FACULTY OF HEALTH AND OCCUPATIONAL STUDIES
Department of Social Work and Psychology

Perceptions on Burnout and Work Related Stress

A discursive analysis on the awareness of work related stress and burnout amongst Social Workers at the Child and Youth Department in Uppsala

Pilanthana Malakit
Johanna Olsson

2015

Bachelor thesis, Bachelor degree, 15 HE
Social Work
Study programme in Social work, Specialisation International Social Work

Supervisor: Thomas Öhlund
Examiner: Pia Tham
Authors: Pilanthana Malakit and Johanna Olsson

Title: Perceptions on Burnout and Work Related Stress - A discursive analysis on the awareness of stress and burnout amongst Social Workers at the Child and Youth Department in Uppsala

Supervisor: Thomas Öhlund
Examiner: Pia Tham

Abstract

The high degree of burnout and work related stress is a highly relevant topic in the Swedish society today. Newly examined social workers often start their career in the Child and Youth Department within the social services, where demands are high. The aim of this study was to find out how social workers at the Social Services, Child and Youth Department, in Uppsala, create discourses around burnout and work related stress at their workplace. The study also aimed to identify what methods and strategies, both personal and organizational, are used in order to prevent burnout and work related stress.

The study reveals discourses around abilities and priorities, and how the social workers create a manageable workplace for themselves with various tools. Shown in the study are the high workload the social workers have to deal with, and how they do it as well as how it reflects and creates identities within the profession.

Keywords: Social Services, Social Workers, Work, Stress, Burnout, Child and Youth care workers.

Number of words: 16559
Preamble

We are using this particular opportunity to thank the social workers who participated in the research and gave useful information in order for us to complete this study. You are valuable and are contributing tremendously to our society with your great compassion for helping people.

Another special thanks goes to our supervisor Thomas Öhlund, who has been generous with his time and given us great comments for reflection and understanding as well as supported us when time has felt difficult. Also do we want to thank our families and friends for your support during the study, we are happy to have you in our lives.

Finally we want to acknowledge ourselves for the hard work we have put into the study and the great cooperation and support we managed to maintain during the study. We were both as equal participants in the study. Great work My friend!

Pilanthana Malakit
Johanna Olsson
Gävle, May 2015
Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 1

2. AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS 2

2.1 ISSUE 2

2.2 AIM 2

2.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 2

2.4 SUB-QUESTIONS 3

2.5 PRELIMINARY UNDERSTANDING 3

2.6 ESSAY DISPOSITION 3

2.7 EXPLANATION OF CONCEPTS 4

3. PREVIOUS RESEARCH 4

3.1 DEFINITION OF STRESS AND BURNOUT AT WORKING PLACES 5

3.2 CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WORKERS IN SOCIETY 6

3.3 HOW TO DEAL WITH BURNOUT-SYMPTOMS AND WORKING STRESS 7

3.4 MBI- A VALID MEASUREMENT TOOL? 8

3.5 CONCLUSION OF PREVIOUS STUDIES 8

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK 9

4.1 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM 10

4.2 THE DIFFERENT MISMATCHES REGARDING BURNOUT BY MASLACH 10

4.2.1 WORK OVERLOAD 11

4.2.2 LACK OF CONTROL 12

4.2.3 LACK OF RECOGNITION AND COMPENSATION 12

4.2.4 COLLAPSE OF FELLOWSHIP 12

4.2.5 LACK OF JUSTICE 13

4.2.6 CONTRADICTING VALUES 13

4.2.7 THE USE OF MASLACH MISMATCHES IN THIS STUDY 13

4.3 BURNOUT AS A SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED CONCEPT 14

5. METHODOLOGY 15

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN 15

5.2 MODE OF PROCEDURE 15

5.3 CHOICE OF LITERATURE 16

5.4 DISCURSIVE PSYCHOLOGY ANALYSIS 16

5.5 EMPIRICAL COLLECTION 17

5.6 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS 18

5.7 THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS 18

5.8 THE ANALYZING PROCESS 19

5.9 VALIDITY 20

5.10 RELIABILITY 21

5.11 GENERALIZATION 22

5.12 ETHICAL STANDPOINTS 23
1. Introduction

The issue of Burnout is a highly relevant topic in human services professions of today. What led us to do this research is our own experience from the field of social work with children and youth in Cape Town, South Africa. Noticed in our workplaces was the amount of request for help and support but insufficient resources to cover all the needs. This lack of resources combined with social workers great wishes to help people led to an immense workload and mental stress amongst the social workers which resulted in that every case is no longer unique. The curiosity for how the situation is in Sweden made us decide that a study in this issue would be of interest since South Africa differs from Sweden in many aspects when it comes to social work.

On February 5th 2015, a study presented by Novus for The Union for Professionals, about the crisis within the social services in Sweden and showed that many social workers employed by the municipal want to leave their work. One of the target groups for this issue is the department of child and youth care (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2015).

The Union for Professionals (2015) stated that young and inexperienced social workers who chose to work within the social services in Sweden are often initially based in the Child and Youth Departments where the demands are very high, which leads to another area of concern since that within a year we will be newly graduated social workers. This makes us assume, based on the study, that it is a great possibility that we will face heavy workload that is not in line with our experience and knowledge. Our previous background, both from previous research and personal experience, makes us strive towards more knowledge in the area.

The Swedish Work Environment Authority (2015) presents that during 2013 almost 36000 people were actively working as social workers and close to 30000 of these were women. Discovered was that 65 % of these women experienced negative effects from their work in terms of not being able to disconnect from work related things when going home at the end of the day.
Barford and Whelton (2010) has through their study in the area presented us with further suggestions for research, conducting a qualitative research in looking at the individual experiences of burnout to uncover the experiential elements of burnout. They suggest that the research should be done with both younger and older employees in order to uncover experimental elements of burnout. This research has been carried out without significance on age or work experience.

2. Aim and research questions

2.1 Issue

The Union for Professionals presents statistics on an increasing sick leave; it has gone from 26 % in 2012 to 46 % in 2014. These numbers show that there is a huge problematic issue that needs to be taken care of immediately and seriously within the social services (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2015).

The Swedish Work Environment Authority (n.d.) stated when time is limited and the workload is too high there are shortcomings in many offices in the procedure for whom social workers should turn to for support. It is difficult to prioritize in the social services when the process is mostly governed by different rules and the high turnover among the social workers results in that the workload can appear to be very stressful for the employees. These issues has led up to the aim of the study, and what shall be investigated.

2.2 Aim

The aim of the study is to do a qualitative discourse analysis; to investigate what kind of discourses that can exist around burnout and work related stress amongst social workers in the social services.

2.3 Research question
How is stress and burnout discussed amongst social workers in the Child and Youth Department in Social Services in Uppsala municipality?

2.4 Sub-questions

- What kind of awareness and acknowledgement around burnout and work related stress exists among these social workers?

- What strategies and methods are used at the workplace in order to avoid work related stress and burnout?

2.5 Preliminary understanding

Our preliminary understanding on this topic is the experience from our internship that made us understand the hard work in the profession, thus has the media been a great factor for our understanding as well. We have the understanding from media and the general surrounding that the path leading up to and the state of burnout can be devastating for the future professional life and it lies in our interest and curiosity to be familiar with the environment so we can be as prepared as possible. The media in combination with our curiosity made us choose to look into the issue and how social workers in fact speak about this issue at the workplace and also map out their subjective constructions of the world of being a social worker.

One of the researchers has experience in the human service profession and has seen how the combination of workload together with the capability of being a compassionate worker can be very demanding. This has made us realize how this profession carries a great risk to become burned out as it is strenuous work and it is important for the sake of the development of the profession to emphasize the issue.

2.6 Essay disposition

The essay consists of eight main chapters. The first chapter narrates the Background for the study and from where the idea of choosing the subject came. The second chapter
follows the Aim, Research question and a description of the Issue in the problem area. The third chapter contains Previous Studies of the coined term burnout and work related stress and presents a description on the definitions and how work stress and burnout is seen from a different perspective as well as suggestions from previous studies on how to manage it. The fourth chapter consists of chosen theories the study originates from, Burnout and the Social Constructivism and a motivation on how it will be used in the study. The fifth chapter is the Methodology part that presents the method and the approaches used, what tools and material have been chosen and reflections on validity, credibility and generalization together with the ethical standpoints in the study. The sixth chapter presents the interpretation of the Results from the material gatherings. The seventh chapter is a discursive psychological analysis of the results in connection to the theoretical framework. Chapter eight and the final chapter, consist of the thesis Discussion, where the research questions will be answered and a methodology discussion is carried out.

2.7 Explanation of concepts

Throughout the study, some concepts are used more often and therefore a short explanation is provided for a fair reading. The concepts refer only to this study, other studies may use other various concepts.

**Burnout** - “.../ Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced presentation ability /.../” (Maslach, 1985, p.17).

**Work related stress** - Pressure on the individual created by the working environment.

**Social worker/caseworker** - Employees at Uppsala Social services Child and Youth Department working directly with investigations and cases at the Department.

**Discourse psychology** - The social construction of identities, attitudes and social groups (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

**First caseworker** - Responsible social worker at the social services for a case.

**Second caseworker** - Assistant to the responsible caseworker.

3. Previous Research
"The profession of Child and Youth Care is considered one of the most difficult and emotionally exhausting careers in the human service industry" (Krueger, 2002 cited in Barford & Whelton, 2010, p. 271).

This chapter presents various view from previous researchers in the matter. The main part of the articles are written from another context than the Swedish context, merely one study is on the Swedish social workers.

The chapter is divided into themes since many of the researchers discussed similar things that can be connected. It further provides the reader with a comprehensible reading. The articles are chosen in relation to the concept of burnout and work related stress. Burnout and work related stress is not a phenomenon just understood in social work profession, though is it a general concept that can occur to anyone.

The articles chosen for this study have focus on social workers and to gain an understanding of burnout and work related stress for this particular profession. All the articles have been Peer Reviewed for a valid background to this study.

