

The Cooperation of Social Workers and Police Officers

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That cooperation and relations between individuals and organizations as necessary to successfully and efficiently achieve their objectives has been argued by a number of researchers, both nationally and internationally. Cooperation that is based on positive and transparent relations is particularly important for organizations whose objective is to serve members of the community. There is a general consensus between the police and social services concerning the importance of close cooperation, which, according to research findings, is strengthening and improving. Cooperation between organizations, apart from various written rules, agreements, and responsibilities, is based on relations between different members of these organizations that are in their daily operations more or less successfully cooperating. This survey was conducted among 336 workers from the Social Work Centre of the Republic of Slovenia. The survey used factor analysis and five factors were identified, with which social workers' cooperation with police officers was measured based on their ratings and viewpoints. These factors are: work relations, mutual knowledge of duties and responsibilities, solving work problems, improving cooperation with police officers, and interpersonal competencies of police officers. The findings have shown that there is a positive correlation between the factors and that, in total, 46.2% of 'work relations' variance can be explained. More specifically, the findings revealed that mutual knowledge of duties and responsibilities influences work relations to 19.6%. Furthermore, work relations are also influenced by mutual problem solving as well as by interpersonal competencies of police officers, which were explained with 21.3% and 24.9% of the variance, respectively. Therefore, we argue that both institutions need to permanently follow up the quality of relations and cooperation between them. As a challenge, an identification of factors was provided which inhibits good, honest, transparent and efficient work relations and cooperation, along with the search and use of various measures for eliminating them so as to achieve a more efficient operation of both institutions.

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