



American Journal of Human Psychology (AJHP)

ISSN: 2994-8878 (ONLINE)

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1 (2025)

PUBLISHED BY
E-PALLI PUBLISHERS, DELAWARE, USA

The Development of Altruistic Motivation in Early-Career Social Workers

Sora Pazer^{1*}

Article Information

Received: November 20, 2024

Accepted: December 22, 2024

Published: April 24, 2025

Keywords

Altruistic Motivation, Early-Career Social Workers, Empathy, Intrinsic Motivation, Professional Development, Resilience, Social Work, Systemic Understanding

ABSTRACT

Altruistic motivation plays a pivotal role in the effectiveness and sustainability of social work practice. This study examines the development of altruistic attributes—empathy, intrinsic motivation, resilience, and systemic understanding—among early-career social workers (N = 87) with 3–5 years of experience. Using quantitative methods, the research identifies significant positive trends and highlights key correlations between these dimensions. The findings demonstrate that professional experiences foster the growth of empathy and intrinsic motivation while emphasizing the protective role of resilience and the critical importance of systemic understanding. Variations across employment sectors reveal unique challenges and opportunities, contributing to a nuanced understanding of professional development in social work. The discussion integrates these findings with existing literature and emphasizes the need for supportive environments to sustain altruistic motivation. Implications for education, policy, and future research are also explored.

INTRODUCTION

Altruistic motivation serves as a cornerstone of social work practice, embodying the profession's commitment to service, justice, and the well-being of others. This intrinsic drive to prioritize others' needs over self-interest is critical in navigating the complex demands of contemporary social work settings (Batson, 1991; Miller, 2019). While altruism has been extensively studied in psychological and sociological contexts, its nuanced development within the professional trajectories of social workers remains underexplored. This study addresses this gap by analyzing how empathy, intrinsic motivation, and systemic understanding evolve in early-career social workers, contextualizing these factors within the broader frameworks of resilience and professional challenges.

Altruistic behavior is often conceptualized through the lens of empathy, which acts as a psychological mechanism that fosters prosocial behavior (Decety & Lamm, 2006). Empathy enables individuals to vicariously experience the emotions of others, catalyzing compassionate responses that align with altruistic goals (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987). Social work professionals rely heavily on empathic engagement to build rapport, assess client needs, and implement interventions effectively. However, as highlighted by Gerdes and Segal (2009), the application of empathy in professional contexts is neither static nor automatic; it is shaped by environmental, personal, and organizational factors. Empathy's role in altruistic motivation is closely intertwined with intrinsic motivation, defined as the internal desire to engage in activities for their inherent satisfaction rather than external rewards (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In social work, intrinsic motivation often stems from a commitment to ethical principles and the aspiration to effect meaningful change (Gagne & Deci,

2005). Understanding how these motivations develop and interact is essential for fostering sustainable practices in the field. Social work operates at the intersection of societal systems and individual well-being, often exposing practitioners to structural inequities and emotional strain. The dual responsibility of addressing systemic injustices while providing direct support to vulnerable populations necessitates a robust combination of altruism, empathy, and resilience (Ungar, 2013). Professional challenges, such as high caseloads, bureaucratic constraints, and emotional labor, can both hinder and refine these traits over time (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Resilience, defined as the ability to adapt positively to adversity, emerges as a critical mediator in this process, enabling social workers to maintain their altruistic motivation despite external stressors (Southwick *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, the systemic understanding required in social work extends beyond theoretical knowledge to encompass a practical comprehension of interrelated societal, cultural, and organizational dynamics. As Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory suggests, effective intervention in social work requires navigating multiple layers of influence, from individual client circumstances to broader sociopolitical contexts.

