

**Applying a Preparatory Program for Developing the Professional  
Competencies of Field Practicum Female Students Within the  
Framework of the Generalist Practice of Social Work**

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**الملخص:****تطبيق برنامج تحضيري لتنمية الكفايات المهنية لطالبات التدريب الميداني  
في إطار الممارسة العامة للخدمة الاجتماعية**

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلي تحديد مدى فعالية برنامج تحضيري في تنمية الكفايات المهنية لطالبات التدريب الميداني في إطار الممارسة العامة للخدمة الاجتماعية ، وتم تحقيق الهدف من خلال أهداف فرعية وهي تنمية معارف و مهارات الممارسة المهنية لطالبات التدريب الميداني على مستوى الوحدات ( الصغرى - الوسطى - الكبرى)، والقيم الأخلاقية التي يجب الالتزام بها ، واعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج شبه التجريبي باستخدام مجموعة تجريبية واحدة وتصميم التجربة القبليّة البعدية ، ولقد استخدمت الدراسة مقياس الكفايات المهنية لطالبات التدريب الميداني في إطار الممارسة العامة للخدمة الاجتماعية ، و تم تطبيق الدراسة على عينة من طالبات المستوى السادس بكلية الخدمة الاجتماعية - جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبد الرحمن، المملكة العربية السعودية ، والبالغ عددهم (30) مفردة ، وتوصلت الدراسة إلي فعالية البرنامج التحضيري لتنمية الكفايات المهنية لطالبات التدريب الميداني في إطار الممارسة العامة للخدمة الاجتماعية ، وتحقيق أهدافه.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** برنامج تحضيري - التدريب الميداني - الكفايات المهنية - الممارسة العامة في

الخدمة الاجتماعية - طلاب الخدمة الاجتماعية

**Abstract:**

The current study aims to determine the effectiveness of a preparatory program in developing the professional competencies of field practicum female students in the framework of the social work generalist practice, and the objective was achieved through sub- objectives, namely the development of knowledge and skills of professional practice for field practicum female students at the level of units (micro- mezzo- macro), and the ethical values that must be adhered to. The study relied on the quasi-experimental approach using one experimental group. The study used professional competence scale for field practicum female students within the framework of Social Work Generalist Practice. The study was applied on a sample of the sixth level students at the Faculty of Social Work, Princess Norah Bint Abdulrahman University, Saudi Arabia, the number is (N=30). The study concluded the effectiveness of the preparatory program for Developing the Professional Competencies of Field Practicum Female Students Within the Framework of the Generalist Practice of Social Work, which achieved its objectives.

**Key words:** Preparatory program, Field practicum, Professional competencies, the generalist practice of Social work, Social Work Students.

**Study problem:**

University education is one of the basic systems by which the necessary technical cadres are prepared to work in various fields. This can be achieved through theoretical teaching and practical training to develop students' skills; increase their expertise and help them to gain the necessary capabilities to perform their assigned tasks efficiently and competently. In general speaking; social work is an applied profession that places an important and essential consideration on field practicum as a planned process and method for developing students' skills and preparing them practicing the profession.

As a result of the complexity of contemporary life, the multiplicity of its problems and its impact on society as whole, as well as the extension of dealing with the problematic situation, it is necessary to prepare a professional practitioner to hold great abilities to deal with all systems (individual, family, small groups, institutions, and community) depending on the nature of the problematic situation within the framework of social work generalist practice.

**Thus**, it is important to pay much attention to the professional preparation to acquire knowledge, approaches, and modern trends in line with the latest scientific developments in social work, enabling students to carry out their duties in social institutions effectively.

This is what the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) referred to in its latest release: Signature pedagogies are elements of instruction and of socialization that teach future practitioners the fundamental dimensions of professional work in their discipline-to think, to perform, and to act ethically and with integrity. Field education is the signature pedagogy for social work. The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum- classroom and field-are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the

Social Work Competencies. Field education may integrate forms of technology as a component of the program (CSWE, 2015, p12).