3.1 Definition of stress and burnout at working places

Important to bear in mind is that literature separates burnout, stress and depression, although they all contain similar symptoms (Marc and Osvat, 2013). According to Fernet, Austin, Trépanier and Dussault (2013) burnout develops from an unhealthy relationship between the work and the person who performs it. Further, Jaber and Al-Zoubi (2012) have identified that psychological responses to repetitive stress in the workplace can be defined as work burnout. The responses can include three elements: exhaustion, inefficacy and cynicism (Demrouti et al, 2001; Borritz, 2006; Jaber & Al-Soubi, 2012).

Role ambiguity is an issue that occurs when an employee does not know the responsibilities, rights and obligations they have at the workplace, and this leads to not performing the job that is required (Farber, 1983 in Barford & Whelton, 2010). When role ambiguity occurs, there is a great risk for stress-and burnout symptoms.
Kim and Ji (2009) explains social work practice as focused towards helping people and is based on everyday worker-client interactions. The nature of this work causes job stressors. The authors presents a study made by the Centre for Workforce Studies, NASW (2006), where it shows the demands on the social work profession has increased (ibid). The study refers to the increased paperwork and unmanageable workload. Marc and Osvat (2013) performed a study with 18 social workers from various organizations, both public and NGOs in Oradea, Romania. The purpose of the study was to highlight the main causes and signs of professional burnout and how to prevent them according to the social workers. The results they found were that some of the main factors were the demands from the organization, time restrictions, lack of supervision, appreciation and rewards.

3.2 Child and Youth Care workers in society

Tham and Meagher (2009) has identified the tough conditions the Swedish social workers work within, as it is very demanding and has high levels of responsibility. Their study was executed through surveys in the County of Stockholm with social workers working in the field with investigations and referrals on children and youths. The results from this group was compared with results collected from an other group of professionals from municipal social welfare office, hospitals, preschool and compulsory school (ibid). The main purpose of the research was “Do the social workers’ experiences of their tasks or organizational conditions differ from the other groups, and, if so, how?” (Tham & Meagher, 2009).

More, Dellgren and Höjer (2005) cited in Tham and Meagher (2009) recognized that public social work in Sweden is seen as a low status profession. Further, the authors has identified that those working within child welfare in the public sector, has the least working experience amongst social workers. They are also the ones least satisfied with the conditions they work within.

Child and Youth care workers has huge difficulties gaining respects from the society, which creates a stigma around the profession (Savicki, 2002 cited in Barford & Whelton, 2010). The cause of this has made it hard to find employees with skills and
knowledge. Further, are the employers unable or even unwilling to provide sufficient training, supervision and various forms of support for the staff (Krueger 2007 in Barford & Whelton, 2010). The workload and the difficult client group the workers deal with is not reflected in their low wages, working conditions, the type of support, and this may be the reason for a high personnel turnover within the child and youth care worker field.

3.3 How to deal with burnout-symptoms and working stress

Identified by Maslach and Leiter (2008) in Barford and Whelton (2010) is that employees who are interested and engaged in what they do run less risk to become burned out than employees who lack interest in the job and are exhausted. An important aspect of decreasing the risk of burnout or working stress is the importance of recognition. The employee needs performance evaluation, feedback and reward (Buzea, 2010 in Marc & Osvat, 2013). In Marc and Osvat (2013) Lonne (2003) mentions that the organization has an important responsibility to provide and assist its employees with appropriate tools to manage the stressors that can arise within the human service profession.

Lloyd, King and Chenoweth (2002) in Marc and Osvat (2013) has identified that caseworkers who sees their supervisor as being supportive are less vulnerable for burnout and has lower stress level. Supportively, Tham and Meagher (2009) has through their study identified those social workers within the child and youth departments in the county of Stockholm, Sweden; the social workers are most of the time pleased with their immediate supervisor. Although, they do not express the same feelings towards the management, where they are unhappy with how recognition and support are handled.

Marc and Osvat (2013) asked the question of how the social workers think that workplace stress can be prevented in the city of Oradea. The social workers believed in clear job descriptions, time planning, ensuring working conditions as well as good communication, being able to ask for supervision from the supervisor as well as help from colleagues and the team.
3.4 MBI- a valid measurement tool?

MBI stands for Maslach Burnout Inventory and is a measurement tool that consist 22 items in a self questionnaire to measure burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1986 cited in Kim & Ji, 2009). The MBI is based on three factors of burnout, Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment (ibid). Emotional Exhaustion is when people feel overstrained, Depersonalization refers to negativity to some parts of the work and lastly Personal Accomplishment refers to feelings of not being enough and lack of achievement at work.

Kim and Ji (2009) study was performed on 1500 registered social workers in California (32 % surveys completed) by using MBI questionnaire. Their results pointed that Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are related and is the core of burnout. MBI as a tool for measuring burnout is valid and reliable, although researchers should see some errors in the self questionnaires and develop these errors.

Kim and Ji (2009) identified the two cores of burnout as emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and have for future research suggested that one should look at empirical evidence for a better understanding and development for human service professions.

3.5 Conclusion of previous studies

The previous research presented in this chapter have been performed both in qualitative and quantitative ways. What have been understood from the studies is that burnout needs to be understood empirically. Even though one can measure the rate of burnout by using MBI (Maslach & Jackson, 1986 cited in Kim & Ji, 2009) it does not provide a complete understanding of the issue.

As shown from the studies, work related stress and burnout symptoms is that it is not an easily defined concept and contains many perspectives and definitions, which is presented in the studies. Most of the studies rely on social workers own experiences and
views about the topic and this is possibly the way one must do it. Stress is identified as a personal experience and differs between human beings. Although shared thoughts on the matter are supervision, gaining enough support and role ambiguity.

The previous studies provides help in this study in the sense that working stress and burnout must be seen through the eyes and situations of the social workers themselves in order to get a complete understanding. By having a previous understanding of the matter, the focus for this study will be narrowed and the research focus will be more situated. The studies has mostly been conducted in other countries, only one has been conducted in Sweden, which is the focus for this study. However, it is believed that the previous research, regardless of country, can provide understanding of the dimensions of work related stress and burnout. Therefore, these studies were of interest for gaining pre-knowledge.

This study is a qualitative study, focused on the empirical statements and dictums of social workers. The article and previous research performed by Kim and Ji (2009) were of interest since MBI and Maslach, can be questioned in terms of validity of her choice of measurement tool. What the study showed was that one can still use the tool, although be aware and help in the development of the errors in MBI.

4. Theoretical framework

In order to reach the aim of the study, two theoretical standpoints has been chosen - Social constructivism and Burnout as a theory, based on empirical research, by Maslach. The aim is to look at the concepts of burnout and how it is discussed amongst the social workers who participated in the study.

Since discursive psychological perspective was used in the study, social constructivist view has been chosen as one of the theoretical standpoint for the study. It complements the perspective since discursive psychology analysis, a branch in discourse analysis, builds on social constructivism. This tool has helped analyzing the discourses, the stories of the social workers and social constructivism provides explanation of how language is used in order to shape the social world (Winther Jørngensen & Phillips, 2000).
The second theory is the empirical theory of burnout. It has provided different aspects in the understanding of the concepts as well as how work related stress can occur. Today Christina Maslach is well-known within the matter of burnout, therefore has her work provided significant aspects for this study.

4.1 Social constructivism

“The sociology of knowledge, therefore, must concern itself with the social construction of reality.” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p.27 in Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p.25). Social constructivism believes that knowledge comes from the process of ideology, interests, or power (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). Humans live in different realities and worlds and move between these worlds and secondary realities and is shared and shaped with others (Berger & Luckmann, 1966 in Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). The others can be typified as “Swedish”, “Social Worker” and “man” and is the face-to-face interactions humans experience everyday (Berger & Luckmann, 1966 in Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). The typification can be described that we categorize certain things, and this can differ between different cultures and societies. Humans create different roles for themselves as well as for others, the roles are important for the development of the self, and for humans to become a subject (Berger & Luckmann, 1966 in Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009).

The worlds of human beings consist of “objectivations”, these give certain meaning content through material expression and examples of objectivations are signs, symbols and language. Language is very important in social constructivism since it is the building block of knowledge. Through language, meaning and experiences are created and stored in layers of memories in individuals, and further shared between the individuals (Berger & Luckmann, 1966 in passim in Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). Knowledge is transferred between the different typifications, example between social worker and supervisor.

4.2 The different mismatches regarding burnout by Maslach
During the development of the model of burnout, three core dimensions of burnout were identified; emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1993 in Maslach & Jackson, 1981a, 1986 in Maslach, 1998). According to Sanchez Moreno, de La Fuente Roldan, Gallardo-Peralta, and Lopez de Roda, (2014) it is important to recognize that burnout is not a form of psychological stress, though it is more a reaction to chronic work stress that is established, through a mismatch, between professional and client/user on the one hand, and professional and institution on the other.

Maslach and Leiter (1999) has identified six areas of mismatches; Work overload, Lack of Control, Insufficient reward, Breakdown of community, Absence of fairness and Value Conflict. These mismatches show errors that creates dissatisfaction and recognize the connection between the people and the working place which can cause work related stress and eventually burnout (Maslach, 1998). Aiken et al., (2001); Bakker and Demerouti, (2007) in Shaufeli et al. (2009) has followed in Maslach trail and emphasize the persistent imbalance of demands over resources, where the workload is not in line the pace of time, as a contributor to the experience of burnout in work life and “insufficient personnel, equipment, supplies, or space to meet the demand” (Aiken et al., 2002 in Shaufeli et al. 2009, p.209). Another agreement of Maslach mismatches is the value conflict Hemingway and Maclagan, (2004) in Shaufeli et al. (2009) brings up as main contributor to the experience of burnout. They mentions that personal values can differ in an organization between the employees and employers.

The concepts are described more below and builds on earlier empirical work from Maslach, even though burnout is a well-established academic subject, it is believed that the burnout concepts identified by Maslach has provided valuable understanding for this study when the researchers has analyzed the empirical data and has given valuable connections for this study. The concepts are interpreted as somewhat general and therefore will provide understanding in the complex and individual situation of burnout and work related stress.