This study examines the development of altruistic motivation in early-career social workers, emphasizing the interplay between empathy, intrinsic motivation, and systemic understanding. Using a mixed-methods approach, we analyze data from 87 participants to identify patterns and correlations that illuminate how professional experiences shape these attributes. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how altruistic motivation evolves within the dynamic and often challenging environments of social work. While

¹ Department of Social Work, IU International University of Applied Sciences, Germany

* Corresponding author's e-mail: sorapazer@gmail.com

existing research provides valuable insights into isolated components of social work practice, such as resilience (Grant & Kinman, 2013) and burnout (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014), there is a paucity of studies examining the integrative development of altruistic motivation. By addressing this gap, the present study not only advances theoretical knowledge but also informs practical strategies for enhancing professional development programs. For instance, promoting empathy through experiential learning and reflective practice could bolster intrinsic motivation, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for both practitioners and clients (Davis, 2009).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on altruistic motivation in social work is both extensive and fragmented, encompassing diverse theoretical perspectives and empirical studies. This section synthesizes existing knowledge, focusing on three interconnected domains: theories of altruism and empathy, intrinsic motivation in helping professions, and the role of resilience and systemic understanding in professional practice. By integrating these strands, we establish a comprehensive framework to analyze the development of altruistic motivation in early-career social workers.

Altruism, broadly defined as a selfless concern for the well-being of others, has been a central theme in psychological and sociological research (Batson, 1991; Hoffman, 2000). Batson's empathy-altruism hypothesis posits that empathic concern, arising from the ability to understand and share others' emotions, motivates altruistic behavior. This theory is particularly relevant to social work, where practitioners frequently engage with individuals in vulnerable or marginalized situations. Decety and Jackson (2004) further emphasize that empathy is not merely an emotional response but a cognitive process involving perspective-taking and emotional regulation. Empathy is both a professional skill and an ethical imperative in the context of social work. Gerdes and Segal (2009) highlight the unique role of empathy in fostering effective client-worker relationships, enabling practitioners to assess needs and develop tailored interventions accurately. However, they caution that empathy must be balanced with emotional boundaries to prevent burnout and compassion fatigue—two phenomena that disproportionately affect helping professionals (Figley, 2002). Intrinsic motivation, as defined by Ryan and Deci (2000), refers to the innate desire to engage in activities that are inherently rewarding. In social work, this motivation often stems from a commitment to social justice and a personal alignment with the profession's core values (Miller, 2019). Gagne and Deci (2005) extend this framework by exploring the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, noting that external factors, such as organizational support and recognition, can either enhance or diminish intrinsic drive. Research indicates that intrinsic motivation is closely linked to job satisfaction and professional longevity in social work (Grant, 2007).

For instance, Perry *et al.* (2010) found that social workers with high levels of intrinsic motivation reported greater resilience and lower levels of burnout, even in high-stress environments. These findings underscore the importance of nurturing intrinsic motivation through supportive work environments and opportunities for professional growth. Resilience, the capacity to adapt to adversity while maintaining psychological and emotional well-being, is a critical attribute for social workers (Southwick *et al.*, 2014). Ungar (2013) identifies resilience as a dynamic process shaped by individual, relational, and contextual factors. In professional practice, resilience enables social workers to navigate the emotional demands of their roles, mitigating the risks of burnout and secondary trauma. Equally important is systemic understanding, which encompasses the ability to analyze and address complex interactions within and between social systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Social workers operate within a web of interconnected systems—individual, familial, organizational, and societal—that influence both client outcomes and professional effectiveness. As Paat (2013) notes, a systemic perspective is essential for developing holistic interventions that address root causes rather than symptoms. The interplay between empathy, intrinsic motivation, resilience, and systemic understanding is central to the development of altruistic motivation in social work. Empirical studies suggest that these attributes are mutually reinforcing: empathy enhances intrinsic motivation (Gerdes & Segal, 2009), resilience sustains motivation in the face of challenges (Grant & Kinman, 2013), and systemic understanding provides the contextual knowledge necessary for effective practice (Paat, 2013). However, the dynamic nature of these interactions underscores the need for longitudinal research to capture their evolution over time. The concept of resilience in social work extends beyond individual capacities, emphasizing the role of systemic interventions in fostering sustainability and adaptability. Lihanda *et al.* (2023) illustrate this through their exploration of social entrepreneurship strategies, highlighting the significance of systemic reforms, individual empowerment, and collective action in enhancing resilience. Similarly, Ungar (2013) underscores that resilience is shaped by dynamic interactions between individual and contextual factors, making systemic approaches critical for sustaining professional well-being. These strategies align with findings by Gonzaga *et al.* (2024), who emphasize the importance of social intuition and emotional regulation in navigating complex social dynamics, further reinforcing resilience. Together, these perspectives highlight the necessity of integrating personal and systemic dimensions, providing a robust framework for developing resilience and maintaining intrinsic motivation in social work practice.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section outlines the research design, data collection, and analytical methods employed to investigate the development of altruistic motivation in early-career