Therefore, field practicum is an integrated program that has the same significance as the theoretical study program. It is the application of theoretical preparation and the first evaluation tool, the criterion and the quality of theoretical preparation programs. It is through the field practicum, the opportunities for success of the trainee in his/ her future career can be predicted (Yakhlef, 007, p. 44).

Field practicum is an essential component of social work, which contributes to preparing well-qualified graduates by providing them with real practical skills and expertise from the field and transforming theoretical knowledge and skills into applied practice consistent with their culture and values. Accordingly, they will be able practice the profession efficiently and effectively, and able to compete in the work market.

The results of the Al-Awawdeh Study (2010) emphasize the importance of field practicum in the professional and practical preparation of the social worker, in terms of his personal and professional values, implanting the values of the profession and its ethics in the student, increasing their knowledge and raising their capabilities. Al-Khatib (2003) agrees with him that the objective of training, which is the graduation of a generalist professional practitioner in social work, should be taken into consideration by providing the students with the opportunity to refine their personalities and gain the field skills necessary for professional practice.

Despite the importance of what field practicum represents in professional preparation, it faces many obstacles preventing it from achieving its objective. Tanga (2013) confirms that there are major challenges facing field practicum in "Lesotho". These challenges are represented in the lack of preparations of social work students towards Training. These challenges are not in line with global standards for social work education and training.

Abdul-Aziz (2010) points out that there is a gap between the theoretical and practical subjects in field practicum as well as the insufficiency of the training

period. The Yeung (2001) study agrees that the theoretical and cognitive background of the social work students are insufficient on the subjects they taught in the training institution and their lack of the ability to organize time and control behavior in class.

The results of the Dnika (2007) study emphasizes the need for congruence between the theoretical framework of social work and practice. This can be achieved through good practical education.

Mayad (2004) also points out the necessity of renewed interest in the knowledge building of the profession in line with the renewed variables scientifically and globally. Al-Awawdeh Study (2010) adds that there are obstacles faced by the students. These obstacles are manifested in how to deal with clients in various fields, the lack of training manuals that facilitate training methods, enabling students to deal efficiently with clients of different social institutions. Also, the failure to grant students the opportunity to deal with clients directly.

Al Hilalat (2015) points out the obstacles exist in field practicum as follows: the large number of students supervised by the academic supervisor in the field practicum; the lack of sufficient time for the field supervisor to follow up the trained students; and the students' inability to apply the theoretical side efficiently.

Although field practicum aims to provide the student with the technical skills necessary to prepare him/ her, whether they are general skills or special skills associated with dealing with each kind of systems he deals with. Although, the commitment to the ethical values of the profession, we find studies that indicate obstacles to achieve it. Abu Al-Hassan (2011) points out that the student does not seek to acquire knowledge and skills. Mohamed (2006) study emphasizes that the obstacles facing training on professional practice skills are the lack of clarity of the content of field practicum; the lack of clarity of the goal of training in professional practice skills; and the lack of correlation between the content of other courses that the student studies and the course of field practicum. Zarzoura (2015) also confirms that students have little knowledge of general

practice skills, but they do not know how to implement such skills and how to face problems.

Salem (2014) indicates that the degree of field practicum female students practice their roles, and the skills level are very low and there is confusion among most students between levels of practice (micro, mezzo and macro). Shehata (2011) adds that the training supervisors are not interested in following up the skill of recording, and the absence of clear plans for field practicum, which has a great impact on students' acquisition of professional values of social work.

While Gharib, Bahshwan, and Al-Aidarous (2019) add the lack of cooperation between students among themselves to perform the tasks assigned to each of them in training and the lack of acceptance of the academic or institutional supervisor's directions as well as neglecting the skill of recording in field practicum. The study recommends that students should receive training courses, and work hard to have all field practicum female students acquire professional skills efficiently; as well as holding initial meetings with all field practicum female students to explain the field practicum plan before going out to training institutions.

Qandil (2015) suggests that field practicum female students should cooperate with each other to implement the training tasks required by the supervisor. Among the obstacles are the students' lack of commitment to the training institution's rules, regulations and policies, and the large number of students in the training institution.

While Khateri (2003) recommends the importance of developing professional skills and updating professional knowledge received by the trainees, and the association of training with the reality of professional practice.

