environment, primarily to the child, and the family under custody investigation for their future interaction.

The data from AAU school of social work assessment reports on 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 shows the contribution of social work unit for the court. From 183 cases in 2012/2013 and 172 cases in 2013/2014 in custody investigations only 2 expert recommendations from each year totally 4 expert recommendation of social workers were rejected by the court the

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rest 352 cases the court accept social workers expert recommendations. This shows the reliability of the expert recommendation social workers present to the court and contribution of the unit provide for the court. The data has presented here under.

4.4. 4. Cases social workers provide service on 2012/2013

Table 4 number of cases seen on 2012/2013

Bench	Year	Number of cases	Number of children use the service	Recommendations Accepted by the court	Recommendations Rejected by the court
Victim	2012/2013	183	223		
Children in conflict with the law	2012/2013	158	179		
Custody	2012/2013	130	183	116	2

4.4.5. Cases social workers provide service on 2013/2014

Table 5 number of cases seen on 2013/2014

Bench	Year	Number of cases	Number of children use the service	Recommendations Accepted by the court	Recommendations Rejected by the court
Victim	2013/2014	_____	89		
Children in conflict with the law	2013/2014	144	170		
Custody	2013/2014	114	172	112	2

4.5. Evaluation mechanisms about the contribution of social work practice

The research findings reveal that there were no institutionalized and regular evaluation systems to assess/ evaluate efficiency of individual social workers until February 2016.

However, there exists a system where by social worker’s regularly review cases, exchange their

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experiences and solicit professional support. Every 15 days social work professionals hold a case review meeting in lideta federal first instance court, from all courts in Addis Ababa which is attended by all social workers from all courts. During the meeting the social workers present cases which they have found to be challenging, so as to get professional support from their colleagues. These meetings enable the professionals to express their opinions, get support on how to manage challenging cases and share good practices.

Even though it was temporarily suspended, a regular supervision mechanism conducted every 15 days took place. This practice was suspended for a while and was only restarted following the feedback from an assessment conducted by Addis Ababa University School of social work.

An informant explains the termination of the supervision mechanism as follows;

The supervision was terminated because of the disagreement between social workers of project and court employees. The former supervisor was a project employee, she was talented enough and even used to give us counseling service for social workers when we were in stressful situation. But now after the mid of this year another supervisor from AAU school of social work has been assigned again.

All in-depth interview participants argued that the court evaluation criteria doesn't have capacity to evaluate the service or the efficiency of the professionals. It solely focuses on individual behavior and the general evaluation criteria prepared for all court employees. They insisted evaluation criteria should consider the unique professional values and standards for every profession, which the court evaluation system lack.

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However, the opinions of the key informants of the research on the court's evaluation system is contrary to the aforementioned informants. For instance, Key informant 3 give the following opinion:

Evaluating the behavior of the professional is inseparable from evaluating efficiency of the professional. I know social workers opinion about this newly implemented evaluation system is negative. But this is very wrong because evaluation on the bases of behavior is very essential especially for social workers because the professional ethic is dependent on the personality of the professional.

Even though it is not an institutionalized system, the child justice project office made assessment on the practice in 2012 & 2013 by AAU school of social work professionals. And it gave valuable feedback on the strength and weakness of the practice and professionals performance.

4.6. Follow up mechanism of social work practice

In their very nature, some services provided in social work unit cannot end along with the end of the court trial. Thus cases require follow up even after a verdict has been reached by the court. However, as the finding of this study shows, there is no follow up mechanism in social work practice in court setting.

In depth Interview participant number 4 explain it as follows

For example in case of custody if social work professional give expert recommendation based on the assessment report for the child to be with the father or mother the other one will get visitation right. But after the court made its decision if the parties doesn't come complaining social workers doesn't have follow up means to know about the

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implementation of the decision and its effect on the child. And this goes true for all services provide in social work unit.

The informant continues to elaborate the idea by giving another example;

In the case of children in conflict with the law, when children come from another area (out of Addis Ababa,) after the correctional measure has been taken, if they ask for reunification we send them to their families using the referral system. But after they have been sent to their families there is no follow up mechanism to inspect the situation of the children. And if there are factors aggravating the condition of the child we don't have any system to protect the child from involving in the crime again. And when they are street children and have no where to go we facilitate a place where they can stay at, in organizations under referral system. But after sending them we won't be able to know in what kind of situation they are in because of lack of the follow up system.

4.7. Target groups of social work service in courts

Target groups of the social work practice in court settings are children. If the case presented to the court directly or indirectly involves children's right issue, social workers' involvement will be required by the court. The court will then send a letter of order to the social work unit soliciting for professionals' expert support.

Although the main targets of the service are children, adults who are families of children involved in the justice system, may also get the service provided by the unit. Custody case is one good example. Moreover, in the victim, and children in conflict with the law bench, there are families which get services like economical, physiological and other supports through the referral system.

4.8 Inclusiveness of the service

The data gathered for this study indicates that social work practice in court setting doesn't consider clients with special needs, such as children with hearing and talking disability and developmental disability. As such, there is gap in providing service for such clients.

According to the in-depth interview participants, when children with special needs come to court, the court assigns experts, which are paid per diems for that specific case. Far from being along-lasting solution, this only provides a temporary solution. For children with special needs, there should be experts who support social workers in regular manner. Clients also suggested that a training of sign languages should be arranged for social workers, so that they can better communicate with clients with hearing disability.

Another gap in-depth interview informants identify relates to the counseling service. Social work practitioners indicated that they shouldn't send clients for counseling every time the services is needed. Because of the workload, social workers claim that they can't give counseling and other services at the same time. Therefore, they recommend that there should be one professional who is responsible for providing counseling service in the unit.

In-depth interview participant number 2 further points out the necessity of having a particular professional entrusted with a counseling service, in the following manner.

In the case of custody when client come to our unit sometimes they come right away from court hearing and some of them come with negative energy (very angry) from the court. These customers can be difficult to handle and this also has an effect on the communication process with social workers. For such cases if there is a counselor in the

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unit he/ she will support the custody case manager before going to the assessment process by cooling down such clients.

In-depth interview participant 4 also supports the idea stating that

In children in conflict with the law case, in addition to the guidance social work department should give counseling service. For children who are convicted of serious crimes or children with repeated crime record we send them for counseling and rehabilitation service to the referral system. But for simple crimes we just give the children guidance and let them go.

Such information reveals a gap in the counseling and guidance system. Even in cases where children are involved in crimes unknowingly, their involvement in the crime by itself shows that those children are exposed to hazardous (unsafe) condition. Therefore for these kind of cases both guidance and counseling service should be available in the unit. However, in the current and actual practice, children only get guidance service.

In general, all in-depth interview informants believe counseling service should be included in the unit. When counseling service is mandatory to be given before social workers provide their regular service for their clients they should not send clients to the referral system every time the service needed. Because of the significant number of cases requires counseling, they believe that there should be one professional assigned for the unit, a counselor who only gives this service for customers, and support social workers.

4.9. Customers' expectation from social work unit

Findings from the in-depth interview participants show that most clients are not aware of the kind of services that are given by social work unit. The exception is in custody cases where

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social workers first clarify about the role and responsibilities of the unit for clients by reading the consent form. This helps the client to set their expectations.

In-depth interview informant number (1) makes the following observation.

Most customers come to the unit because the court ordered them to do so .Some don't even want to use the service they take it as waste of time. This brings its own negative impact on the quality of the service.