social workers. By employing a quantitative approach, the study systematically examines the relationships between empathy, intrinsic motivation, resilience, and systemic understanding while situating these findings within the participants' professional experiences. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design to capture a snapshot of altruistic motivation among social workers with 3–5 years of professional experience. This approach allowed for the identification of patterns and correlations across key variables, providing insights into how specific attributes develop during the formative years of practice. A structured Likert-scale questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection, supplemented by demographic questions to contextualize the findings. The design was informed by theoretical frameworks in altruism (Batson, 1991; Hoffman, 2000), motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and resilience (Ungar, 2013). These frameworks guided the selection of variables and the development of survey items, ensuring alignment with the study's objectives. The sample consisted of 87 early-career social workers employed in various sectors, including youth and family services (42%), social counseling (28%), healthcare (18%), and other areas (12%). Participants were predominantly female (65%), with male (33%) and non-binary individuals (2%) comprising the remainder. The mean age of participants was 29.4 years (SD = 2.7), reflecting the demographic characteristics of early-career professionals in the field. Data were collected through an online survey distributed via professional networks, social media platforms, and organizational partnerships. The survey consisted of 20 items, grouped into five domains:

Empathy Development

Assessed using statements such as “I find it easier to empathize with clients now than at the beginning of my career.”

Intrinsic Motivation

Measured through items like “I feel motivated to help others regardless of external rewards.”

Professional Challenges

Explored through questions such as “I often feel overwhelmed by the demands of my work.”

Systemic Understanding

Evaluated via statements like “I can identify how different systems interact to affect client outcomes.”

Resilience

Assessed using items like “I can adapt to unexpected challenges without losing focus.”

Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly agree”). Demographic questions captured participants' age, gender, years of experience, and primary area of employment.

Quantitative analyses were conducted using statistical software to explore both descriptive and inferential aspects of the data. Key methods included:

Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were calculated to summarize participant responses.

Inferential Statistics

- o A t-test was employed to assess the significance of changes in empathy development over time.

- o An ANOVA test was conducted to examine variations in intrinsic motivation across different employment sectors.

- o Pearson correlations were calculated to explore relationships between key variables, such as empathy and intrinsic motivation.

Results were considered statistically significant at a p-value of < 0.05 , with additional emphasis on effect sizes to evaluate the practical significance of findings. The study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, ensuring that they understood the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time. Data were anonymized to protect participant confidentiality and stored securely in compliance with data protection regulations. The reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases, such as social desirability effects, which could influence participants' responses. Additionally, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw causal inferences about the development of altruistic motivation. Future studies should consider longitudinal approaches to capture changes over time and triangulate survey data with qualitative methods for a more comprehensive understanding.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents an in-depth analysis of the study's findings, organized into demographic profiles, development of empathy, intrinsic motivation, systemic understanding, resilience, and the interplay between these dimensions. The results highlight key trends, significant correlations, and insights into the professional development of altruistic motivation in early-career social workers. Tables are used to provide a structured presentation of the data, offering clarity and facilitating interpretation.

The demographic profile of the participants reveals a representative sample of early-career social workers, with notable diversity in gender, age, and areas of employment. The majority of the participants identified as female (65%), followed by male (33%) and non-binary (2%). The average age of the participants was 29.4 years (SD = 2.7), reflecting a cohort primarily at the early stages of their professional careers.