In spite of these obstacles, we find the trend of preparation through competencies has become now one of the best and most effective trends that attract the attention of a large number of educational institutions worldwide. It is one of the best solutions for professional preparation in a realistic manner (Mohamed, 2005, p. 73).

We find the Competency-based education (CBE) perspective rests upon: a shared view of the nature of competence in professional practice. Social work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being. EPAS recognizes a holistic view of competence; that is, the demonstration of competence is informed by knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that include the social worker's critical thinking, affective reactions, and exercise of judgment in regard to unique practice situations. Overall professional competence is multi-dimensional and composed of interrelated competencies. An individual social worker's competence is seen as developmental and dynamic, changing over time in relation to continuous learning (CSWE, 2015, p.6).

**Therefore**, field practicum is the most important aspect in the field of education, which provides the students with the opportunity to gain professional competencies, and through which they are given theoretical knowledge and professional skills while Commitment to moral values. Qazhah (2011) recommends the ongoing review of field practicum programs and their impact on developing students' professional competencies. Al-Najem (2017) recommends providing more descriptive and specialized advanced studies and research in determining the professional competencies that a social worker will need to work with different clients. Hemat (2014) emphasizes the need to provide field practicum female students with professional competence and applied expertise.

**Accordingly**, many studies recommend the necessity of working to address these obstacles by working to prepare students for field practicum before joining social work institutions to achieve the professional competencies of female students. Al-Khumshi, Al-Rawaf and Ghaz (2005) emphasize the need for a preparation period for female students before starting the training practicum in order to prepare the student psychologically and professionally.

Al-Rasheed (2009) confirms that the student comprehension at prior field practicum levels for some professional help intervention processes is low. Therefore, the study suggests that these processes must be explained and applied

before joining training institutions through providing professional situations related to all fields of practice, which increases female students' awareness of these processes. Hassanein (2014) agrees with that conclusion, as it points out the necessity of preparing students for the field practicum stage, through the participation of the accepted students in a preparatory program before the beginning of each semester. According to this program, the profession requirements are explained from theoretical and practical perspectives.

Al Arab and Al- Rawashdeh (2016) confirm that one of the obstacles that limit the quality of field practicum for social work specialization is the failure to develop the training program appropriate for the disciplines that the students study. The study recommends that the training process must provide programs to develop students' professional abilities and skills, and work to connect the theoretical information that the students study with the training program and real practice.

Al Rabai (2016) points out the necessity of attending the induction courses held by the concerned departments and training institutions at the beginning of each semester to introduce junior undergraduate to field practicum, its objectives, its importance, and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all participants to practice the profession efficiently. Galalh (2011) emphasizes the importance of providing training programs for social work students to develop their knowledge and skills at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro).

**According to the mentioned above** and what has been confirmed by previous studies and research regarding the importance of field practicum; the obstacles facing field practicum female students which are related to professional competencies represented in the knowledge and skills of professional practice that they will need when they begin their tasks in field practicum; the commitment to the values and ethics of the profession, as well as the recommendations of other studies for the need students for programs that train them on professional practice before joining field practicum institutions to develop professional competencies for social work generalist practice.

This brings to the light the idea of the research to address the current reality by implementing a preparatory program for sixth level students (before they join field practicum institutions) to improve the track of the educational process, to develop knowledge, skills and values of professional practice for female students at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro). **Therefore, the study problem is determined by a question:** What is the effectiveness of a preparatory program in developing the professional competencies of field practicum female students in the framework of social work generalist practice?

### **Study Objectives:**

- 1- Measuring the effectiveness of a preparatory program in developing the professional competencies of female field practicum female students by focusing on the knowledge associated with the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions, skills of professional practice at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro) and the ethical values that must be adhered to during professional practice.
- 2- Determining the nature of professional knowledge, skills and moral values that must be developed for students according to the specification of field experience in the field practicum course.

### **Study Hypotheses:**

**The main hypothesis:** There are significant statistical differences between the pre and post measurements of the preparatory program and the development of professional competencies for field practicum female students within the framework of the social work generalist practice.