4.2.1 Work overload
Maslach and Leiter (1999) identifies that changes in larger corporations can lead to decreases in the manpower which in turn has an effect. The effect can be that the workload being differently divided and the employees, in turn, has more work to do but less time to manage it on. The demands cannot be met which can become visible for the corporation in the longer run. The ambition regarding working as a social worker might change since it becomes more important to keep a position that is safe rather than having a job that is satisfactory.

4.2.2 Lack of control

The state of not being in control over the individual work can be very draining for the employees since much of the independence and commitment to the work lies in having control. It is important to feel authorized over the job and the responsibility that has been given in a trustful manner by the employer. If control is taken away by rules and regulations, there can be great losses in the employees’ obligation towards the work and the feeling of inadequacy can occur (Maslach & Leiter, 1999).

4.2.3 Lack of recognition and compensation

Maslach and Leiter (1999) also brought up the issue of not being recognized for the work. Money, prestige and security carries the aims that employees work for, however can this let down by the cut downs in the organization which can be a factor to a burnout in the longer run. They also emphasize the inner satisfaction e.g. enjoying the work and the outer feeling of feeling adequate for the job. If this cannot be fulfilled as a complementary achievement for the employees, there is a risk that they will lose interest in doing the job they are required.

4.2.4 Collapse of fellowship

Another inconsistency that can create a mismatch and eventually lead to burnout is the breakdown of a companionship. Since cut downs can cause short term solutions in terms of shorter contracts for employment and create volatile personnel turnovers. This,
in turn, can lead to a decrease in bonding with the workgroup; people will not put significance in attachments with their colleagues since it is changing so often. Further, it will decrease the support and the human care for each other are being lost (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). There is a great need for strong and supportive connections to the immediate network since the work itself can be very emotionally difficult.

4.2.5 Lack of justice

Maslach and Leiter (1999) mentions that a workplace require a few things in order to have justice; reliance, honesty and respect. These are important elements that will create an atmosphere that invite the workers to justified work. This include trust in their colleagues for performing their work tasks, respect for other peoples’ abilities and an honesty in the work between the workers to show that everybody is equally important for contributing to the success of the organization. However, if these things lack in an organization there is a great risk that available resources will be prioritized on other aspects that is not solutions for long term work and eventually it can lead to a failure in the organization as well as a disrupted fellowship.

4.2.6 Contradicting values

According to Maslach and Leiter (1999) values related to work exist for everyone and are important for a successful business since it drives people towards a goal. However, if values that people have do not corresponds within the business, contradictions will occur and can motivate people in different directions. This will not create a positive atmosphere for the cooperation to grow, but will rather create conflicts in the working group.

4.2.7 The use of Maslach mismatches in this study

The root to the raising problem of “burnout” lies within the economic development, technology and leadership-philosophy (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). The mismatches presented describes what type of unhealthy situations can create dissatisfactory situations for a worker that in the long terms can be affected on the health of the individual and their dedication to the job. According to Lee and Ashforth, (1996); Maslach et al., (2001) in Dnika J. Travis et al. (2015) burnout from work related stress can create a cognitive distance that protects against stressful work experience. The
result can cause reduction in motivation and frustration towards the job, which in turn can lead to corrupt attitude “that reflect disengagement and psychological withdrawal in the workplace” (Halbesleben and Buckley, 2004 in Dnika J. Travis et al., 2015, p. 5). These mismatches has been used as a guide and a foundation for our study when the empirical material has been gathered. The use of the mismatches is of value for the study since it gave an empirical starting point to originate from in the study. The burnout concepts has provided help for analyzing the relations between work situation and the individual personal experience (Maslach, 1998). The authors of this study has used Maslach concepts in order to grasp the complexity that is seen in the theoretical view as well as from the previous research done in the area.

4.3 Burnout as a socially constructed concept

The starting point with using social constructivist philosophy in relation to stress and burnout has been the ambition to get another point of view of it and look at the connections between stress, burnouts and social workers and connect it to discourse psychology. Maslach and Leiter (1999) states that burnout is identified as a workplace condition which means that in some way the work as a social worker must have been formed and suppressed by society and power relations so that workers in this field are being put in the state of stress and becoming burned out. When putting burnout into relation with social construction there has to be other factors consider in order coming to a conclusion.

Burr (2003) is writing about health and illness issues and mentions the context-dependent cases. If a person becomes injured and loses his legs and must use a wheelchair, he would have difficulties getting up the stairs, and moving around with public transportation as well as driving a car when he had legs. He is “disabled”. However, if he would be provided with various helping tools such as ramps, stair lifts and adjustments in home and car, the disability would reduce effectively (ibid).

“So health, illness and disability are not only socially created; they are sustained by social practices that often serve the interests of dominant groups in society” (Burr, 2003, p.38).
This can also be put into the context of social work regarding stress and burnouts. If the circumstances around the profession would change, the problems would decrease as well.

5. Methodology

This chapter presents the methods that were used in order to enable the aim of the study to be fulfilled. The chapter presents the design of the research, how and why the participants were selected, the analyzing process and how credibility was handled in the study.

5.1 Research design

The study has been investigating and analyzing meaning constructions visible in the language of the social workers at the Social services, Child and Youth Department in Uppsala regarding work related stress and burnout. Discourse psychology analysis has been a helping tool in the process of finding visible and underlying discourses e.g. what conversations exist concerning burnout and work related stress and understand the social practice through language.

The study has seeked to identify the voices of the social workers therefore interviews has been used to collect the empirical results, interviews gives a realization of the circumstances within a social setting (Eriksson-Zetterquist & Ahne, 2011). On the other hand, with just a few interviews with a selected group of people in an organization, the study only gained the employees perspective and has not provided a completed holistic view from the organization.

5.2 Mode of procedure

The study has been conducted in a qualitative manner, using an abductive method. The abductive method gave the opportunity to start from an empirical basis; the theory of burnout according Maslach and the social constructivist view. Later, combined the
findings from the interviews in the analysis with the previous research and theories (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). The abductive method gave the opportunity to go between previous findings in literature, previous research and the findings in the interviews, then reinterpret in combination to each other (ibid).

In order to reach the overall discourses in the empirical gathers from the social workers, the empirical results has been read through several times and discussions has been made between the researchers in order to gain a conclusion. The empirical results has been presented in order to give the reader a view in the main arguments that has shaped the discourses (Bergström & Boréus, 2012).

5.3 Choice of literature

Material chosen for a study is relevant literature from the library at Högskolan in Gävle and the library in Uppsala, previous research will be collected from the database, SocIndex, Google Scholar and Oxford Journals, search words used has been; Social Services, Social Workers, Work, Stress, Burnout, Child and Youth care workers.

5.4 Discursive psychology analysis

Discursive psychology, as in many other qualitative approaches, aims to look at the meaning production in the research questions. However, the difference from the other qualitative approaches lies in how the meaning is constituted in discourses when humans speak about aspects of the world (Winther JØrgensen & Phillips, 2000). Discursive psychology sees texts and speech as constructions of the world that orientate towards social actions (ibid).

Important in the empirical studies of discursive psychology is to see the focus on how identities arise, reconstruct and becomes objects for negotiations in social practice. The discourse do not see people as having only one identity, but several that is “created” due to the social circumstances. One can see this through the “self” which is not isolated but is rather social (Winther JØrgensen & Phillips, 2000). Meaning that the “self” varies depending on the context and social setting.
Winther Jørgensen and Phillips (2000) describes how Potter and Wetherell has been analyzing how discourses are being constructed in connection with social action and how humans construct their own worldviews in social interaction, which leads to the building of their ideological practice. Discourses can be defined in different ways e.g. all types of verbal interaction and written text (ibid).

The empirical data collections together with the theoretical framework has been analyzed through discursive psychology analysis. Burr (2003) argues that in order to see how people perceived the world through discourses, we need to deconstruct texts. Deconstructing means taking text apart and presents a vision of the world and gives it the ability to be challenged. Text, in this study, is the spoken word of the social workers that has been transformed into text through transcriptions. In the analyzing process there has been focus upon the identity and subjectivity of the participants in the study (Burr, 2003). Focus on the texts has been put on “how people construct versions of themselves, how they built defensible identities, how they present versions of themselves and events as factual and how they legitimate their actions.” (Burr, 2003, p.163).

Discursive psychology aims to see how people is created in the social surrounding, in this case within the social services and in relation to burnout and work related stress.

5.5 Empirical collection

The empirical collection were designed in co-existence with discursive psychology analysis, in order to gain a good framework for the researchers. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, where the questions were designed in a thematic way (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) (appendix 1). This means that we shaped our questions in regard to our research aim and research questions. The purpose of the interviews with the social workers was to get their views on burnout and work related stress. A semi structured interview was relevant since we desired the interviewees’ ability to elaborate more, as well as for us to be able to ask follow up questions. Stated in Winther Jørgensen and Phillips (2000), in the process of discursive psychology one want to get as much elaboration from the participants in order to see how the subject is created through the social environment, and therefore semi-structured
interviews were relevant in order for the researchers to still focus on the specific topic and area but give the participants space to elaborate. Discursive psychology aims to see how the language is used more than who the individual is, therefore the scope of the sample is not as important as the rich information gained. Thus can a few interviews lead to more valid information than hundreds of answers on questionnaires (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000).

5.6 Selection of Participants

The participants were chosen randomly via e-mail (appendix 2) through the webpage of Uppsala Municipality, Child and Youth Department. The e-mail consisted of information about the study and an invitation for the social worker to participate on a voluntarily basis as well as time and date for when the interviews were going to be implemented. The set up with the social workers for the interviews was with those who responded first on the e-mail sent out to employees at the social services, child and youth department in Uppsala. There were no significance put into the selections in terms of gender, age or experience. Private contacts and email were also used in order to speed the process of connecting with the social workers, due to the researchers’ time limitations.

5.7 The investigation process

Seven personal meetings were set up with the social workers at City Hall in Uppsala. The reason is that it is a private and secure environment for the participants. Time efficiency for the participants were also a part of the selection of place, since they did not have to leave their office and spend time on commuting. The interviews were executed during three days.