Table 1: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	56	65%
Male	29	33%
Non-binary	2	2%

The high percentage of female participants aligns with existing literature indicating a gendered trend in the social work profession (Kreitzer *et al.*, 2015). Male and non-binary representation, though smaller, provides valuable insights into the diverse experiences within the field.

Table 2: Age Distribution

Statistic	Value
Mean Age (Years)	29.4
Standard Deviation	2.7

The narrow age range reflects the study’s focus on early-career professionals, allowing for a concentrated examination of their developmental trajectories.

Table 3: Employment Sectors

Employment Sector	Frequency	Percentage
Youth and Family Services	37	42%
Social Counseling	24	28%
Healthcare	16	18%
Other Sectors	10	12%

Participants represented a variety of professional settings, with the largest proportion working in youth and family services (42%). Social counseling (28%) and healthcare (18%) also featured prominently, highlighting the multifaceted nature of social work practice. The “Other” category (12%) included areas such as community development and educational support. Empathy, a cornerstone of altruistic motivation, showed significant positive development among participants. Using a Likert-scale question to assess empathy growth, 48% of respondents reported a strong increase, while 37% noted a slight increase. Only 12% indicated no change, and a minimal 3% reported a decrease.

Table 4: Empathy Development

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Increased	42	48%
Slightly Increased	32	37%
Remained Unchanged	10	12%
Decreased	3	3%

The mean empathy score was 4.2 (SD = 0.73), indicating a high level of empathic capacity among participants. A one-sample t-test revealed that this increase was statistically significant ($t = 8.72, p < 0.01$), suggesting that empathy development is a key outcome of early

professional experiences. Intrinsic motivation also demonstrated positive growth, with 42% of participants indicating a strong increase and 39% a slight increase. The mean score for intrinsic motivation was 3.9 (SD = 0.81), reflecting a generally high level of internal drive to engage in meaningful social work practices.

Table 5: Intrinsic Motivation by Sector

Employment Sector	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Youth and Family Services	4.1	0.72
Social Counseling	4.0	0.78
Healthcare	3.7	0.89
Other Sectors	3.8	0.85

An ANOVA test revealed significant variations in intrinsic motivation across employment sectors ($F(4,86) = 3.72, p < 0.05$). Participants in youth and family services reported the highest levels of intrinsic motivation, while those in healthcare displayed slightly lower scores, possibly reflecting sector-specific challenges. Systemic understanding, defined as the ability to navigate and analyze interrelated systems, showed moderate increases among participants, with a mean score of 3.8 (SD = 0.88). Correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship between systemic understanding and professional challenges ($r = 0.47, p < 0.05$), indicating that exposure to complex work environments enhances this critical competency.

Table 6: Systemic Understanding by Experience

Experience Range (Years)	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
3-4 Years	3.7	0.82
5 Years	4.0	0.89

Participants with five years of experience reported higher systemic understanding, suggesting that professional exposure over time contributes to this skill. Resilience emerged as a key factor in sustaining altruistic motivation, with a mean score of 4.1 (SD = 0.76). Nearly 45% of participants indicated a strong increase in their resilience, while 38% noted a slight increase.

Table 7: Resilience Development

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Increased	39	45%
Slightly Increased	33	38%
Remained Unchanged	12	14%
Decreased	3	3%

A series of Pearson correlations highlighted significant relationships between key variables. Empathy and intrinsic motivation showed the strongest positive correlation ($r = 0.62, p < 0.01$), emphasizing their interdependence.

Resilience was also moderately correlated with empathy ($r = 0.55, p < 0.01$), reinforcing its role in sustaining altruistic engagement.