#### **This hypothesis is tested for the following hypothesis:**

- A- There are statistically significant differences between the pre and post measurements of the preparatory program and developing the knowledge of field practicum female students related to the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions.
- B- There are statistically significant statistical differences between the pre and post measurements of the preparatory program and the development

of professional practice skills for field practicum female students at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro).

- C- There are significant statistical differences between the pre and post measurements of the preparatory program and the development of ethical values that the field practicum female students must adhere to in professional practice with the client systems.

### **Study Concepts:**

#### **Professional Competencies:**

CBE is a curriculum-oriented approach. The aim of this approach is to ensure that students are able to demonstrate integration, and achieve proficiency during professional practice. Based on the Education Policy and Criteria for Accreditation (EPAS), effective social work practice consists of competencies and overlapping behaviors, which in its entirety consist of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and emotional processes (Wagner & Newcomb & Weiler, 2001, p.113).

Professional Competencies are defined as the ability to perform work that consists of knowledge, skills, and directions easily, with appropriate mastery and adjustment (Al-Qarni, 2018).

Professional Competencies are also, defined as a mixture of scientific and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills, behavior and values used to improve performance, or used as an indication of the performance of a particular job. Each profession has a set of competencies that its members must have to evaluate their performance (Abdul Rashid, 2011, p. 148).

It is also defined as a group of knowledge, capabilities, and directions that a person must possess in order to be able to effectively and master it effectively, and it is acquired during work through preparation programs before joining work, and is developed by training during the performance of work tasks (Abdel Raouf and Suleiman and Al-Zari, 2010, p. 232).

**Professional competencies are also defined as:** The ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a

purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community well-being (CSWE, 2015, p.6).

**By professional competencies, the researcher means the following:** The group of knowledge, skills, and ethical values that are developed for students of field practicum at the sixth level, and is determined procedurally in this study to the degree that the respondent obtains on the professional competency scale within the framework of the Generalist Practice of Social Work (prepared by the researcher).

### **Field Practicum:**

Training is defined as "an educational process that includes the acquisition of skills, concepts, rules and trends to continuously increase and improve the individual's performance" (Hassan, 2004, p. 163).

Field practicum is also defined as the process that aims to help the student to obtain a clear vision in implementing knowledge, theory and application of skills (Ali & Mahfouz, 2011, p. 31).

**By the field practicum, the researcher means:** One of the important requirements for the professional preparation of the social worker, which is taught as one of the courses in the study plan at the bachelor's stage at three levels of study (sixth, seventh, and eighth) through a practical program in social institutions under academic and institutional supervision. The student shall apply the theoretical experiences she receives in the undergraduate classes.

### **The preparatory program:**

By the preparatory program, the researcher refers to: a set of procedures represented in training units designed in a sequential and interconnected manner aiming to prepare field practicum female students before joining training institutions to develop their professional competencies related to professional knowledge, skills and moral values within the framework of the social work generalist practice.

**The objectives of the preparatory program:**

The general objective of the training activity is: Developing the professional competencies of field practicum female students within the framework of the social work generalist practice.

**A set of specific goals for the training activity:**

- 1- Developing knowledge related to the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions, through:

1.1 Requirements of Training package and field practicum fields.

1.2 Steps of social work generalist practice professional intervention (engagement - assessment - planning - implementation - evaluation - termination - follow-up).

- 2- Developing professional practice skills at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro).

- 3- Developing ethical values that must be adhered to in professional practice with client system through personal behavior and moral responsibility of students towards (clients, colleagues, organizations, profession, community).

**The criteria that were taken into account when designing the preparatory program:** In preparing the Preparatory Program, the researcher took in her consideration a set of criteria:

- The preparatory program was developed according to the specifications of the field experience course for the sixth level students. According to the course report, especially the section on obstacles, recommendations, and the evaluation presented by the students regarding the quality of the course as well as the course development plan for the previous semester.

- The time for implementing the preparatory program for female students was determined before joining the field practicum institutions, where a decision was issued by the field practicum office at the Faculty of Social work for female students to visit the field practicum institutions after the third week of the second semester. It was a good opportunity to implement the program according to the female schedule so that it was three days a week, five hours per day. **The**

**approval** of the field practicum Office, female students and field practicum supervisors to provide the preparatory program was received to serve as a preparatory program to help them in professional practice efficiently.