Recording devices used for the interviews, were an Ipad 2, program Recording Lite and in case technological difficulties would occur an Iphone 4S were also used as a backup recorder. We made a test check on both the items to reassure that the sound was of quality before conducting the interviews. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) states that it is the researchers who ensure quality of the recordings; therefore the interviews were
conducted in meeting rooms where the possibility for disturbance was low. During the interviews one of the researchers led the interview and the other observed and took notes in order to not miss out on important statements and aspects.

5.8 The analyzing process

Discursive psychology analysis does not provide any particular schema or style of how the analyzing process shall take part (Bergström & Boréus, 2012). Therefore, the researchers of the study has constructed the analyzing process. It has been important for the researchers to keep a simple and understandable analyzing process, both for the sake of the study and for the reader.

The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed by the two researchers where the spoken word became text. In the transcribing process, the researchers had previously decided how to handle the typing in order to gain as good transcriptions as possible. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) provides, it is hard to cross-compare transcriptions if not written in the same style. The researchers chose not to place emphasis on ‘filling out words” such as “hmm”, “ehhh”. The transcriptions were made as detailed as possible of the words said, in order for a better analyzing process. The transcriptions were read through by the researchers separately before coming together and discuss the themes and topics that stood out. This process was repeated, but when coming together the researchers tried to see the underlying processes in the transcriptions.

The themes and topics that were of interest were color coordinated in the transcriptions. First done separately by each researcher and then a concluding process where the final themes were identified. The themes were both identified in relation to theoretical framework but also topics that occurred several times. This process led to five themes identified in relation with the theoretical framework, to further be presented in the Result chapter; Time limitations, Lack of Appreciation, Safety Net, Openness and Structure. Here the participants were given code names, with no particular meaning more than taken from a Swedish television show. The interviews and transcriptions are conducted in Swedish, and in order to retain a quality and truthful translation, lots of time has been put in presenting the result in the study.
The next step in the analyzing process was to identify the general discourses. What has been focused on in this process was to see what discourses were openly spoken about in the interviews then also underlying themes in the answers from the social workers. Questions and discussions when going through the material were “Can this be connected to burnout?”, “What are the causes for the social workers statements regarding the issue of burnout and stress?”, “What are the underlying meaning in the social workers statements?”, “What kind of identities in the social workers and the organization can be interpreted in their work relations in respect to burnout and stress?”

5.9 Validity

To secure the validity in the research it is important to have measuring instruments that measures what it is supposed to measure (Grinnell, 2001). In this case a thematic interview guide for the qualitative interviews was made in relevance to the aim and research questions. Themes were based on the research questions and the researchers’ previous understanding in the matter. It was a cooperative process between the researchers making the interview guide, the themes were discussed in order to try to produce answers from the participants that could be beneficial for the study and give as harmless consequences as possible (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

Previous to the actual interviews, a test interview was performed with the questions to see if there were any possibilities to reach relevant answers. The using of semi-structured interviews gave the process an opportunity to come as close to what were expected to be researched, deepen an understanding and provide validity for the study. One aspect that was considered of was the issue of language. The interviews were done in Swedish since all the social workers spoke Swedish every day and was thought of the language that would be most comfortable to speak and could give most elaborated answers. Consequently it was decided to just translate quotations that were used in the study. The translations of the quotations has been carefully made to not miss out the main point in the statement as well as considered the context the statements was made in to give as valid information as possible to the study.

Bergström and Boréus (2012) mean that validity can only be judged by each investigation in relation to how the structure of the research actually answers the
research questions. They also emphasize the researchers’ preliminary understanding of the investigating study to secure validity in the research. Through a constructivist point of view, the researchers are part of constructing the study and the preliminary understanding decides what answers can build the understanding of the issue. Therefore, the researchers of the study has increased the pre-understanding and learned more about the social context, which the investigation was conducted in (ibid). Articles and books in relevance to the study, was gone through in order to have a greater overlook and understanding of the issue of burnout and work related stress.

Bryman (2011) brings up ecological validity i.e. to capture knowledge, opinions, attitudes from the people studied that are expressed in their natural environment. The ecological validity was ensured and increased since the researchers of the study let the participants develop their answers but also that the participants show an interest to share their stories and views. Since the interviews were conducted at the social work office, the social workers own environment, thematic questions regarding the issue was asked openly so they could speak freely, there is a great chance that an ecological validity has been reached.

5.10 Reliability

The reliability lies in the degree of accuracy or precision that a measurement instrument provides (Grinnell, 2001). Bergström and Boréus (2012) mention that from an empiricist perspective can reliability be tested through similar independent investigation about the same phenomena, generate same results and indicate a good intersubjectivity. However, since this study contains interpreting aspects of a text i.e transcribed interviews it could be a controversy. The interpretations are based on stories by social workers, but humans interpret things differently. With this in consideration, the researchers of this study increased the reliability by going back and forth between empirics and theory. In the interviews, leading question and confirming questions was used in order to verify our interpretations of the participants answers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

Additionally, to reach reliability in different manners the researchers have been as precise as possible in the descriptions on all parts of an investigation. The study
describes the process at all stages to add the transparency and give the reader an opportunity to sum their own conclusion (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

Further, to increase the reliability in the study the results has been strengthen with quotations so the reader can be fully aware of what has been said and how the researchers have understood it. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) also mention that a simple check for the reliability is if recorded interviews are transcribed and interpreted independently and later comparing the transcriptions together, since written words can supply different meanings. Consequently, the interviews were divided between the researchers, transcribed and then shared between each other. The transcriptions have also been ready thoroughly many times by the researchers, both separately and jointly. Since both had been part of the empirical gatherings, we believe that this do not have a greater effect on the reliability for the study.

5.11 Generalization

In our study we had individual conversation that was based on a thematic interview guide, which results in that the answers can vary between people and does not have to be applicable to a larger group. However, to measure generalization puts a great emphasis on gathering a group that can be as representative for the study as possible (Bryman, 2011) and the study focused on gathering representatives who worked as social workers.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) mention the naturalistic generalization, which rests on the personal experience. The natural generalization develops through experience and come from silent knowledge that leads to expectations rather than formal predictions. Considering the previous research, the personal experience say that the theory of burnout amongst human service profession by Maslach there is a natural generalization that can occur. They also bring up the analytical generalization that connects a situation of a study and how it can be applicable to another situation through analyzing the similarities and differences of the two situations (ibid). Since this study is conducted in a manner to gain subjective views, consequently the generalization in this study may therefore be hard to reach, however the circumstances for the situation can be relevant to other cases.
5.12 Ethical standpoints

The study concerns professional social workers personal views that will be published; therefore it is of importance to consider the confidentiality as well as protect their anonymity since it can be a very complex process of ethical issues. First and foremost, the confidentiality of the participants’ identities has been kept anonymous throughout the research and thesis. We wanted them to feel secure to disclose their views and feelings for a reliable research but not harm their privacy (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Our intention has not been to criticize the organization, but to get a picture of how the subjective view is on a highly relevant concept. This was all stated in a written informed consent (appendix 3), that the research participants signed before entering the research. Important issues were stated, such as the participants’ right to withdraw at any time, purpose of our study and how the information given to us will be used (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

The participants’ names will never be revealed, and the researchers has handled the transcriptions and audio recordings with sensitivity in order to keep the confidentiality. Confidentiality has also been taken in consideration, when informing the participants who will have access to the material, which only has been the researchers and their supervisor (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Therefore the material has been handled with great respect towards the social workers that participated in the study. The names of the participants in all of the material gathered is never mentioned, therefore the confidentiality and protection of the participants are very high.

Transcriptions and audio recordings will be deleted when the study is completed. Code names are used throughout the study, and quotes has been selected carefully in order to not be able to trace back to a specific participant. The code names that has been given to the participants in the study has no particular meaning more than chosen from a Swedish television show, that has no connections to social work. The reason the researchers has chosen to do this is due to make the study as structured as possible for
the reader and the researchers also believes that rather using names instead of just numbers of the participants makes it a study one can relate to. The issue and sensitivity of interviewing people who has the medical condition burnout and/or has been on sick leave has been discussed between the authors, and the conclusion is that these people will not be our area of focus, mostly since it can be hard to get in contact with this group of people.

Grinnell (2001) brings up the ethical issue of joint authorship, which has been examined throughout the research process. Both researchers have contributed the same amount of effort and time into the study, and both researchers has reviewed the completed result of the study.

6. Results

The participants in the study consisted of seven employees from the social services in Uppsala Municipality, Child and Youth Department, age range from 26-64 years. The department is divided into four different units in terms of geography in Uppsala County and specializes with either children or youths. The participants were from three of the units, however has this not been of importance for the study. Common for the seven participants were the experience of stress in work but differed in the level of experience. Observations made in the interview transcripts were that many of the reasoning and statements regarding stress and burnout overlap and was expressed more than once.

6.1 Time limitation

Descriptions concerning time limitation showed several consisting thoughts that time is not enough and pressure on finishing investigations on time is always present. The time is not enough for all the documentations and meetings that are required during the investigation time, in the end both investigation (clients) and the caseworker suffers. The empirics showed that Lack of time for documentation and own reflections is an issue for these social workers. The Time pressure is constantly present, a client-investigation has to be finished within four months and within that time frame there is a lot of individual work to do as well as work in collaboration with others.
The Collaboration consists of contacting and meetings with schools, other organizations and if the parents of the child or youth are divorced the social worker has to meet with both parties. Schedules of all these partners in the child or youth’s life are hard to match. The social workers in the study expressed that the Workload is high, since everything concerning the client has to be documented, e.g. phone calls and meetings. It was expressed from the social workers that because of the workload being so demanding, the quality of work gets affected.

“/.../ we have four month to investigate /.../ during that period of time one shall talk with parents, the school, preschool and sometimes grandmother, grandfather, the child of course and the teenager several times. And in between all that, one shall have the time to write”. - Ylva.