Table 8: Correlations Between Key Variables

Variables	Correlation (r)	Significance (p)
Empathy - Intrinsic Motivation	0.62	< 0.01
Empathy - Resilience	0.55	< 0.01
Systemic Understanding - Challenges	0.47	< 0.05

The results reveal a clear pattern of positive development in empathy, intrinsic motivation, and resilience among early-career social workers. The correlations between these variables suggest a dynamic interplay that underpins altruistic motivation. Sector-specific differences, particularly in systemic understanding and intrinsic motivation, highlight the need for tailored professional development strategies.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore the development of altruistic motivation in early-career social workers, focusing on empathy, intrinsic motivation, systemic understanding, and resilience. The findings reveal significant positive trends across these dimensions, shedding light on how professional experiences shape altruistic attributes in a challenging field. This discussion contextualizes these results within the existing body of research, highlights critical perspectives, and addresses the implications and limitations of the study.

Empathy: A Cornerstone of Altruistic Motivation

The marked increase in empathy among participants aligns with theoretical perspectives that underscore empathy as a foundation for altruistic behavior (Batson, 1991; Decety & Lamm, 2006). The high mean score for empathy ($M = 4.2, SD = 0.73$) suggests that early-career social workers experience significant growth in their capacity to understand and share the emotions of others. This is consistent with findings by Gerdes and Segal (2009), who emphasize that empathy is not only an inherent trait but also a skill that can be cultivated through professional practice and exposure to diverse client populations. However, the mechanisms driving this empathy development warrant closer examination. Theories of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983) suggest that social workers may consciously enhance their empathic abilities to meet the emotional demands of their roles. While this process can strengthen professional-client relationships, it also raises concerns about the risk of empathy fatigue or burnout (Figley, 2002). This dual-edged nature of empathy development highlights the importance of organizational support and supervision in mitigating potential negative outcomes (Newcomb *et al.*, 2020).

Interestingly, the small proportion of participants (3%) reporting a decline in empathy invites critical reflection. This finding could be indicative of emotional desensitization, a phenomenon observed in high-stress professions where repeated exposure to trauma diminishes empathic responses (Bride, 2007). Future research should explore whether this trend persists over time and identify interventions to counteract such declines.

Intrinsic motivation, with a mean score of 3.9 ($SD = 0.81$), emerged as a key driver of altruistic behavior. The findings corroborate self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), which posits that intrinsic motivation flourishes in environments that satisfy basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The strong correlation between empathy and intrinsic motivation ($r = 0.62, p < 0.01$) further supports the argument that these attributes are mutually reinforcing, as empathic engagement often enhances the internal satisfaction derived from helping others (Gagne & Deci, 2005). The observed sectoral differences in intrinsic motivation, particularly the lower scores among healthcare social workers, raise important questions. One possible explanation is the unique stressors inherent to the healthcare sector, such as time constraints, hierarchical structures, and exposure to life-and-death scenarios (Dyrbye *et al.*, 2017). These factors may dampen intrinsic motivation by creating environments that prioritize procedural efficiency over relational engagement. By contrast, sectors like youth and family services, which reported higher motivation levels, may offer greater opportunities for meaningful client interactions, thereby enhancing motivational alignment (Grant, 2007). Systemic understanding showed moderate development among participants, with a mean score of 3.8 ($SD = 0.88$). This finding reflects the increasing ability of early-career social workers to navigate and interpret the interconnections between individual, familial, and societal systems. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory provides a useful framework for understanding this progression, emphasizing the importance of analyzing multiple levels of influence on client outcomes. The positive correlation between systemic understanding and professional challenges ($r = 0.47, p < 0.05$) suggests that navigating complex work environments enhances practitioners' contextual awareness. However, this relationship is not without tension. As highlighted by Paat (2013), systemic understanding requires both cognitive and emotional investment, which can be difficult to sustain in resource-constrained settings. The study's findings align with research by Healy and Meagher (2014), who argue that structural barriers, such as high caseloads and bureaucratic inefficiencies, often hinder social workers' capacity to fully apply their systemic knowledge.