Finding from the two client informant also approved this fact as both confirmed that they didn't know what types of services are given in the unit. They only come to the unit because of the court order.

In general finding of the research shows that Customers' knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of the social work unit is very low or near to nil. This is because of the low experience of awareness creation and promotion about the role and responsibilities of the unit for co-workers and customers. In turn, this has its own influence on the performance and acceptance of the unit role and contribution. Client's skepticism on the necessity of the service comes from the limited Knowledge on the role and contribution of the unit.

4.10. Clients Awareness of the service

As the guideline for social works practice in courts clearly explains in the introduction part the role of social workers enlisted specifically and clearly for two main reasons. Preparation of guide line for social work practice in courts has two main objectives. One of the objectives is preparing a readily accessible compiled listing of job description with specifications of the roles and responsibilities of social workers. The other objective aims at giving insight in to the role and responsibilities of social workers, for service users. Since clients don't have access to the

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guideline this mean to imply the awareness creation and promotion responsibility of concerned parties for service users about the role and contribution of social work service in court setting.

4.11. Challenges of social work practice and their cause

4.11.1. Limitation of resources

The Findings show that one of the challenges encountered in social work practice is limitation of resources. Limitation of resources includes material starting from computer, chair, table, stationeries and transportation for field assessment. In-depth interview participants relate limitation of resources, with an alleged overarching challenge of the practice- the belief that the social work unit is given less (attention) value by the court officials.

In depth interview informants said that the court administration doesn't give a credit concomitant to the contribution of the social work unit to the court. They also believe that this emanates from the fact that the court administrators are from law background and don't have adequate knowledge about the unit's role and contribution.

However, key informant number 1 insisted that resource allocation is done between different departments of the court equally. The shortcoming arises because of the scarce budget the court has; this in turn results from the country's financial condition. He further adds that shortage of resource for the social work unit is the same as any other department in the court.

4.11.2 Misperception of the contribution of the social work unit

Another challenge raised by the in-depth interview participants, and key informant number 3 pertains to the judge's misperception about the role and contribution of the social work unit. They state that often, newly assigned Judges do not understand the role and contribution of social workers, and this has become a challenge for social workers and the practice. Because of

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the court's structure, there is always rotation of benches and high turnover of judges. Awareness creation trainings for new judges might delay because of budget and other technical arrangement problems. Consequently, the misperceptions are reinforced by the newly assigned judges.

The findings held with in-depth interviews informants show that although few in numbers, some judges even proceed cases without notifying the social work unit about the cases and asking them for their expert support. Even though key informants insisted that no single judge decides cases that involve children's right without the assistance of social workers and their expert opinion, in-depth interview participants express persistent complaint about the issue.

4.11.3. Lack of Training

The study reveals that lack of regular and institutionalized training for professionals is another challenge all-in-depth interview informants raise as a concern. Regular trainings helps to upgrade social workers skill, and to provide strong reports and valid professional recommendations to the court. Ultimately, these will enable provision of quality service and promotion of the image of the unit and its contribution.

In-depth interview participants further add that, even new social work practitioners join the practice without getting any training. Even though 3-5 day on the job trainings are arranged, and new social work professionals start their jobs as apprentice under supervision and learn the practice from senior professionals, they argued that the trainings are insufficient.

In -depth interview informant 3 explain the situation as follows:

Training is an issue which social workers complain about in every meeting. Trainings are not given for social workers sufficiently and regularly, because of budget and technical arrangement problems. Even those very few and short trainings are given late and rarely.

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Let me tell you my experience. When I joined the unit, I came from a very different work experience. Even though my educational back ground is from psychology, I used to work in a completely different area. But still I didn't get any training before I started working and joined the practice. And obviously this brings gap on the practice. When cases challenged me, I asked for advice and support from experienced social workers. Afterwards I got two trainings for 3-4 days and that's it. It's been seven months since I joined the unit. In a same manner, mostly professionals try to upgrade their knowledge through reading and experience sharing. And the case review program plays a very significant role for experience sharing, and to get helpful directions especially for new social workers.

According to a Key informant Key informant No 3

There are limitations of trainings but even though trainings are not given in a regular manner, on job trainings are always given for social work professionals and judges every year.

4.11.4. Difference in remunerations

Another challenge revealed is salary and per dim differences between court, and project social work employees. This difference has its own impact on the motivation of court social work employees. Child justice project office employees have greater salary as they are project employees, and their possession wills faith out as soon as the court fully takes over the responsibility of hiring social work professionals. Even though it is not that significant it is raise by the in-depth interview participants as one challenge.

4.11.5. Lack of stress management mechanism for social workers

The findings from in-depth interview informants shows that even though the job is stressful there are no stress management services / mechanisms provided for social workers. An in depth interview informant no 3 further explains the situation as follows:

The job is very stressful and demanding. It's not a type of job you can finish in the office and leave it there. It is emotionally very draining, even after you left your office. The stressful feeling and sometimes heartfelt feelings in cases will follow you at home. And we are not talking about one case; it might be 2 or 3 cases at a time. This brings stress to professionals. If there isn't an outlet mechanism for the stress, it will affect the professionals. They might be fade up and less motivated. And this will affect the practice as well. Therefore, there has to be refreshment programs and professional counseling service for social workers. And previously, before I joined the unit I heard there was one councilor who also supervised the service, and she used to give counseling service for professionals. That practice should come back again.

4.11.6. Lack of awareness about the unit's role and contribution

The other challenge revealed from the finding is lack of alertness of court officials about the unit role and contribution. As social work unit is directly accountable for the president of the federal first instance court, president of lideta federal first instance court was out of country for education and his administrative position was covered by the delegation of the vice presidents. According to in depth interview informants, his absence brought an enormous gap to the practice because the former president has a very important role in social work practice. They state that he played an insurmountable role in the establishment of the social work practice.

In-depth interview informant number 4 explain his importance as follows;

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The former president has good knowledge and support for the role and contribution of the unit. He was the one who established the social work unit and used to safeguard it well. But now, the higher officials in charge do not have enough knowledge about the unit and its contribution. So this has been affecting the unit in great deal.

Concerning Magnitude of the challenges in depth interview informants explained it as follows;

In-depth interview informant number 1 explained the magnitude of the challenges as follows:

In the beginning, the service the unit provides was started informally but by now it has become a system in the court. This is because of its necessity to the court and the justice system as a whole. All these challenges the unit is dealing with directly affect the quality of the service professionals are providing. Therefore, if we can't provide the anticipated service from the unit the sustainability of the service will be questionable / in danger.

Another example given for the magnitude of challenges is on limitation of resource. In-depth interview informant number 3 presented it as follows.

We use one computer for three professionals, because of the shortage. And if we can't write(prepare) our assessment report for the court on time, we will be forced to ask for extra appointment and this disappoints and frustrates our customers.

One of the evaluation criteria for quality of service in the justice system is time. There is a common saying "justice delayed is justice denied." Therefore, this will also affect the quality of the service.

Concerning Responses of concerned parties for challenges all in depth interview participants said that the response of the court is always full of promises, and often the court is slow in taking

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practical measures. The response about the response of the court and child justice project office for their challenges is presented as follows.