- Setting the general framework for the preparatory program (in coordination with the field practicum Office), and determining the available capabilities needed to implement the program.

- Determining the activities of the preparatory program, which were presented.

The preparatory program includes two essential integrated aspects, which are:

**Theoretical Aspect:** Through lectures, group discussions, and individual activities with the presentation of some educational videos.

**The practical Aspect:** by reviewing some models and applied cases, analyzing situations, workshops, role-playing and brainstorming sessions.

**By looking at the preparatory program from the general Systems theory, three integrated components of the preparatory program can be identified:**

**Inputs: Which Include**

**A- Human Inputs:** represented in the trainers and the trainees. In this study, we mean by the trainers (the researcher), and by the trainees we mean the field practicum female students (the research population) with their characteristics and training needs.

**B- Scientific and practical inputs:** These are the professional competencies represented in the knowledge, skills and moral values of social work generalist practice, and appropriate training methods.

**C- Material Inputs:** It is the material resources needed to implement the training program.

**Transformative processes:** they are mainly concerned with the targeted operations and activities related to the content of the preparatory program for field practicum female students to develop professional competencies for social work generalist practice.

**Outputs:** Outputs are the product of the final output of the system (the preparatory program) represented in the outputs it provides which are the

acquisition of new characteristics by field practicum female students (female trainees). The results are achieved as a result of the implementation of the program, which is the development of the professional competencies of field practicum female students.

**The application of the preparatory program went through several steps as follows:**

**A) Preparation stage:** This stage is mainly concerned with designing the preparatory program and includes the following variables (objectives, program content, strategies used, techniques, implementation of training activities, the role of the trainer, skills).

**B) Implementation stage:** This stage is mainly concerned with the implementation of the program. The preparatory program was implemented at the specified time, and according to the time plan set for it, in a schedule distributed over (3) weeks, three training days every week' each training session lasted five hours, i.e. (45) training hours, from the Sunday 7/1/2019 to Sunday, 23/1/2019, after preparing and mobilizing the necessary training means, and determining the place for its convening, the Faculty of Social Work at Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University in Riyadh was chosen.

**C) The evaluation stage:** The researcher determined the extent of the objectives achieved of the preparatory program. The evaluation was done **as follows:** Mechanisms were used to evaluate the preparatory program through discussion groups, applied exercises, and design a tool to measure the training performance of trainees entitled "a professional competency scale for field practicum female students within the framework of the Generalist Practice of Social Work".

- Carrying out an evaluation for the trainees before the start of the preparatory program to measure the extent of developing the professional competencies of field practicum female students within the framework of the Generalist Practice of Social Work using a scale designed for that purpose. This procedure is known as the pre - test.

- **In-training Evaluation:** by applying the tests (question cards – applied case exercises) that the trainer undertakes.

- **Carrying out an evaluation after the implementation of the preparatory program:** It includes evaluating the trainees by conducting post-test using the same scale used in the pre- test.

### **Methodology:**

This study belongs to quasi-experimental studies, using one experimental group and designing the pre and post experiment. The differences between the two measurements are considered as the change that comes from the preparatory program. If the statistical results led to a fundamental difference between the two measurements, this means that applying the preparatory program and developing professional competencies for field practicum female students as part of the Generalist Practice of Social Work was effective.

**Sample:** Students of the Faculty of Social Work, Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, KSA, (N= 30).

### **The sample was chosen according to the following conditions:**

- The trainees should be from the sixth level students who are placed to the field practicum institutions.
- The female students (female trainees) should not be exposed to the training program that has been studied previously.

### **Tools of the Study:**

The researcher relied on designing a professional competency scale for field practicum female students within the framework of the Generalist Practice of Social Work (prepared by the researcher), the researcher followed the following steps in designing the scale:

**A-** The researcher has reviewed the previous studies, theoretical literature and the specification of field experience and the relevant scales on the subject of measurement.