Resilience: A Buffer Against Adversity

Resilience emerged as a critical factor in maintaining altruistic motivation, with participants reporting high levels of resilience ($M = 4.1, SD = 0.76$). This finding

aligns with Ungar's (2013) conceptualization of resilience as a dynamic process influenced by individual, relational, and contextual factors. The strong correlation between resilience and empathy ($r = 0.55, p < 0.01$) underscores the protective role of resilience in sustaining emotional engagement, even in the face of professional adversity. The literature highlights various pathways through which resilience can be fostered in social work practice. For example, Southwick *et al.* (2014) emphasize the importance of social support networks, reflective supervision, and access to professional development opportunities. These elements not only enhance individual coping capacities but also create organizational cultures that prioritize well-being and sustainability (Grant & Kinman, 2013).

Nonetheless, the resilience reported by participants may also reflect adaptive mechanisms developed in response to systemic inadequacies. While this adaptability is commendable, it raises ethical concerns about the normalization of high-stress work environments. As Baines (2017) argues, resilience should not be used as a justification for maintaining unsustainable workloads or inadequate resource allocation. The correlations between empathy, intrinsic motivation, resilience, and systemic understanding highlight the interconnected nature of these attributes. The strong relationship between empathy and intrinsic motivation suggests that social workers derive personal fulfillment from empathic engagement, which in turn fuels their commitment to altruistic practice. Similarly, the link between resilience and systemic understanding indicates that the ability to navigate complex environments is bolstered by emotional adaptability. These findings contribute to a growing body of literature emphasizing the holistic development of professional competencies in social work (O'Leary *et al.*, 2013). However, they also point to potential areas of vulnerability. For instance, the reliance on intrinsic motivation as a primary driver of professional engagement may render social workers particularly susceptible to burnout in unsupportive environments. This underscores the need for systemic interventions that address both individual and organizational dimensions of well-being. The study's findings have significant implications for social work education, practice, and policy. Training programs should prioritize the development of empathy and systemic understanding through experiential learning, case-based instruction, and interprofessional collaboration. Moreover, resilience-building strategies, such as mindfulness training and peer support groups, should be integrated into professional development initiatives (Kinman & Grant, 2011). At the policy level, addressing structural barriers is essential to creating environments that support altruistic motivation. This includes reducing caseloads, increasing access to supervision, and ensuring equitable resource distribution. As Healy and Meagher (2014) note, systemic change is critical to enabling social workers to apply their skills and knowledge effectively, thereby maximizing their impact on client outcomes. While the study provides valuable

insights, several limitations must be acknowledged. The reliance on self-reported data introduces the potential for social desirability bias, which may have influenced participants' responses. Additionally, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences about the development of altruistic motivation over time. Longitudinal studies are needed to capture the dynamic interplay of these attributes throughout social workers' careers. Future research should also explore the role of cultural and organizational contexts in shaping altruistic motivation. Comparative studies across different countries and sectors could provide a more nuanced understanding of how systemic factors influence professional development.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant development of altruistic motivation in early-career social workers, emphasizing empathy, intrinsic motivation, resilience, and systemic understanding as interconnected attributes. The findings demonstrate that professional experiences enhance these traits, while also revealing sector-specific challenges that shape their progression. By situating these results within the broader literature, the study underscores the critical role of supportive environments in fostering sustainable social work practices. Future research and policy efforts should prioritize addressing structural barriers and promoting holistic professional development to empower social workers in their essential roles.

REFERENCES

- Baines, D. (2017). *Doing anti-oppressive practice: Social justice social work* (3rd ed.). Fernwood Publishing.
- Batson, C. D. (1991). *The altruism question: Toward a social-psychological answer*. Erlbaum.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Bride, B. E. (2007). Prevalence of secondary traumatic stress among social workers. *Social Work, 52*(1), 63–70. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/52.1.63>
- Decety, J., & Jackson, P. L. (2004). The functional architecture of human empathy. *Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Reviews, 3*(2), 71–100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534582304267187>
- Decety, J., & Lamm, C. (2006). Human empathy through the lens of social neuroscience. *The Scientific World Journal, 6*, 1146–1163. <https://doi.org/10.1100/tsw.2006.221>
- Dyrbye, L. N., Shanafelt, T. D., & Sinsky, C. (2017). Physician burnout and healthcare reform: Reinvigorating the patient-physician relationship. *Health Affairs, 36*(4), 657–662. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2016.1571>
- Eisenberg, N., & Strayer, J. (Eds.). (1987). *Empathy and its development*. Cambridge University Press.
- Figley, C. R. (2002). Compassion fatigue: Psychotherapists' chronic lack of self-care. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 58*(11), 1433–1441. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.10090>