In-depth interview participant number 3 states that:

Response of the court administration is very poor. Our relationship regarding most of our challenges doesn't bring tangible solution other than reporting and hearing excuses. I can give you one example. This month 6 new social workers have been hired by the court itself. And the unit wants to arrange a half day training to guide new social workers until proper training can be arranged by the child justice project office. .But the court administration can't cover this very easy cost which is not greater than facilitating refreshment program. But in contrast, child justice project office gives quick solutions for our challenges. Especially on challenges concerning materials; including CCTV. Most of our material problems are solved by the project. For instance very recently the project arrange material support from UNICEF.

Another informant No. 4, 2016) further adds the following idea

Concerning challenges of the practice, response of the project office has a better and quicker response in comparison to the court. The Court's response doesn't often go beyond making promises. Because there are many departments under the court, there is resource scarcity, and the attention for given to our unit is limited, most of the time our problems don't get immediate solution in time.

In-depth interview informant number 2 further adds the following.

Our interaction with the court concerning administrative solution is not satisfactory. Other than sending cases to the unit their involvement in providing practical solutions

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concerning challenges of the practice is very passive. It is the project which supports us with even minor things like stationeries. For instance I am court employee but it is easier for me to expect solution from the project than the court.

In general the finding from in depth interview participants show that they believe the response of the child justice project office, to the challenges encountered by the social work practice in the selected court is encouraging and more tangible and practical. In depth interview informants said that the project officials attempt their best to provide for the unit's needs, when compared to the court. They stated that it is the project office which gives fast and satisfactory remedy for their challenges.

4.12. Resources for social work practice in courts

Findings of the study indicates main resources for the practice are, skilled professionals, constant/regular trainings to upgrade professionals 'knowledge and skill, convenient atmosphere both for professionals and customers , convenient office setting for children , and materials , like computer , accessible transportation, stationeries, office furniture and the referral system . And the finding shows these resources are not adequately provided for professionals and the unit as a whole.

As one of the aim of the research is identifying main resources of social work practice in courts the two main resources, Training and qualification of social workers and the support system to social work practice in court setting which is the referral system will be discussed in detail in this sub-section.

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4.12.1. Training and qualification of social work professionals

Qualified social work professionals are one of the main resources of social work practice in court setting. As the research finding shows, in Ethiopia, the overall history of professional social work practice in court setting has only been 8 years. As the practice is new, the effort to empower and upgrade social work practitioners' skill was very promising at the start. As there were no social work graduates, psychologists and sociologist did the job.

To fill this gap, the child justice project office facilitated a short term training of 21 days to certify social work practitioners as paraprofessionals. In addition continuous supervision and on job training use to be arranged in regular manner from 2008 to 2012.

The research finding shows that currently, from the 27 social workers in the federal first instance court, only two are social work graduates. In lideta federal first instance court all social work practitioners are from psychology and sociology background. Due to organizational and budgetary problems, the Para-professional certification training for social work practitioners has been stopped for the last three years.

Social work practitioners are only getting on job trainings. These on job trainings are very limited in number and are not given in regular manner. This clearly affects the capacity of professionals and the quality of the service as well.

Even though psychologists can also provide the above mentioned service because of their developmental knowledge and assessment skill, their generalist knowledge makes social workers more appropriate to undertake the task. What makes social workers preferable is their role of undertaking assessment and intervention for the complex needs of their clients in a comprehensive manner.

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Furthermore, social work assessment tools help professionals to prepare well-rounded assessment report for quality expert recommendation to the court. This well rounded assessment finding also help social work practitioners to identify the cause of the problem, of the case in hand. And another relevance of the well rounded assessment finding is it help social workers to arrange intervention for children in contact with the justice system and their families for prolonged solution. As stated in the guideline for social work practitioners in court setting one of social work practitioner's role is to facilitate additional support for children in contact with the justice system and their families through the referral system.

However, this is not meant to imply that social workers don't need trainings. All social work professionals in court setting need to get trainings before engaging in the practice. The unique nature of social work service in courts makes basic legal knowledge imperative. On job trainings should also be arranged in constant manner to upgrade social work practitioners' skill.

When we come to the actual fact finding shows up to 2005EC there were short term trainings and ongoing on the job trainings. Social work practitioners use to get these short term training before joining the practice and being certified to be paraprofessional. The child justice project office prepared those trainings in collaboration with AAU school of social work. Professionals were certified as paraprofessional after the 21 days trainings. When the professionals engage in the practice, ongoing supervision and 3-4 days on job trainings were given to further empower the professionals.

In related manner, key informant number 3, further elaborates on the training and supervision procedures in practice as follows:

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The paraprofessional training was facilitated by the child justice project office in collaboration with AAU school of social work. In addition to the 21day consecutive training, the project arranged ongoing on the job trainings and continuous supervision. In general, for the first round professional's training, the child justice protection office invested more than 500,000 birr to empower the professionals and make them compatible for the position.

Nonetheless, the in-depth interview informants further highlight that since 2005 professionals didn't get training and certification before joining the practice. Rather, they begin the practice as apprentice under supervision for 6 months. In the mean time they get 3-5 days on job trainings.

They argue that as the trainings are not sufficient, they upgrade their capacity through reading, and experience sharing with experienced social workers. An informant No.3 explains the situation further stating that:

Trainings are not arranged for new professionals joining the unit. We get 3 or 4 days training after we start practicing and even these trainings are not provided in sufficient manners. For example it has been 7 month since I joined the unit and I only got two brief trainings I am tiring to empower myself and cop up by reading and experience sharing with senior professionals.

4.12.2. Support system for social work practice in court setting

4.12.2.1. Referral system

The other resource for social work practice in court setting is the referral system. The referral system provides multiple service (opportunity) for the practice.

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In addition to the constitutional provisions which deal with the rights of the child, Ethiopia has ratified different types of international laws concerning rights of children. These international laws acceded by the state are given constitutional recognition. The recognition is articulated as “all international laws ratified by the country are Integral parts of the law of the land” Constitution *Article 9 (4)*.

The referral system between governmental and non-governmental institutions is established to achieve the above mentioned goal by promoting best interest of the child in the justice administration, through organized collaboration of institutions who work towards this end separately. One mechanisms of collaboration is offering support for justice organs so as to guarantee the best interest and wellbeing of children.

Currently, the support system available for social work service in court setting is this referral system. This system was established in 2009 for the improvement of administration of justice for children at federal courts. The Memorandum of understanding was signed between 37 governmental and nongovernmental organizations. After 6 years, the MOU was revised signed by 37 members which includes new additional organizations. The revised MOU explain the purpose of the establishment of the referral system as follows. “To establish a formal commitment among the signatories to work on developing and improving the justice system for children especially with issues related to the federal first instance court. And to support the collaborative work of institutions working with and for children and position the parties to effectively address the problem of children.”(MOU of referral system 2015 page 8). In the referral system, all federal courts, the Child justice Project Office, and other organizations work in collaboration to provide integrated service /support for the justice system.

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4.12.2.2. Practical knowledge and experience of social workers using the referral system.

As stated in the guideline, in addition to the services social workers provide in the unit, they should also use the referral system to provide additional support for complex needs of individual clients. However, the findings of the research show otherwise. According to the assessment report of AAU school of social work and finding from in-depth and key interview informant social workers are not adequately using the referral system. It highlights that the court has a better trend of using the referral system.

Although the guideline for social work service in courts also mandates professionals to use the referral system for additional support and follow up, and social workers are not using it adequately. This is because they are not well-informed about the referral system. What services are available, how to use the referral system and qualification (standard) to use the service are not clear for social workers. Moreover the social workers tend to be skeptic about the quality of the service on the service quality.