“No, the time is not enough, one should have wanted to do so much more. A good work? It often becomes a scribble” - Amanda.

“The time together with the clients during the investigations is not enough. It does not come close to a good investigation as it should be” - Sylvia.

Each investigation has two designated caseworkers, first caseworker and second caseworker. The participants has around 25-30 cases where they are the responsible caseworker for current investigations and earlier approved intervention that needs follow-up supervision, and additionally they are second caseworker on other cases. The interpretations of the common views that the social workers has on the topic of time, shows that the time for meetings with the clients is not perceived as enough and both the client and the social worker are described to be affected.

Time limitations and the lack of time experienced by the social workers, gave a feeling of a stressor. Most of the social workers talked in general terms, not using the word “I”, but rather talked as if they knew that this is what most of the employees felt. An interpretation made was when the workload becomes too high and time too limited, an inner stress is built up and there is nothing the individual can do about it, the work just needs to be done.
6.2 Lack of Appreciation

Lack of appreciation and the feeling of not being acknowledged in terms of salaries, promises and wishes were shared amongst the social workers. Expressed was Salary versus Workload. The social workers mentioned many times that the compensation is not enough for the work burden they carry and that it is not a fair division in relation to their workload. Even though many of the social workers mentioned they enjoyed working as a social worker, however, reminded by the fact that the payment is not good is affecting them. This leads to many social workers leaving the workplace and that in turn causes a high personnel turnover that is very demanding for the work environment.

Another expression regarding the lack of appreciation was Broken promises. Many times has further education, new/other conditions for the job been offered or/and promised from directors and higher levels of management, although it usually takes longer time than promised or is never executed. The social workers has recently moved in to a new office building, but mentioned that the situation had been really bad, due to risk of ill health at the old office space building. The social workers and the union contacted the Work Environment Administration, and a report was filed on their initiative. This causes the social workers to not feel prioritized and appreciated and this can have a keen effect on the trust and the commitment to the work.

“/.../ countless are those surveys one had to fill in for ok, what do you wish for? /.../ and further education etc. And that has been said so many times and very little is happening.” - Ylva.

“/.../ people are searching their way away from here. /.../ it has always been an open climate in the workgroup and what is spoken about is the workload one feel that one cannot work as one wish in terms of stress and low salary, and then the salary is not of importance, however, one does not feel that it equals the hard work that is being put down.” - Rose-Marie.

“Signs of Safety had been good, and think it’s on its way /.../ Sometimes there goes rumors but then you do not know if it is true or not. It is included in this package of
trying to keep people, they put forward the thought of what they think and this is the plan” - Amanda.

“/.../ we have received that some type of interventions shall come and we want to see that it happens. Some of us have been here a long time and have heard... Sometimes it is all bark and no bite” - Amanda.

Overall, the dissatisfaction expressed by the social workers was regarding how the business is managed, how many times they have lifted issues and brought forward wishes with no or delayed responses. A reply to this from one participant when speaking about the problems is “who can be held accountable?” Everyone on every level is doing their job accordingly and it is hard to find anyone who can take responsibility for issues and obstacles that comes up.

### 6.3 Safety Net

In order to manage their work, the social workers had different opinions on what is beneficial in the working-environment and what needs improvement. The indications from the social workers concerning the topic of safety net were united when one looked upon Colleagues. They all appreciated their colleagues and used them as a sort of safety net and felt a great trust towards them. Feelings of solidarity and empathy towards colleagues were also expressed.

The social workers in the study further discussed Team involvement. They are always two caseworkers on each client case and this is due to safety reasons. An interpretation made was that the team is strong and when new cases are handed out to them they expressed feelings of protection, solidarity and empathy for one and another. They speak up for each other to reject cases and even take on cases for each other in order to protect someone else.

Part of the safety net at the social services is Supervision. The supervision takes part every second week for around 2-4 hours. The social workers and their working unit (around 7 caseworkers) meet an external supervisor outside the office. The participants expressed that the unit manager was not present during the supervision and it was up to
them what they wanted to discuss during the hours. Even though the social workers together constructed what should be brought up during the supervision, the opinions differed. Some of the social workers felt that the supervision should be more personalized and less emphasis should be on cases they are involved in. Others are happy with the way it is at the moment, where they discuss how to take cases further and how to handle them. One critic that came up, was that more time for the supervision would have been nice, since other things comes up at times which leads to missing attendance at supervision. Consequently, if more time is given to supervision, there is less time for cases and the social workers workload would increase.

From the interviews a clear voice that stood out was that the social workers supported each other and together helped each other out when they faced difficult times. They also use each other to gain laughter during the day, further expressed was also that they tried to do fun things such as "After-work" to create better bond on a personal level. Since they are in the same position it seemed easy for them to feel empathy towards each other and develop an environment of solidarity. There is an expression of not knowing how much one can handle but wanting to do well. The interpretation of this is that it can lead to having too much on the plate.

"/.../ my colleagues always make me happy despite how stressful the work is, it is always the colleagues that make you want to come back". - Rose-Marie.

"/.../ more than half of the group consist of young, new girls who just got out from school. They are in greater need of case-supervision. I think it is more fun when we have that type supervision were we as persons, who am I? /.../" - Ylva.

“No /.../ I know that others have been missing supervision more than I. It will not be a good supervision if half of the group is missing.” - Amanda.

“/.../ when unit manager sits with x-amount of new cases that needs to be distributed /.../ then its completely quiet and you know that well, she is tired and she has been on sick leave, that it is easy to say that you can take it /.../ I think many feels that, that you want to be a loyal and then it ends up with taking on too much” - Ylva.
“...I am working for the society and I want to help people so clearly I will take on cases. It might be easy to forget what you can handle and what you cannot handle.” - Ida.

“We always have a standing question when we draw cases /.../ “do you have space for new cases”? And there they are excellent at saying no. That is also when the group decides that we have to do it for the sake of our health. We have to support each other in it.” - Fanny.

“It is the combination of having too much and thinking that one is underpaid /.../ and the wage determination has been that the new that comes in gets salary that is as much as for us that has been working a longer time. Then one always hears “be happy for that, it is good for you. Yes, of course it is, but it is a bit disagreeable.” - Ylva.

6.4 Openness

The Expressions on burnout and stress were among the things that differed in how it was spoken about at the workplace. Some of the participants felt that the conversation and the feelings surrounding stress and burnout were openly talked about and they referred to knowing people who has been on sick leave because of stress and burnout. Knowledge around the issues was not actual; it was more a knowledge with general aspects.

All of the social workers expressed a good connection to their working group and also felt that they had a trusting relationship in the general group, including the unit manager. Many of them stated that much could be spoken about on the workplace, both professional as well as private matters, however it differed in levels of openness amongst the participants. Much in the theme of Openness overlap with what is identified in the theme Safety Net, although the interpretations differ somewhat, therefore it is divided into two themes. Openness is more emphasized towards the feeling that the social workers carry regarding how much they can share their thoughts and feelings with their colleagues and the participants often mentioned the open climate in the work groups.
This theme also consists of Reliance, both towards co-workers and the unit manager. Being open towards the group and sharing issues and concerns but also fun things they experience and feel. The social workers statements are interpreted as it is good to speak out about certain things, and that it is developing for both individuals and the group to do. Although the opinions differed of what one can be open about, as one of the participants’ states, one can be open but maybe not as open when it comes to negative things. The interpretation of this is that the group together tries to create a positive atmosphere at the work place.

“No, I would not say that it is expressed that there is knowledge about burnout. I guess it is more what one know by common sense /.../ we diagnose each other.” - Ylva.

“Yes, it does since it is an ongoing case of sickness at the moment and when they have burnt out the newly graduated social workers /.../.” - Fanny.

“We also know other units where the level of sick leaves are very high due to stress. Also what one read in media and at the union's webpages.” - Elsa.

When speaking about the feeling of thriving at the workplace there were no doubt that all of them felt comfortable at work. This led to the workers being confident in sharing their thoughts and feelings with each other about anything that is current. Many also felt a support from the unit manager's side and that they were available often when they were needed.

In the discussions on burnout, it was recognized amongst all the social workers, although it was expressed differently and perhaps due to experience in the matter. Noticed is that the media’s current reports on burnout and work related stress had not been missed, and that the reports are concerned with newly graduated social workers.

6.5 Strategies - on personal and organizational level

Important in understanding the view of stress and burnout among the social workers, structure is interpreted as a main theme in the interviews. Personal strategies were discussed; how they handle their working days and the way of keeping things in order
for own self-use in the work. Also discussed were the *Organization strategies* that gave descriptions on the benefits the employees receive and the offered support systems e.g. supervision, management and how the relationship is with the unit manager. Mentioned many times was the lack of organizational structure; problems regarding the manpower and the lack of personnel for the work which is causing unhealthy division of workload, particularly noticed by the researchers was when the personnel is calling in sick. The capacity to handle the load of cases is already limited and with short term sick leave makes it become even more strained which is not beneficial for the sick employees who still need to manage their job in some way.

It was also expressed that sometimes it can be unclear expectations from the directors and this can cause feelings of frustration. The social workers are already working under hard pressure due to various circumstances and many rules and regulations to follow and is always run by the demands which does not make it easier to do the job. Another thing that was brought up was the *Woman Prevalence* in the social services and how it might affect some of the view and status this profession has in the society that can be tied to an issue on structural level.

“Most often I already know what to do when I arrive, I usually prepare that the day before just because otherwise it increases the risk of doing what is most visual and forgets the things that is around /.../ I need that to remember and have structure/.../.” - Rose-Marie.

“... one gets frustrated over unclear information from above, our director, you do not know what is expected of you and they are unclear in their judgements and we shall somehow work from that and then it is bad feedback from the directors.” - Rose-Marie.

“The work is controlled by the business and by demands so even if one as an employee has the need to take a couple of slower days /.../ the prioritizing for that does not exist and then the stress builds up even more /.../” - Elsa.

“We want less to do and better wages. And further educations. That has been said many times by us, and very little is happening. We have to see. We have a new organization
from 2015, and now it has been said that it is going to enhance and the wages have
gone up a little, we have to see." - Ylva.