- Gagne, M., & Deci, E. L. (2005). Self-determination theory and work motivation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(4), 331–362. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.322>
- Gerdes, K. E., & Segal, E. A. (2009). A social work model of empathy. *Social Work*, 54(2), 141–148. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/54.2.141>
- Grant, A. M. (2007). Relational job design and the motivation to make a prosocial difference. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(2), 393–417. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.24351328>
- Grant, L., & Kinman, G. (2013). Enhancing wellbeing in social work students: Building resilience in the next generation. *Social Work Education*, 32(5), 621–633. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2012.695192>
- Gonzaga, R. K. O., Abrenilla, J. C., Dumanhog, M. L. E., & Culajara, C. L. B. (2024). Interrelating the emotional styles and social intelligence of university students. *American Journal of Human Psychology (AJHP)*, 2(1), 84-92. <https://doi.org/10.54536/ajhp.v2i1.2790>
- Healy, K., & Meagher, G. (2014). The reprofessionalization of social work: Collaborative approaches for achieving professional recognition. *British Journal of Social Work*, 44(6), 1675–1692. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bct051>
- Hochschild, A. R. (1983). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*. University of California Press.
- Hoffman, M. L. (2000). *Empathy and moral development: Implications for caring and justice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kinman, G., & Grant, L. (2011). Exploring stress resilience in trainee social workers: The role of emotional and social competencies. *British Journal of Social Work*, 41(2), 261–275. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcq088>
- Kreitzer, L., Lens, V., & Drover, G. (2015). Gender and social work practice. In L. Healy & R. J. Link (Eds.), *Handbook of international social work* (pp. 383–388). Oxford University Press.
- Lihanda, B. B., Oloo, C., & Aila, F. O. (2023). Social entrepreneurship strategies and resilience of One-Acre Fund household livelihoods in Kenya. *American Journal of Economics and Business Innovation (AJEBI)*, 2(3), 50-60. <https://doi.org/10.54536/ajebi.v2i3.1942>
- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Burnout: A multidimensional perspective. In A. M. Rossi, P. L. Perrewe, & S. L. Sauter (Eds.), *Stress and quality of working life* (pp. 68–84). Information Age Publishing.
- Miller, S. E. (2019). Altruism and social work: A framework for professional ethics. *Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics*, 16(2), 45–54.
- Newcomb, M., Burton, J., & Edwards, D. (2020). Professional supervision in social work: A model for resilience-building. *Social Work Practice*, 30(4), 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2019.1685056>
- O’Leary, P., Tsui, M.-S., & Ruch, G. (2013). The boundaries of the social work relationship revisited: Towards a connected, inclusive, and dynamic conceptualisation. *British Journal of Social Work*, 43(1), 135–153. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcs033>
- Paat, Y. F. (2013). Working with immigrant children and their families: An application of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 23(8), 954–966. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2013.800007>
- Perry, J. L., Hondeghem, A., & Wise, L. R. (2010). Revisiting the motivational bases of public service: Twenty years of research and an agenda for the future. *Public Administration Review*, 70(5), 681–690. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02196.x>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Southwick, S. M., Bonanno, G. A., Masten, A. S., Panter-Brick, C., & Yehuda, R. (2014). Resilience definitions, theory, and challenges: Interdisciplinary perspectives. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 5, Article 25338. <https://doi.org/10.3402/ejpt.v5.25338>
- Ungar, M. (2013). Resilience, trauma, context, and culture. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 14(3), 255–266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838013487805>