In-depth interview informant number 3 describe it this way

I come across with the information about services in the referral system during case review sessions. But even after that, I have never used the referral system. But in the case review sessions, I heard that there is plenty of resource social workers can use. For instance, in custody, there are good examples raised by professionals on services like parenting style and counseling. In my opinion, most of us don't have enough knowledge about the referral system. You can take me as an example. It's been 7 months since I joined the practice but I have never used it. After the assessment feedback made by AAU school of social work which shows there is a limitation in using the referral system, a one day

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training was arranged to create awareness about the refer system . That was when I heard about the referral in detail. Afterwards I become curious and started to ask more about it. Whenever I asked different social workers, I got different and confusing answers. Now I am convinced that even the senior professionals don't have enough (clear) knowledge. In general, I believe all social workers need to get training in the area.

In-depth interview informant number 3 explained the quality of the referral system and social worker's knowledge about the referral system in the following manner.

The knowledge I have about the referral system is that it provides economic, legal and psychological supports in general. Practically, we (social workers) are not using it because we don't have adequate knowledge on how to use it and the standards (criterion) as what type of customers can use the service. On the other hand, social workers who use the referral system specially the counseling service complain about the quality of the service. This also has negative impact on professionals' attitude towards using the referral service. With regards to my experience in using the referral system, I work on custody bench but I only send clients to the referral system for counseling service .I never use another service because I am not knowledgeable about the services in detail and the standard for what kind of customs can use the support in the referral system.

As finding from in depth interview informants show the only service most social workers briefly using is counseling in custody bench. Even in counseling services professionals have complaints about the quality of the service. Even though they are very few, some social workers also use the referral system other than counseling service. For instance, in children in conflict

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with the law, if children are involved in the crime repeatedly or involved in serious crime social workers send these children to the referral system to help them get rehabilitation service.

In addition in custody bench in times when the reason for family problem is financial because low living standard can cause family disintegration and make children vulnerable to crimes. And if the assessment shows economic status of the family is the determining cause for the case in hand and another related problems, social workers send that family to the referral system to get economic and physiological support.

4.12.2.3. Challenges of professionals using the referral system

Finding shows Social work practitioners have number of challenges in using the referral system. The major once are unwillingness of client to use additional support from the referral system and limited knowledge of professionals.

As in depth interview informants' another challenge is customers don't want to go for further support as they want to end the case as fast as possible. Even in the case of customers who want to use the support in the referral system, they complain for not getting proper service which is followed by lack of institutional commitment in organizations in the referral system and this discourages professional from using the referral system.

To elaborate this informant number 4 explain as follows

For example, customers that we send to the referral system for additional service said the organizations contact them for two or three sessions. Even that was for a very short time and it ended without giving them the attention they deserve. They say the service didn't help their case. This put the quality of the referral service under question. Such feedback

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from customers complaining they didn't get helpful service is also another discouraging factor for professionals from using the referral system.

Using services in the referral system is based on clients' voluntariness. If customers don't want the service, social work practitioners cannot force them to do so. Besides cases like counseling services need patience and time. If customers don't have faith and are not willing to use the service the outcome won't be effective. Moreover, as in depth interview informants most families don't want to accept that they have problem and need counseling or other related help. This also bring its own influence on social workers motivation to use the referral system.

4.12.2.4. Limitations of the referral system

Finding shows aside from the professional's limited knowledge and challenges from clients in spite of its relevance the referral system also has its own limitations. Limitations of the referral, system are more of procedural and technical gaps and in depth interview informants explained them as follows:

As in-depth interview informant number 1

one limitation of the referral system is that there are no standards "for instance if one social worker want to use the referral system for economic support there is no standard for what type of customers should and should not be included to get the service.

Finding shows another limitation is follow up mechanism after social workers send clients to child justice project office for additional support they don't know what has happened to clients it is child justice project office who send clients to organizations in the referral system. Professionals don't have direct contact with organizations providing the service. They might not

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even know which organization is giving the service let alone the quality of the service. If they want any information they only contact child justice project office.

Another challenge for accessibility of the referral system is specification of services. Most of organizations in the referral system have their own specifications to provide service. This means that the services given by the organizations has specifications as to who can use their services by age, sex, woreda and sub cities and this limits the accessibility of the service. And this limits their capacity to provide services for divers clients and this limits their accessibility.

And limitation of knowledge of social workers about the referral system is also another factor which affects accessibility of the referral system.

4.12.2.5. Organizations under the referral system and Services they provide

The referral system encompasses 37 different types of governmental and non-governmental organizations. It is built to provide support for children who are in contact with the justice system. In the referral system services like legal support, financial support, shelter and care, support in income generation to their families, food, education, medical support, psycho--social support, rehabilitation and correctional support for children in conflict with the law are provided. This system is established to enhance integrated services with organizations that have sufficient experience on the provision of the above listed services by collaborating governmental and nongovernmental organizations. (Revised MOU, 2015 page 1)

4.13. Relationship of social work unit with other justice organs

Finding of the research shows trend of social work unit working with other justice organs other than the court is nil. The unit doesn't have any contact with other justice organs .Even though social work practice demands team work and coordination with other stakeholders is

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essential for the practice the practical truth of working in collaboration with other justice organs is otherwise.

Building professional relationship with justice organs like police, public prosecutors, lawyers specifically defense lawyers is vital as they all work under same principles for child justice administration and all are involved in the court room, but the actual practice shows otherwise. Social work unit in lideta federal first instance court doesn't have a trend of working with other justice organs. Furthermore informants of in depth interview of the study, except one in depth interview informant working in victim bench, others don't think team work with other justice organs is necessary.

This exceptional in depth interview informant said:

Justice organs like justice office and police have also a huge role in the justice administration concerning children in contact with the justice system it's a pity that they don't work together. She even suggested there has to be a team chart which holds together all stake holders in the justice system can be accountable so that better service can be availed to the public.

The rest believe that their interaction should only be with the judges and those children in contact with the law and their families. And if they require further information from anywhere, they can get it through the letter of order from the court.

However, the unit should take these stakeholders as resources or supports for social work practice. As the services these organs are providing have similar values and target, they should use this organs as one resource and develop the culture of working in collaboration. If the unit works in collaboration with the aforementioned organs the quality of service being provided by the unit will significantly improve.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

5.1. Discussion

This chapter discusses the findings of the research presented in the preceding chapter, based on the literature review and the six research questions of the study. It also identifies the role and contributions of social work practice in courts, challenges of the practice and professionals and main resources for the practice in relation with the support system.

5.2. Social Workers Role in court setting

5.2.1. Assessing courts to work in line with major principles of child rights

Finding from social workers guideline and key and in depth interview informants' shows role of social workers in court settings is assisting the court in promoting the welfare of children on the basis of best interest of the child. In doing so, all social work practitioners should consider the four basic major principles of child right driven from the CRC (1989) in providing social work services. These are best interest of the child, nondiscrimination, the right to life and growth, and the right to participate.

The finding also indicated promotion of best interest of the child is done by presenting report with expert recommendation and making the court child friendly for children in contact with the justice system. Preparing expert opinion will be done through different assessments in the case of custody and children in conflict with the law. Consistent with this finding Mantle et al (2008) relives in cases of custodial issues social workers prepare welfare report to assist the court to come to the right decision regarding residence and contact concerning the child under custodial investigation.