“/.../ our boss is quite good in helping with list of priorities. If one feel that it is hard to
prioritize on one's own, one can get help /.../” - Sylvia.

“If one is on sick leave due to stress and feel bad it does not become better when one
have a full time-employment on should manage it on halftime /.../ my boss said that it
cannot be done in another way there is no one to take care of your investigations and
then one just had to do the work as best as one could.” -Sylvia.

“The workplace is prevailed by women/.../ so in some way it can depend on it being too
many girls at the same place.” - Sylvia.

There was an overall disappointment that occurred throughout the interviews regarding
the structure in the organization even though the social workers also showed an
understanding for the chaotic situation in general. A notion on the issue of structure is
that the social workers understand that the unit manager has demands from a higher
manager but also need to meet the demands of the caseworkers.

Important to mention is that the different experience from the social workers may be
because of the geographical areas the units are responsible of, although they all
recognized that demands on the units are constantly shifting.

6.6 Conclusions of the results

The time limitation, lack of appreciation, safety net, openness and structure- on personal and
organizational level are all themes derived from the transcriptions of the interviews. There were
outstanding statements that reappeared consistently in the interviews that the researchers have
put together in suitable themes. The separations of some of the themes have been hard to
establish since much of the statements and views overlap. The interpretations the researchers
made of the participants statements has been to find empirical data and with considerations to
the research aim that in the next chapter will be analyzed in relation to the burnout theory and
social constructivism.
7. Analysis

The results from the empirical gathers revealed two prominent discourses, “The discourse of Abilities” and “The discourse of Priorities”. The discourses has arisen from the views of the participants and will be expressed from a social constructivist mindset. The analysis aims to investigate and make the social workers interpreted stories and views on burnout and work related stress visible.

7.1 The discourse of abilities

The empirical material presented descriptions of how the social workers enabled their own work as well as how the organization and broader society constructs abilities in different dimensions. The ability discourse is presented in sub-headings to provide an understanding of the complexity and the different elements that has laid the foundation of the discourse. The division is on three levels, Personal-, Organizational-, and Societal level, since the discourse of ability is interpreted and created within these different levels.

*Personal level*

The abilities on personal level are created within the relationships the social workers built together. In the aspects of working relationships, the interviews revealed an ability to attach and connect to their work group. The discourse further presents that the social workers feel support, recognition and a good spirit within the work group.

Personal abilities are also an inner process that the social workers create. The part of the discourse concerns the possession of controlling one's own influences and the strength that comes when accomplish assigned tasks. The organization provides external supervision every second week for the social workers and within the supervision different identities is perhaps created such as the professional identity.

*Organizational level*
The ability on the organizational level is seen as a production by the actions and recognition from the organizational side. Feelings of acknowledgement and recognition can be something created in terms of how the organization decides to treat their employees in terms of keeping promises, recognize needs and support and in that sense become a valuable factor in the social workers working life. The discourse also present the downside of how the ability on the organizational side can mistreat the trust and support by not fully take responsibility and use their power to care for the workers and might lead to broken reliance and trust between the higher levels of management and the social workers.

Societal level
The social workers mention feelings of struggle in recognition from society that affects them in various ways. The demands on the social workers strive from what society expects and offers in rewards (salaries) and in recognition (status). The societal level is part of the completed Discourse of Abilities; it has an effect on an organizational and a personal level.

7.1.1 Personal relationships

Human relationships are fundamental in an organization and the daily interaction in the work team creates an individual experience in the organization (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). The experience one has in the interactions is unique for everyone and the social world is in a constant movement, which is affecting both thoughts and feelings. Although when speaking with others about things, there will be a joint construction of reality for the people involved and these personal relations thus becomes part of the identity (ibid). The social workers, in the study, expressed that they had common interactions on a daily basis. The interaction is not created by one person in a monologue, but rather in a dialogue between two or more people and their behavior they create in the interaction with each other (ibid). The personal relationship lies within the social workers joint creation of their social practice. It seems like they all had an understanding for the situation they are in and some of the interpretations made by the researcher was that the relationships amongst the social workers was very important and that it was a clear effort in maintaining that. The daily interactions between the social
workers creates a common view of how the organization works and acts, the situations and feelings are often shared.

According to the burnout theory, a collapse of community happens when disengagement in positive connections with people in the group occur. The destructive part is when it becomes chronic and people become stuck in conflicts with others. This can causally lead to feelings of aggression and frustration reduction in social support which consequently can be very draining in the professional life and be a stress factor and cause burnout (Maslach, 1998). Other factors that can destroy the connections between the workers and the social common sphere are short-term contracts and uncertain job security (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). An interpretation made was that the social workers has constructed a common working environment since much time is spent together and the workload and work task are the same. They relate to each other, which also leads to a supportive environment. The person is important to understand in relation to others, and Shotter (1993a, 1993b, 1995a, 1995b in Burr, 2003) explains that people constantly move together and the actions of a human should be seen as ‘joint action’.

7.1.2 Power in saying no

Each of the social workers seemed to have the ambition of wanting to do well in their investigations and role as a social worker, however has that many times been prevented by the circumstances and “that little extra” e.g. being there mentally, physically and spiritually completely, that is desirable for working in the human service are often neglected. The burnout theory speaks about the lack of control they have due to the circumstances in terms of work overload, however had several of the participants expressed that they are gaining some of the control back in standing up for themselves. As was founded in the empirics was the statements that some of the social workers has become better at saying no on taking on too much of the workload when they feel fully booked with cases, but also the strength and support they have formed in the group on saying no for the benefit of the social workers health and wellness.

Consequently, the social workers has recognized that in order to avoid burnout, one has taken control and made sure that ‘lack of control’ discussed by Maslach, is perhaps not
an issue to the same extend at their working place. If one do not have control over their own workload, one might reach feelings of exhaustion (Maslach & Leiter, 1999) and there were clear statements in the empirics that feelings of not being adequate for the job comes to surface when this happens.

7.1.3 Supervision

External supervision for the employees occurs every second week, in groups with an external mentor and without any managers present. The social workers provide the interpretation that the supervision is very much controlled by them and the discussions that are on the agenda often concerns how to work and proceed with a client case. The data showed that even if the social workers themselves control in a big sense how the time for supervision should be prioritized, there was a feeling that the person with her own feelings and thoughts did not become visible, focus was much more put on cases and how they managed the professional role. Maslach (1999) discuss that work is valued through capacity and results, and many times the oppression of a person's own feeling can lay the foundation to burnout. The discourse of how the abilities the social workers are constructing through the supervision, where the place and room is essential in the social workers professional and personal development. Although, one can interpret that a lack of focus is put on the individual and the discourse that becomes visible are the abilities in a professional developmental. Though parts of the social workers would much rather put emphasize on the personal emotions and development, which can be seen as oppressing in some aspects.

Much of the identity of the social workers are constructed within the supervision since it is a place for discussions and conversations, although in the sense of burnout and work related stress, one can ask what types of identities are created and valued. The interpretation made by the researchers on this matter, is that less emphasis is put on the person as an individual, can lead to burnout. The individual should have an opportunity to develop not only on a professional level i.e. only in how to manage cases, but also on the personal level and how to develop on more than one level. The value of all aspects, feelings and thoughts of the person should be put in focus in order for more healthy employees.
7.1.4 Rewards and Recognition

According to the social workers, further education is offered and a list of educations that the organization should provide exist, although a common view is that it never reaches the employees and that few of them have received the education. They provided the information of educations in System theory and Signs of Safety, and the interpretations was that these are desirable and wanted educations. One statement made is that it has been on the agenda to receive Signs of Safety for several years now.

There is a discourse about the abilities from the organization, or the lack of ability to keep a promise and follow through with the promises giving to the employees. From a burnout perspective, the lack of insufficient rewards devalues both the work and the workers (Maslach, 1998). The value of the work that the social workers put into their cases, and their request for a further knowledge in order to develop in their professional role is ‘put down’. As Maslach discusses, if the employees do not get sufficient reward for the work they are doing, there is a road that might lead to burnout.

In a social constructivist perspective, conversations between people create and construct the social surrounding, and are ever changeable depending on the social setting. When looking at the issues of words of promises from the organizational side regarding further educations, a trust is built up between the social workers and the higher management. Creations of how the human perceives the world depends, among other things, on historical things. When promises are broken, and when the social workers never sees a result of what is promised for them, trust is broken. In the discourse of abilities from the organization, or maybe say non-abilities, this creates a future of mistrust. Discursive psychology further looks at the construction of identity were the human build defensible identities (Burr, 2003). The social workers identity can be interpreted as building a resistance towards the organization, which in the view of burnout (Maslach & Leiter 1999) leads to a feeling of disregard and a sense of not being recognized. When the values of the organization becomes contradicted, the social workers in the daily work, becomes affected. According to Maslach and Leiter (1999), this can lead to high levels of anxiety; less quality work and latter people become burned out.
7.1.5 Status

One of the participants’ claimed that status and salary goes hand in hand, and that one of the reasons people leave their job is due to the salaries. The social work practice carries a dishonor, and the social workers are aware of this due to the way and the focus put on the response expressed when asked what profession one works within. In many healthcare-institutions, there is a lack of support from society (Maslach, 1985). She continued to state that the work itself has gain a negativity around it e.g. that social workers only has employment if the society has demands for them.

Further, the negativity is created through the view of the society, and consequently the social work practice becomes affected and the employees in the social practice. Could it be the case that the negativity has gone so far that less money is put into the social services? The view from society could be said is an inherent inhabited in a cultural perspective (Burr, 2003). The participant have taken a personal experience and emotion and put it into a social domain (ibid), which creates her social reality. Even though this study does not focus on the political part of burnout, a decision was made to present it since it is of importance, and maybe a further process in prevention of burnout and work related stress.