5.2.2. Support the courts for correctional decision

Social workers in children in conflict with the law bench assist the court in preparing expert recommendation in passing correctional measure and help the child in conflict with the law by giving guidance service and give mediation service for families of the victim and children in conflict with the law . In the same manner as Wilson M,(2010) stated role of social workers in courts working as criminal justice social worker is to balance the conflict between the public need and needs of the offenders by presenting bio- social aspects of offenders to the court. And when the preceding is concerning juvenile delinquent as Robert and Springer (2007) stated social workers might have also a mediator role between the victim and the juvenile and if the social work is successful in creating smooth relationship then the court will decide alternative correctional measure without passing penalty measure.

5.2.3. Protecting children from secondary victimization

Finding of the study shows in the case of children who are victim of a crime and witness in the court room, the role of social worker is to facilitate the court to be friendly and convenient for children, so that they can cooperate with the court. This will be done first by building a rapport with children, and assisting the children to present their testimony to the court through CCTV.Likewise according to Parker (2006) social workers role in the case of victim children is to help victim /witness children testify about the crime by making the court less formal and friendly by acting as intermediary.

5.3. Contribution of social work practice

5.3.1. Contribution of social workservice for the court and service users

Social work service in courts has multiple roles, and in executing these roles they contribute to the court, children in contact with the justice system and their families. Consistent

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with this finding statutory guidance on court orders and proceedings (2004) reveals role of social workers in matters of children and their families involve them as cases manager . By being a case manager they work to identifying families difficulties in order to provide adequate service and create convenient atmosphere for the child, this contribute both for the family and the child.

5.3.2. Enhancing service quality

Major contribution of social work practice is increasing the quality of service courts provide by bringing psycho- social aspects of cases and safeguarding best interest of the child. To excel, social work service in court setting it is vital to work in collaboration with the available resource. This helps to increase diversity of the service and to promote its quality.

The findings show that the main targets of the social work practice in courts are children. And they get the services in three benches; the victim bench, children in conflict with the law bench and custody service in family bench.

5.3.3. Contribution of the practice in victim bench

In the victim bench social workers serve as intermediary between the court and children to make the court atmosphere friendly for children, to protect them from secondary victimization and trauma from the defendant. They are also contribute in assisting the court to get clear and refined information about the crime. Consistent with this finding as Mubarak (2013) quoted Pled stated that social workers have dual contribution on their involvement in victim bench. Social workers provide support to the court by helping the victim child to extract the truth about the allegations and also protect the child not to face secondary victimization or trauma in the court room.

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The role of intermediary social workers is making the court atmosphere friendly and less formal for children. The intermediary social workers present the questions coming from the judge and the defendant or his/ her lawyer, to the children in a way suitable for the child, and help them to understand the questions easily without distorting the theme. This is done to protect children from fear and frustration. The intermediary service provide not only the victim children, but also for all children coming before the court of law as witnesses.

Finding shows all social workers in victim bench are female, this is because mostly crime victims are girls and crimes are mostly committed by male perpetrators. If male social workers come as intermediary they might not be able to get the trust of victim children.

Finding shows in addition to the support social workers provide in the court room for victim children they also provide additional support for the victim children and their families' like physical support and health-care for the victim child if needed. Consequently Dickens & Masson(2014) reveals social workers also involves in cases of victim child to facilitate therapeutic treatment for the child and family of victim child to help them in handling the crisis situation.

In general the whole point of intermediary service is to protect children from secondary victimization and trauma, because of the direct contact and questions come from the court room in times of examination. As the defendant, his/her lawyer or even judges and public prosecutors may not have adequate skill and training on how to communicate with children, the children are vulnerable to secondary victimization.

5.3.4. Contribution of the practice in children in conflict with the law bench

Finding from informants and the guideline to social workers show in the cases of children in conflict with the law bench, social workers contribute support to the court in providing proper correctional decision or punishment (if the child has repeated crime record) after guilty verdict has been passed. The report will be presented to the court based on the assessment carried out by social workers based on the child's personal condition. During assessment social, mental and family interaction of the child, the situation the crime was committed, and the intention of the child will be taken in to consideration.

In addition to making assessment and preparing expert recommendation on the type of correctional measure or punishment to be passed on by the court, social workers also give guidance service for the child in conflict with the law in view of preventing them from committing another crime.

The findings show that if children are involved in the crime repeatedly or are involved in serious crime, social workers send these children to the referral system to get counseling and rehabilitation service. The guideline also recommends for professionals to use the referral system whenever the support services needed in all services social workers provide.

5.3.5. Contribution of the practice in custodial cases

In the case of family bench, the role of social workers come only when there is custodial issue. This means that social workers get involved when children are involved in divorce cases and there is disagreement as to where the children should be living in the future, and who will be in charge of raising the children.

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As finding shows in custody bench in addition to the custodial investigation Social workers give additional services for families using the referral system. When the assessment shows economic status of the family is the determining cause for the case in hand and social workers believe the reason for family disinformation is financial and the situation of the family make children vulnerable to crimes social workers send clients to the referral system for economic and psychological support.

5.3.6. Contribution of the practice for families of children in contact with the justice system

Even though children are the main target groups of social work service in court settings, families of children also get services given by social work unit because of their children.

In the case of custody, parents get mediation service, trainings on parenting style, family preservation service, including economical support, and counseling from the referral service.

In the case of children in conflict with the law, in addition to the support social workers provide for the children the service families get from social workers is mediation service. Social workers give mediation service between families of the victim and children in conflict with the law for their future relation to make it smooth and to prevent revenge.

Social workers also involve in paternity investigation, they facilitate financial support for the expense of DNA test, and follow up on the process of paternity test to assure its legitimacy.

5.4. Target groups of social work service

In general, the goal of social work unit is to promote best interest of the child, hence children are main targets of social work practice in court setting. But when we talk about best interest of children their wellbeing mostly depends on their caregivers. Therefore, promoting the

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welfare of children is highly attached with their families. That is why family of children in contact with the justice system particularly in relation to courts are secondary targets of social work service in courts. Families of children in contact with the justice system also get different services in the referral system, in addition to custodial cases whereby families have direct involvement.

All this brings out the complex and diverse needs of service users. And such demands/needs can only be addressed through an inter-sectorial and multi-disciplinary service and social workers should work in collaboration with available support system.

5.5. Relevance of working in collaboration

What makes social workers generalist is they have to have holistic knowledge on how to solve complex needs of their clients. In addition to the service social work professionals can provide, they should also identify possible support system using their holistic knowledge to address different challenges and problems which cause and aggravate the given case in hand. Similar to this Fred Mayhew (2012) mentioned social workers need to work in collaboration with multidisciplinary organizations which create an opportunity to use different integrated professions and professionals to their service. The collaborated service helps to provide effective and efficient service in addressing complex needs of their clients in comprehensive manner.

They also should use possible resources to solve the problem or challenges related with the given case. Given the resource limitation the court and the social work unit mentions, and different types of challenges in using the referral system social workers need to adopt innovative skills to access the available resources around. Consistently as Fred Mayhew (2012) quoted Sandfort at el in using the collaborated service social workers should use their innovative skill to deliver services consistent with each clients need as their unique character. Therefore until

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limitations of the referral system are solved and procedures and standards of the services in the referral system become clear, social work Practitioners have to use their innovative skill to use services in the referral system to provide additional support to their clients

5.6. Support system for social work service in courts

Individual social work professional can't satisfy the complex needs and complex problems of their clients, therefore professionals should use the available support system to address these problems. Concerning this Mantle et al (2015) indicates working with other concerned agencies is important for social workers. And using referral by sending their client to statutory and voluntary agencies for foundling, consultation, work with behavioral problems and family support add value to their service.

Finding shows currently the available support system for social work practice in courts is the referral system which holds coordinated service together. The referral system was established with the coordination of different organizations to provide integrated support for the justice system in general, and particularly to children in contact with the justice system under federal first instance courts. The referral system encompasses 37 different types of governmental and nongovernmental organizations collaborated to provide diverse services, with the overarching aim of safeguarding the best interest of the child.

As finding shows the referral system encompasses variety of services like economic support, empowerment, counseling and many more. Yet, finding shows social workers inclination in using this massive resource is very low. And a review of the practice of social workers indicates that their utilization of the referral linkages is limited.

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The findings from all informants, and assessment report of AAU school of social work (2013&2014) reveal that in few cases, social workers use the referral system in services like mediation, economic, rehabilitation and counseling. The finding further show that counseling service is fully covered by the referral system and relatively social workers use this service better, especially in custodial cases.

Social workers use the referral linkage at times when the case in hand is beyond their capacity and in services not provided by the unit like counseling service. Finding from in depth interview informants reveals services social workers use in the referral system are often the support that is provided by the referral system includes mediation and counseling service for family with custody issue, and medical, psychological and economical support for victims, and children in conflict with the law.

Currently the counseling service is fully covered by the organizations under the referral system in accordance with the type of counseling needed. But social workers need to use this multi-sectorial approach which involves multidisciplinary service more often in diverse services.

5.6.1. Shortcomings of the referral system

Finding shows social workers are not using this resource as much as they have to and this is due to many reasons. One reason is social workers' lack of adequate knowledge about services in the referral system. On the other hand, clients don't trust quality of the service provided by the organizations in the referral system. Such skepticism has emanated from prior experience where by clients weren't served properly on time, and high bureaucratic process encompassed by organization and lack of institutional commitment in the organizations, this brought general belief that organizations don't give adequate attention to their clients.

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The other limitation relates to the follow up mechanism. Once social workers send the client to use one of the services in the referral system, there is no follow up mechanism enabling social workers to know what is happening. The practice of using the referral system is social workers send the client to child justice project office by filling the referral form and specify the service the client has to get. And it is the child justice project office that sends the client to organizations which provides the needed support.

Social workers don't have direct contact with organizations in the referral system; they might not even know which organization is giving the service. As a result, they don't have follow up access to see the progress and assess the quality of service the organization giving. They can only contact the child justice project office for any information about the case.

All the above discussed reasons limited knowledge of social work professionals about the referral system, and lack of follow up mechanisms, including unwillingness of customers to use the service and not believing in the service, are factors which affect the accessibility of services in the referral system.

With regards to the trust issue raised by the professions on the services given by organizations in the referral system, follow up mechanisms should be established. Professionals should have the access to contact organizations directly so as to get evaluation and follow up chances, and to oversee the process and quality of the service rendered by the organizations in the referral system.

5.6.2. Limitation of social workers using the referral system

The findings of this research also show that most social workers in court setting don't have the holistic knowledge or inclination to use the referral system in addressing the complex

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needs of their clients. One reason for this is lack of knowledge on how to use the referral system and the services available therein. In order to change this situation, ongoing training has to be prepared for professionals to build their knowledge and skill, and to give professionals a comprehensive understanding of the referral system.

5.7. Challenges of social workers in court setting

In providing social work service in court settings, the practice has its own challenges. Challenges of social work practice are mainly centered on the following issues- resources, misperception/low attention given for the contribution of the unit by court officials and limitation of clients' awareness about the role and contribution of social work service, and stress outlet/management mechanisms including lack of training for social work professionals.

Findings of the research disclose there is gap in training arrangement for social work professionals. The guideline for social work practice in court settings also emphasizes that undertaking trainings in a regular manner is essential for social work professionals who seek to develop their knowledge and skill.

In particular, social work practice in court setting has a unique character as cases also involves legal aspects. Consistently Moriarty et al, (2015) stated besides using interdisciplinary service social workers working under legal setting has to use an interdisciplinary and distinct range of legal and social work knowledge and skill to help people make change in their lives and get the outcomes needed. Therefore, every social worker should get ongoing training to develop their skill. Especially professionals should get training prior to joining the practice to have adequate knowledge and skill for the practice. Nonetheless, the findings revealed that there is gap in this area.

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Building professionals 'skill helps to provide reliable and strong assessment reports and expert recommendation. In turn, this contributes to the acceptance, and enhancement of the quality support the professionals render to the court.

As challenges of the practice are mainly related with resource and limitation of awareness about the role and contribution of social work service. These have wider consequences on the practice and the quality of service the unit provides.

However, having an enormous resource in the organizations in the referral system which is divers and integrated much can be done to at least reduce limitation of resources and training by exploiting the resource in the referral system.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION & IMPLICATION

6.1 Conclusion

As children are vulnerable and need special attention in all aspects, dealing children's matter in the court of law also need special care. Based on international laws Ethiopia ratified many reformatations have been implemented in all sectors, to promote best interest of the child, reforms in the justice system by incorporating social work practice in the court system is one of them . Social work service in court setting contributes to the court, children in contact with the justice system and particularly to children in contact with court and their families.

Roles and responsibilities of social workers in court setting is to assist the court with cases related to children, and their families to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Social work service makes a contribution to the court by minimizing the court's work load and increase quality of the service the court provides by bringing the psycho social aspect of the cases.

Even though the practice provide enormous contribution for the justice system it has its own challenges. And as finding indicated challenge of the practice are manly resource. On the other hand as the practice is a new phenomenon in the country misperception and less value given for the practice also contribute for challenges of the practice.

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Whilst social workers in courts provide services, they have to encompass knowledge of both the social and legal aspect of the given cases and services they provide need holistic knowledge to handle the complex needs of their clients. Therefore professionals need continuous and regular training to upgrade their skill and knowledge. But finding indicted arrangement of training for professionals is limited and unsatisfactory. And it is one of the main challenges of the practice which will bring its own impact on the quality of the service.

As reports showed almost all expert recommendations and support the practice provide have been accepted and implemented by the court and this shows even with its challenges the practice is contributing a great deal for the quality of the justice system deliver by courts.

Available support system for the social work service in the practice is the referral system which deliver coordinated service. Establishment of the referral system aimed to enhance integrated service provided by different institutions. The system encompasses multidisciplinary service. Hence finding shows practioners are not using the service in the referral system as much. But this massive resource can be used to contribute in resolving challenges of the practice in addition to the service it provides to clients of social work service.

6.2. Implications

The findings of this study indicated that social workers in courts engage in various roles. Roles and responsibilities of social workers are divers and their contribution are vital for the court system. Social work practice enhance the service by promoting best interest of the child and bringing the psycho social aspect of the case ,in addition to the legal implications. The service also provides support for the court in minimizing the work load. Therefore, the contribution of social work practice in courts bring great opportunity for providing quality service. However, despite social work practices' contribution for the justice system, various gaps

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and barriers existed. These barriers extend to both structural (organizational) and personal realm. These should be addressed by the concerned bodies.

6.2.1. Implications for social work education

The research findings show that the role and contribution of social work unit does not get the acknowledgment and attention it deserves. Practically, the unit is providing an enormous support for the justice system. Weak promotion of the unit's role and its contribution has its own impact for the lack of attention.