The discourse reveals that in the social practice there is a sense of non-appreciation and recognition from an organizational level. Although as stated earlier, discourse psychology does not in particular focus on structural issues, the researchers feel that the discourse is of importance and therefore presented. The feelings that are expressed from the social workers in the social practice can be connected to the status of society. What is seen as human beings construct status, where one values certain things but not others. A social constructivist view sees that we create our world together with others and therefore one would say that the sense of not gaining status in society is socially constructed. The social worker creates a subjective position as a professional social worker in the society's norms and values that in her view is a stigmatization over the profession, societies constructions reaches the subjective in the social practice.
7.2 The discourse about priorities

The empirical material presented several expressions concerning the time disposal and how priorities are essential in the social practice of Uppsala Social Services. Much of the discourse of priorities overlap with the previous discourse, although the researchers felt an importance of giving a clear picture regarding priorities and the decisions the social workers has to make on a daily basis.

7.2.1 Time disposal

Time in social work is a limited access that is sometimes difficult to reallocate in a way that is beneficial for the social workers. The empirical results showed that several of the social workers felt that one has to prioritize the time available, and the question on whose behalf the selections has to be made. The social workers has an annual working time and they need to decide to some extent how their working days will look like. None of the social workers could provide an answer on how many hours the year should contain, although there was a common answer that one should be at work between office hours. The social workers had all been working after office hours, and even some at weekends. The discourse provides an understanding that lack of time is a daily issue; things have to be prioritized, such as clients. The client cases is much more than just meetings, the documentation is part of the process that consumes a lot of time and as a social worker one has to prioritize how time should be used.

In the conversation about prioritizing, the issue of what should come first, is an ongoing inner and outer conversation for the social workers i.e. there is a negotiation within themselves that decides for what is the most urgent issue on their agenda. The outer conversation refers to the negotiation between the two caseworkers, and the organizational demands. The social workers defense mechanisms the researchers has interpreted as a constant conversation of considerations of what should be dealt with first and how much time and focus should be put on each task. The social constructivism in discursive psychology focuses on the person as the responsible for own actions and further act within one’s moral framework in the system (Burr, 2003). It might perhaps be an moral ambivalence between the social workers own, personal needs, the clients’ needs and the demands of the organization that all should be fulfilled.
in the work that the social workers is doing. The discursive psychology analysis provides an understanding for the interpretations of the language produced by the participants; they negotiate for themselves every day as being credible (Burr, 2003) both for their co-workers, the clients, themselves and also the organization. Everything done has to be definable for someone, especially since their regulations for working procedure lies within the Swedish law system, Social Services Act. Reality is constructed through subjective knowledge (Burr, 2003) and therefore the lack of time becomes a structured reality for the social workers and also very concerning issues in relation to stress and burnout.

Identified by Maslach and Leiter (1999) is that if the working days are long, and for the social workers at the social services in Uppsala their days most often longer, therefore it might lead to higher levels of stress and further even burnout.

7.2.2 Personal Justice

The discourse is interpreted in relation to one of Maslach six mismatches, lack of justice. It aims at feelings of the fundamental respect for the workers being neglected (Maslach & Leiter, 1999) and that can result in an “us against them” mentality and make the workers starting to behave in an unethical manner towards the organization as a revenge for the mistreated behavior from the leadership. It can be a causal effect, a stress factor that can open a gate towards burnout. Essentially, the burnout theoretical standpoint this study is stemming from is not yet a fact that was told by the social workers, however, one can interpret that it can happen.

The discourse continues regarding other issues e.g. when it comes to the wellbeing of the personnel. It involves in the personal justice since the state of good health is important for a prosperous professional life and it seemed as in many circumstances in this job that it is a constant struggle between personal health and professional performance.

Some social workers brought forward the issue of more guidance and supervision, however is that on a cost of less time with cases, which seemed as few social workers wanted to sacrifice. Also, in terms of time in relation to burnout, one of the participants
shared the issue of sick leave and the lack of consideration shown by the managers in that scenario. Even though one participant was on sick leave halftime there was still full time work to be managed, by the same person, and response was that there were no other who could take those cases. This situation clearly shows that the social workers are the ones that is losing, no matter what they chose to do. It might not perhaps be enough with the personal responsibility that Burr (2003) discusses, where the person should be accountable for his/her own actions, the relationship between the demands, acknowledgement and supervision may create a fission, that in turn creates a stressor within the social worker.

7.3 Creating identity within the discourses of Abilities and Priorities

The discourses connect in many aspects; the social worker gets affected when priorities are not clear and in order. From a discursive psychological perspective there were two aspects of the social workers’ identity created within the analysis of discourses interpreted by the researchers. It can be describe as an identity on a horizontal angle and on a vertical angle.

The aspect on horizontal angle represents a stable identity, an identity of safety that the social workers has created as a result through interacting with their co-workers, gaining a sense of belongingness and built a comfort zone. The identity has been interpreted by the researchers in relation to discourse psychology, expressed in statements by the social workers with confidence and obviousness such as speaking about thriving at work because of colleagues and many of the social workers are friends outside the work as well. It strengthens the work situation for the social workers and provides a solid point in the cluttered work environment. There were also expressions about appreciating what they do for a living and doing well for society and has a positive effect in the identity.

The vertical angle represents a more ambivalent aspect of the identity amongst the social workers. When the social workers discourses were analyzed, the researchers could also interpret a conflict in the interaction between the social workers and the organizational demands, and within their stable environment they have created, there is struggles and confusions. The researchers has made the interpretation of an identity that
lack comfort and trust towards the larger organizational picture. Since the high demands and a chaotic situation, expressions have been made that unclear directions from the organization at times may occur which can cause a conflict in their role and identity as social workers. The lack of time and the workload seems to repress the desired role and identity as the social worker cannot work and be the caring and well-performed social worker they would like to be for all the clients. It creates frustration and irritation and becomes a part of this vertical, ambivalent aspect of the identity.

8. Discussion

The main research question in this study is “How is stress and burnout discussed amongst social workers at Social Services, The Child and Youth Department, in Uppsala municipality?” and will pervade through the sub questions “What kind of awareness and acknowledgement around ‘Burnout’ exists? and “What strategies and methods are used at the workplace in order to avoid work related stress and burnout?” since these questions were examined, and the main question was constructed in relation to social constructivism. The presentation of this chapter will be in relation to the sub questions.

8.1 Acknowledgement and Awareness

Acknowledgement and awareness in work related stress and burnout exists amongst the social workers in the study. They are more than familiar with the concepts and many of the social workers had constructed knowledge about it since they have been in contact with people who had been or are on their way of becoming burned out. It was given some examples on how they support each other when new cases has to be delivered, but also a support shown from the unit manager's side in this situation, that was expressed in asking if there were more space for the social workers to take on new cases. It showed a form of creation of support in the hectic situation of workload. Many of the social workers had constructed a confidence and assurance in their language in the conversations about the courage of rejecting more cases and this contributes to their stable and safe identity, also discussed as the horizontal identity in the study. The identity seemed to be the reason for the social worker to hold on to the position as a social worker and helps in carrying through tough times. Within the interpretation of
attitudes amongst the social workers, a healthy and supportive community is created and the social workers describe it as beneficial for the group. This kind of community is created through the good relationships between the social workers; if the group consists in a positive environment that will affect the individual social worker as well. Consequently, a strong and supportive identity is created.

The interpretation of the discourses regarding abilities lifts the fact that the social workers community has the possibilities to work according to the circumstances and make the best out of what can be done in order to find the best solution at the time. If solidarity is lacking and the group of the social workers only cared to work solely instead of creating a strong work environment with their co-workers, a loss of synergistic effect can occur. Also might the secure community that the co-workers have created becomes affected negatively when organizational demands and expectations do not meet the awareness that exist within the social practice.

*The awareness and acknowledgement* from the organizational side is hard to interpret in a truthful manner, since the focus has been on the social workers stories. The social workers shared that the organization offer support in terms of external supervision, where focus is put on the professional development and case management. Support for this can be found in study of Marc and Osvat (2013), were Lloyd et al., (2002) has identified the importance of supervisors. The social workers felt that they have support from the unit manager as well as external supervisor, and the study showed that a supportive manager or supervisor helps reduce the risk of burnout. The researchers in the study has interpreted the support from the organization as weak, and the weakness is perhaps due to lack of awareness and acknowledgement in the matter. If the organization does not show that they are aware of the issue of burnout and work related stress, it may perhaps create a lack of trust in the relationship between the work group and the organization. Some of the participants expressed that support could be found in their closes unit-manager, who always tried to have an open door policy. Therefore, one can argue that parts of the organization have recognized the importance of support for the employees. This may create confusion amongst the social workers in terms of not knowing the extent of the awareness and when they are recognized or not.
Noted are also the social workers view on high workload and the high personnel turnover, their statements on this can be connected as well as questioned in relation to the organization on acknowledgement and awareness. The employee's interpretation is that many are leaving and cannot continue their work, much due to stress. The organization may do quick fixes by employing new members to the teams, but what about the long-term solutions? With lack of time and new members employed constantly, it may be difficult to integrate them well and many quit the job and the evil circle continues. The high personnel turnover can disturb the steady group and be an agitating factor for the horizontal identity.

8.2 Strategies and Methods

The social workers constructed their individual and social strategies and methods in order to cope with their work tasks and feel secure and comfortable in their profession. Clearly stated was that no day is like the other and therefore it is important to have a form of structure in order to manage unexpected and emerging matters that may occur during the day. The result showed a great significance of having control over one's own work, and this increases the social workers feelings of independence and commitment. More is that strategies and methods for managing the workload can be beneficial for the efficiency of the performance of the tasks since the loss of feeling that nothing is ever executed can perhaps also lead to a loss of interest in doing the job. There is an emphasis on being flexible in this kind of business and not become too stuck at a solid scheme since that can create an inefficient workflow and be a contribution to the stress and eventually burnout.