On the other hand, the findings show that there is also gap in the practice especially when there are turnovers of judges in benches. This brings gap in the practice because of lack of proper timing in arranging and executing training on social work service in courts, its role and contribution for newly assigned judges to create uniform understanding.

The finding shows that this is due to lack of knowledge about role and contribution of the unit. This gap on the practice intends intervention of social work education. Since the structure of courts include social work units and their service has been integrated in all courts, all judges should have to have knowledge about roles and contributions of social work service.

For prolonged solution, as School of social work is one of the institutions in the referral system, it should have to work in collaboration with law school in promoting the role and contribution of social work practice in courts. School of social work should also consider including legal stream as one concentration in its curriculum or include course which at least give basics legal knowledge for students, as socialwork practice in court setting is one stream which social work students will provide service.

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Similarly the law school should also include social work practice in its course which at least gives basic highlights about social workers' role and their contribution in courts.

Meanwhile, as school of social work is one member of the refer system it should work on promoting the role and contribution of social work unit for all stake holders, in collaboration with the child protection office so as to bring appropriate acceptance and acknowledgment about the service they provide.

On the other hand empowering the professionals through constant on job training is mandatory to upgrade their skills .Professionals newly joining the unit should get paraprofessional training before engaging into the Practice; hence, empowering both the social workers and judges' help to promote the value and contribution of the professional to enhance the quality of the justice system.

6.2.1. Implication for practice

The finding shows that resource limitation is a worrisome challenge for social work practice .But having a very huge resource in the referral system, the unit shouldn't experience exaggerated resource limitation. Therefore social workers and concerned higher officials should expand their drift of using the referral system as additional resource for their resource limitation in addition to the service they use to give additional support for their clients.

6.2.3. Implications for research

Very limited research has been made on social work practice in courts and there are many undealt issues on the area. Especially support system for the practice is untouched area.

Therefore, the researcher believes the area needs rigorous research and detailed studies on areas like: professionals' skill and capacity, how to promote the contribution of the unit, on

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the quality of the service the practice provide and how to increase accessibility of the referral system.

6.2.4. Policy implication

Even though the FDRE constitution recognizes best interest of the child, its implementation will be done through detailed rules and regulations under different ministers. Therefore, concerned bodies should consider including social work practice and detailed procedures and roles of social workers and the practice implementation. The practice should also be incorporated in court systems all over the country so that it can be implemented, and become one structure in the justice system.

Appendices 1

List of organizations signed Memorandum of Understanding for the Improvement of Administration of Justice for Children at Federal Courts.

-  Federal Supreme Court
-  Federal High Court
-  Federal First Instance Court
-  Federal Supreme Court Child justice Project Office
-  Addis Ababa Police Commission
-  Ethiopian Human Rights Commission
-  Ministry of Education
-  Charities and Societies Agency
-  Addis Ababa Women, Children and Youth Affairs Bureau
-  Addis Ababa Health Bureau
-  Addis Ababa Bureau of Education
-  Addis Ababa University School of Social Work
-  Addis Ababa University Center for Human Rights
-  United Nations Children's Fund
-  Africa Child Policy Forum
-  Save the Children
-  Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association
-  Ethiopian Christian Lawyers Fellowship
-  Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment

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- ✚ Integrated Family Service Organization
- ✚ African Network for the Prevention of and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN)
- ✚ Organization for Prevention Rehabilitation and Integration of Female Street Children
- ✚ Hanna Orphanage
- ✚ Goal Ethiopia
- ✚ Selam Children's Village
- ✚ SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia
- ✚ Mekdem Ethiopia National Association
- ✚ Hiwot Ethiopia
- ✚ AbebechGobenaYehitsanatKiebi kabenaLimatMahiber
- ✚ Organization for Child Development and Transformation (CHADET)
- ✚ Progynist
- ✚ Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development
- ✚ Hope Enterprise
- ✚ Retrak EthiopiaFormer Inmates Rehabilitation Center

Appendices 2

Addis Ababa University

College of Social Sciences

Graduate School of Social Work

Consent Form

Greeting ... good morning/good afternoon

First of all I want to express my deepest appreciation to you for being voluntary to have this interview with me. My name is Seble Ayalew and I am a student in Addis Ababa University School of social work. Currently I am conducting a research entitled “social work practice in court setting: the case of Lideta first instance federal court” which is required in partial fulfillment of the degree of master of social work.

This interview will take only a short time. The information you provide will contribute a lot for the comprehension of the study. The data you are going to give will be used only for academic purpose.

Participating in the study is voluntary. You are free to terminate the interview or decline to answer any question if you feel uncomfortable. I assure you that there will be no negative consequence you incur from anybody for participating or not participating in the study.

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Any information you provide including your name will be kept confidentially. That means only the researcher will know that and no information will be disclosed without your full consent. To help me grasp the information you are going to give, I will tape record and write your responses on note book based on your preference. If you have any question related to the study please don't hesitate to ask.

If you agree to take part in the study by giving information for the interview question, please confirm your agreement by signing here. Your signature below indicates your consent to participate in the study.

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, you will sign the agreement below.

Signature of the interviewee (participant) _____

Signature of the interviewer (researcher) _____

Date of the interview _____

Appendices 3

Interview guide

Interview guide for in depth interview informants

1) Background information of the informants

- a) Gender _____
- b) Educational background : _____
- c) Position: _____
- d) Work Experience specifically on the unit or related position: _____

2). Questions related with roles and responsibilities of social workers/social work practitioners

A). where are the role and responsibilities of social workers enlisted? Is there a job description or a manual?

B). Are the roles and responsibilities of social workers clearly specified? If yes what are they?

C). Do the roles and responsibilities of social worker fit the professional standard or quality service the professionals should provide?

D) What type of services are given for the clients by the social work unit?

E).what type of service do you suggest to be included?

F).what are the main demands and expectations of customers from the unit? Does the service the unit provide satisfy their demand/ expectations?

3. Questions related with the experience of social work unite in delivering service under the court setting

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A).How do you express the importance of the actual service delivered by the social work unit

B) Are there existing mechanisms to assess or evaluate the performance and contribution of their practice?

C. If the answers is yes are there clear evaluating criterion to evaluate the performance of individual social workers? Do you believe the criterion are fair?

D). Are there any differences between the project and the court social work employees? If there are difference what are they?

If there is any difference does the difference bring/brought any influence on their work performance? If yes please elaborate

E) Are all social work practitioners professionals? If not how many of them are professionals?

F. Is there any work performance difference between social work graduates and others?

G. Does all professional get training before going to practice?

H. Are there on job trainings? How do you explain the arrangement of training for the professionals in general? Do you believe it is enough?

4. Questions related to target groups or service users to get social work service in courts

A) Who are the target groups of social work service on courts?

B). Do you believe all target groups or services concerning the target groups included in the service?

If you believe there are target groups or services concerning target groups left out whom do you suggest to be included?

Running head social work practice.....

5). Questions related to the support system (how do social workers explain the referral support system?)

A) What are the available support system for the social work practice in court setting?

B). what are the contribution of the referral System for social work practice?

C). How much do the social workers know about the referral system?

D). what is the practical experience of the social workers using the referral system? Or how often does the social workers use the referral system?

E). When and in what condition social workers use the referral system?

F). How accessible are the organization in the referral system?

G) Do you believe the referral system is enough to fill the gap the unit provide or do you think additional support system need to be included?