The strategies and methods provided by the organization are identified by the social workers as the supervision and case management. The supervision every other week is interpreted as not being enough and is differently experienced by the social workers. As noticed in the previous studies, work demands are very high. Many of the newly graduated social workers are based at the Child and Youth Department. The interpretation made in this study, is that the social services adjust their supervision for this group of employees. The discourses clearly show that the more experienced social workers demands more from the supervision than what is provided. The supervision provided by the organization might be good in that sense to protect younger employees,
but the more experienced employees might be forgotten. When speaking in terms of identity, and how it is created at the social services, a less supportive supervision might be contributing to the ambivalent also known as the vertical identity in this study, amongst the more experienced social workers.

In the discussion on what methods and strategies provided for the social workers by the organization is further educations, which is an important topic in the concerns about work related stress and burnout. The social workers expressed the desire for further professional development, thus education provided by the organization. The organization is part of the internal and personal success of the social workers so when the organization does not provide the meaningful means, a mistrust occurs towards the organization. In relation to this a lack of justice is created and can be seen as a lack of respect for the employees. This sums the identities that are created amongst the social workers within the social services in Uppsala, on both horizontal and vertical level.

8.3 Methodology discussion

This study aimed to identify and make social workers views visible on the subject of work related stress and burnout. In the study, seven interviewees were randomly selected for semi-structured interviews. This method was chosen by the researchers to gain rich, descriptive and self-experienced data and has been an advantage for us as researchers to have the possibility to meet the people and the environment we aspired to investigate in.

In order to reach to the extent of the material; a thematic interview guide was worked through many times. By having previous studies and theoretical standpoints identified, the thematic interview guide was able to be as good as the researchers could possibly expect. Further, it provided help although the researchers own interest and curiosity was sometimes difficult to restrict in the conduction of the interviews. When going through the transcriptions of the empirical gathers, the researchers felt that the material was adequately limited to complete and fulfill the aim of the study.

The disadvantage of only having a few (seven) social workers in the study, is the fact that it cannot give a completed picture of the issue and not ensure how every social worker experience stress and burnout. The researchers did consider group interviews;
perhaps the conversation that occurs on a daily basis would have been more visible. However, the sensitivity of talking about burnout and work related stress was taken into consideration and therefore individual face-to-face interviews were done. The authors of this study believe that the results has gained a deeper understanding due to the promised anonymity of the participants and that the social workers felt recognized when it came to the issue of burnout and work related stress.

The limitations in the empirical gathers refers to choosing social worker and this might be an issue in the sense that we did not gain descriptions from the unit managers, the management and politicians. These people would perhaps have provided another picture of the concepts and have other views on what strategies and methods etc. are provided. The researchers of the study handled this issue in an early stage by making previous research on view of social workers and formulate aim and research question in relation to this.

A struggle in the process of analyzing the results were to limit ourselves to the aimed areas of investigation and not focus on e.g. the organizational and structural issues. The researchers had bared this in mind throughout the analyzing process. The choice of analyzing tool, discursive psychological analysis, has provided the study with a depth since it enables the study to find visible discourses but also underlying discourses. If other types of discursive analysis had been chosen, these underlying views would never been recognized and brought to the surface.

The researchers has during the study learnt about the method of analyzing, since it was the first time it was used for both of them. As researchers, we had together discussed and learnt from each other and felt that we have gained control over our analyzing method and can see the advantages of using it. The qualitative study, with an abductive approach that is used throughout the study, has been useful for the study in the sense that the researchers has been able to go between the empirics, theoretical standpoints and previous research throughout the whole process. This has been an advantage, since one can constantly check and do analyze during the whole process.

Maslach concepts on burnout has provided the researchers with valuable help in order to understand the complexity of burnout. Even though there are many researchers in the
area that provides deep understanding in burnout, this paper chose to focus on Maslach concepts due to the general understanding of the various mismatches which made the analysis of the statements from the social workers possible. The concepts were perceived as relevant in this study and by seeing the theory from a social constructivist perspective, it is believed that new light was shed to the theory.

8.4 Suggestions for further research

During the research process, several questions has arisen concerning time and work efficiency, which the researchers has interpreted as less beneficial for the social worker or the clients. Further, the empirics of this study shows gaps between the organizational directions and the views of the social workers that is in direct contact with clients, documentation and the computer programs that is provided for the case-investigations.

Our suggestions for further research would be to investigate how the social worker, client, organization and society should construct the everyday work within the social services in order for all the parties to feel satisfaction and meaning.
9. Abbreviations list

i.e. - id est (so to speak)
e.g. - exempli gratia (for example)
etc. - etcetra (so forth)
passim – throughout (used in references)

10. Reference list

Akademikerförbundet SSR. (2015) Krisen i socialtjänsten måste vändas nu. [online]
Available at: http://akademssr.se/reportage/krisen-i-socialtjansten-maste-vandas-nu
Retrieved 2015-02-20


Child and Youth Care Forum, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 271-287.


Jaber, F., and Al-Zoubi, M. (2012) The Relationship between Work Burnout and Employees’ Mental Health as Measured by GHQ-28: A Field Study Using a Sample of


Appendix 1

Interview guide

Participant:

Quick questions/ Background of the participant
1. Age?
2. Education?
3. Position?
4. Working experience? Within this department?
THEME 1 - Workload
1. Describe a working day for you?
   - Describe some of the feelings you experience during a day?
   - What situations make you feel stressed?
   - How do you manage your personal stress?
2. How many clients per social worker?
3. How much time per client? Is it enough?
4. What shall be documented and how is it done?
   - Is there a scheme that needs to be filled in after each client?
6. What is your scheduled time for work? Do you work according to the schedule?
7. If you have been gone due to sick leave, how is the feeling of coming back to work?
   - If the participant has not been on sick leave, how is it to come back to work after e.g. a vacation?
8. How would your perfect working day/ workload look like if you were to feel satisfied?

THEME 2 - Resources
1. What guidelines do you have at the department?
   - How does these look like?
2. How is the supervision in the department and what kind of supervision is offered?
3. What ergonomic tools are available at the working place?
4. What type of support are you as an employed offered, e.g. psychological (therapy), physical (activities)? Are there any”feel good” resources? (Room for relaxing, dining room, massage).
5. What support are you as an employee offered to personally process the cases you are involved in?
6. Do you feel that help from above (supervisors and more) help in the reduction of burnout?
7. Are you offered any further internal educations?
   - In that case, what educations?
   - Do you feel a need for other educations?

THEME 3 - Openness, Fellowship, Collaboration
1. Do you feel comfortable talking about personal difficulties? /How is personal things discussed?
2. Do you dare to say no to things/cases/orders?
3. Do you experience a competing environment, e.g. competition on who can do the most and get the most appreciation?
4. How to you experience the fellowship at the department?
5. How to you experience the language between the employees? (Professional or relaxed?)

THEME 4- The personal experience
1. Explain shortly how you define work related stress.
2. How do you handle the work related stress?
   - Do you have your own strategy to prevent work related stress?
3. If stress occurs, who do you think is responsible?
4. Does it exist knowledge about burnout/risk of burnout at the department?
   - In that case, how is it expressed?
5. How is your trust towards the working place e.g. colleagues, unit managers and the management?
6. Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience of work related stress?

Appendix 2

E-mail sent to the social workers

Jag heter Pilanthana Malakit och läser just nu Internationella socionomprogrammet på Gävles högskola.
Jag och min uppsatskamrat har påbörjat vår C-uppsats just nu där vi tänkte göra en diskursanalys om stress/utbrändhet bland socialsekreterare på barn/ungdomsenheterna i Uppsala. Därmed behöver vi några socialsekreterare som vill ställa upp på en intervju och vi undrar nu om du skulle vilja delta i uppsatsen som en del av vår informationssamling.
Det är en individuell, anonym intervju på max en timme där vi kommer ställa några frågor om ditt arbete och din upplevelse av arbetsrelaterad stress m.m. Vi har valt att göra denna undersökning för att det är en intressant miljö att undersöka i och intressant att få höra din historia om hur du upplever ditt arbete just nu. Vi är även nyfikna eftersom socialtjänsten eventuellt är något vi kommer jobba i sen också.

Vi är väldigt tacksamma om du skulle vilja ställa upp (vi är medvetna om att ni inte har tid i överflöd) eller om du vet någon som gärna vill ställa upp. Datumen vi har planerat att göra intervjuerna på är den 8e, 9e och 10e april och tiden är något vi kan komma överens om, om du vill delta.

Tack på förhand och återkom gärna med svar.

Med vänliga hälsningar,

Pilanthana & Johanna.

Appendix 3

Letter of Consent

Kära deltagare,

Detta brev av samtycke inbjuder dig till att delta i vår kandidatuppsats där vi vill undersöka den diskurs psykologiska analysen om stress/utbrändhet bland socialsekreterare på barn/ungdomsenheter i Uppsala. Uppsatsen bedrivs i kursen ”Degree Project”, 15 hp, vid Gävle Högskola under ledning av Thomas Öhlund.

Med din tillåtelse, kommer vi att spela in och ta anteckningar under intervjun, för att underlätta insamlingen av information och senare transkriberas för analys.
transkriberingen kommer den intervjuade att vara anonym och identifieras med hjälp av pseudonymer eller koder. Deltagandet i den här intervjun är frivillig och du har rätt att avgå när som helst, utan några konsekvenser.

Om du som deltagare vill granska vår datainsamling från intervjun, har du rätt att lyssna på inspelningarna eller få en kopia av transkriptionen. Det är bara att kontakta oss så kommer vi att skicka den till dig.

Resultatet av vår informationssamling kommer att anslutas med befintliga teorier enligt ämnet utbrändhet och social konstruktion och ingås i en C- uppsats. Om detta är något du som deltagare vill ta del av efter godkännandet av uppsatsen (maj, juni) så är det bara att kontakta oss så skickar vi den till dig.


Om du har några frågor angående denna studie/intervju, kan du kontakta oss på;
Johanna Olsson, tel; 0708932055, e-post; johannaols.jo@gmail.com
Pilanthana Malakit, tel; 0708580358, e-post; Pilanthana.M@hotmail.com

Tack för ditt deltagande i uppsatsen, det är mycket uppskattat!
Deltagarens namn: ______________________________________________________
(bokstavera)
Deltagarens signatur: ___________________________________________________
Datum: __________________