If you think there should be additional support in what area?

6). Challenges of social work practice in courts

A). Are there challenges that made the social work practice in courts difficult?

If yes what are the challenges?

B). How do the social workers try to cope with the challenges?

C). what are the leading causes of this challenges?

D). How critical are they?

Running head social work practice.....

E). what type of measures has been taken to solve these challenges? How do you explain the response of the court in comparison with the child protection office?

7). Questions related to resources for social work practice in courts?

A). what are the main resources of social work practice in courts?

B). Are the resources sufficient to provide quality service?

C). Are they accessible for the Social workers?

8. Questions restated with the interaction of the social work unit with coworkers

A). what is the practical experience of the interaction between the social work unit and other court employees including judges?

B).How much do other court employees know about the roles and contributions of social work unit?

C) What is the practical experience of the social work unit working in collaboration with the police, public prosecutors and lawyers beside judges?

D) How involved are these coworkers (the police, public prosecutors and lawyers) in the social work service?

E). Do the units have a trend to promote about the role and responsibility of the unit in awareness creation for the customers on what to expect from the unit.

Thank you for your participation!!

Interview guide for Key informants of the court

1) Background information of the informants

A). Gender _____

B). Educational background: _____

C). Position: _____

D). Length Work Experience on related position: _____

2). Questions related with roles and responsibilities of social workers/social work practitioners

A).How significant do you think the role of social workers in court setting? How do you evaluate their performance?

B).what type of services are given for the clients by the social work unit?

C). Are there any service you suggest to be included?

D). what are the main demands and expectations of customers from the unit? Does the service the unit provide their demand/ expectations?

3. Questions related with the experience of social work unite in delivering service under the court setting

A).How do you express the importance of the actual service delivered by the social work unit

B) Do you believe the social work practitioners use their maximum capacity to achieve their responsibilities? How do you evaluate their performance?

C) Are there existing mechanisms to evaluate the performance and contribution of their practice?

Running head social work practice.....

If the answers is yes are there clear evaluating criterion to evaluate the performance of individual social workers? Do you believe the criterion are fair?

D). Are there any differences between the project and the court social work employees? If there are difference what are they?

If there is any difference does the difference bring/brought any influence on their work performance? If yes please elaborate

4. Questions related to target groups or service users to get social work service in courts

A) Who are the target groups of social work service on courts?

B). Do you believe all target groups or services concerning the target groups included in the service?

If you believe there are target groups or services concerning target groups left out whom do you suggest to be included?

5. Questions related to the support system

a) Are there any support systems for social work practice in court setting other than the referral system?

If there are any what are they?

A). what are the available support system for the social work practice in court setting?

B). what are the contribution of the referral System for social work practice?

C).what is the practical experience of the social workers using the referral system? Or how much/ how often does the social workers use the referral system?

Running head social work practice.....

D) Do you believe the referral system is enough to fill the gap the unit provide or do you think additional support system need to be included?

If you think there should be additional support in what area?

6). Questioners related to Challenges of social work practice in courts

A). Are there challenges that made the social work practice in courts difficult?

If yes what are the challenges?

B). what are the leading causes of this challenges?

C). How critical are they?

D). what type of measurers has been taken to solve these challenges?

7). Questions related to resources for social work practice in courts?

A). what are the main resources of social work practice in courts?

B). Are the resources sufficient to provide quality service?

C). Are they accessible for the Social workers?

8. Questions restated with the interaction of the social work unit with coworkers

A). what is the practical experience of the interaction between the social work unit and other court employees including judges?

B).How much does other court employees know about the roles and contributions of social work unit?

Running head social work practice.....

Interview guide for Key informants of child protection office

1) Background information of the informants

A). Gender _____

B). Educational background: _____

C). Position: _____

D). Length Work Experience on related position: _____

2). Questions related with roles and responsibilities of social workers/social work practitioners

A).How significant do you think the role of social workers in court setting? How do you evaluate their performance?

B).what type of services are given for the clients by the social work unit?

C). Are there any service you suggest to be included?

D).what are the main demands and expectations of customers from the unit? Does the service the unit provide their demand/ expectations?

3. Questions related with the experience of social work unite in delivering service under the court setting

A).How do you express the importance of the actual service delivered by the social work unit

B) Are there existing mechanisms to assess or evaluate the performance and contribution of their practice?

Running head social work practice.....

C. If the answers is yes are there clear evaluating criterion to evaluate the performance of individual social workers? Do you believe the criterion are fair?

D). Are there any differences between the project and the court social work employees? If there are difference what are they?

If there is any difference does the difference bring/brought any influence on their work performance? If yes please elaborate

E) Are all social work practitioners professionals? If not how many of them are professionals?

F. Is there any work performance difference between social work graduates and others?

G. Does all professional get training before going to practice?

H. Are there on job trainings? How do you explain the arrangement of training for the professionals in general? Do you believe it is enough?

4. Questions related to target groups or service users to get social work service in courts

A) Who are the target groups of social work service on courts?

B). Do you believe all target groups or services concerning the target groups included in the service?

If you believe there are target groups or services concerning target groups left out whom do you suggest to be included?

5. Questions related to the support system

A) Are there any support systems for social work practice in court setting other than the referral system?

Running head social work practice.....

If there are any what are they?

B). what are the available support system for the social work practice in court setting?

C). what are the contribution of the referral System for social work practice?

D).what is the practical experience of the social workers using the referral system? Or how much/ how often does the social workers use the referral system?

E) Do you believe the referral system is enough to fill the gap the unit provide or do you think additional support system need to be included?

If you think there should be additional support in what area?

6). Questioners related to Challenges of social work practice in courts

A). Are there challenges that made the social work practice in courts difficult?

If yes what are the challenges?

B). what are the leading causes of this challenges?

C). How critical are they?

D). what type of measurers has been taken to solve these challenges?

7). Questions related to resources for social work practice in courts?

A).What are the main resources of social work practice in courts?

B). Are the resources sufficient to provide quality service?

C). Are they accessible for the Social workers?

Running head social work practice.....

8. Questions restated with the interaction of the social work unit with coworkers

A). what is the practical experience of the interaction between the social work unit and other court employees including judges?

B).How much does other court employees know about the roles and contributions of social work unit?

C) What is the practical experience of the social work unit working in collaboration with the police, public prosecutors and lawyers beside judges?

D) How involved are these coworkers (the police, public prosecutors and lawyers) in the social work service?

E). Dose the unit have a trend to promote about the role and responsibility of the unit in awareness creation for the customers on what to expect from the unit.

Thank you for your participation!!

Running head social work practice.....

Interview guide for clients /respondents

1) Background information of the respondent

A). Gender_____

B) Age_____

C). Educational status _____

D). Service you get _____

Questioners related to the service delivered by the social work unite

A). what type of services do you use from the social work unite?

B). How do you explain the service you get from the social work unite?

C). what was your expectation and how much of your expectations is fulfilled by the unit?

D). Do you have any complain on the service? If yes what are they?

E). Are you knowledgeable about the manual which stipulates the roles and responsibilities of social workers?

F). what do you recommend to be included or excluded in the service?

G). Do you use any service from the referral system?

H) If yes how do you express the service in the referral system?

I) what do you suggest to be included or change in the referral system service?

Thank you for your participation!!

Running head social work practice.....

Appendices 4

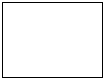
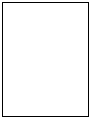
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Appendices 5

Amharic version of interview guide

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