**B-** The dimensions of the scale were defined. They were confined on the professional competencies of field practicum female students, within the framework of the Generalist Practice of Social Work in their relation to:

**The first dimension:** knowledge related to the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions.

**The Second Dimension:** Professional practice skills at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro).

**The Third Dimension:** The ethical values that must be commitment in professional practice with the client systems.

### **C- Ensuring the validity of the scale by relying on:**

#### **Validity:**

The scale was presented to five social work professors to rule out the scale, expressing an opinion on the appropriateness of each statement in terms of its formulation and its relation to the dimension to be measured. They may add the terms they think appropriate, as well as deleting the terms they think inappropriate for the study. According to the inter-rater agreement score, which reached (80%) for the scale. Some statements were deleted while other statements were modified in terms of formulation. Furthermore, other statements were added. The scale statements in their final form reached (73) statements, and the responses for each statement in the test take one of the three responses (yes - Somewhat – no).

#### **Reliability:**

Reliability was confirmed using test retest to verify the reliability of the tool though its application on a sample composed of 10 respondents from students at Faculty of Social work outside the research sample, sharing the same characteristics of the sample and reapplying them 10 days later. Then Spearman's rho equation was calculated and the following reliability coefficients were found:

Table No. (1)

Spearman's rho Correlation Coefficient to measure Scale reliability

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Value of Spearman's rho Coefficient</b>
First dimension	0.880**
Second dimension	0.881**
Third dimension	0.827**
<b>The Scale as whole</b>	<b>0.985**</b>

\*\* Significant at < 0.01

The previous table shows that the Scale Spearman's rho Correlation Coefficient are statistically significant (0.01) indicating the validity of the Scale and its fitness for use in the design.

### **Professional intervention:**

The preparatory program for developing the professional competencies for field practicum female students within the framework of the social work generalist practice.

The program was applied on field practicum female students at the sixth level of the experimental group. The program sought to achieve the general objective of the training activity, which is: Developing the professional competencies for field practicum female students within the framework of the social work generalist practice. The general objective was achieved through achieving the sub-objectives **as follows:**

#### **First sub- objective:**

1- Development of knowledge related to the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions, and the objective was achieved as follows:

**Program Content:** Definition of the training package and fields of field practicum, and acquisition of knowledge requirements for professional intervention steps for social work generalist practice (engagement - assessment - planning - implementation - evaluation - termination - follow-up).

- **Training strategies used to achieve the objective:** persuasion, cognitive reconstruction, active education, cooperative education, problem solving.

**Techniques:** clarification, interpretation, role playing, and brainstorming.

**Implementation of training activities:** The researcher used the interactive lecture, brainstorming, dialogue and discussion. to do so, the researcher presented the program topics (introducing the components of the training package and training fields, how to prepare the training plan, types of clients and types of problems in each field) and implementation was as follows:

- A brainstorm was introduced to the students, with a group of questions and tasks given to start working in groups, seeking to search for answers through research and learning.
- Displaying a video clip explaining the concept of field practicum and fields of professional practice, then the process of discussion and dialogue took place.
- Four female graduate students were hosted and a panel discussion was held on the problems that can be faced in field practicum and how to overcome them.
- A case study was also studied and training how to apply the steps of professional intervention to social work generalist practice and used role-playing, workshops, discussion and dialogue, and at the end of the training the students draw a free illustration (such as nerve branching) of the general practice steps with the problem and then share it with others.
- **By the end of each activity, questions and the answers were exchanged:** the researcher covers the contents of the course by asking a series of questions and doing a reverse process as well. The students are asked to form and ask questions to learn more about the topic.

**Professional roles used:** interpreter, teacher, evaluator, analyst.

**Skills used:** listening, observation, communication.

### **Second sub-objective:**

2 - Development of professional practice skills at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro).

**Program Content:** skill (professional relationship, observation, communication, interview, recording).

- **Training strategies used to achieve the objective:** problem solving, collaborative work, promotion, and critical thinking.

**Techniques:** clarification, interpretation, role play, brainstorming, group discussion.

**Implementation of training activities:** The researcher used the lecture, workshops, behavior modeling, critical thinking groups, case studies. The training activities were **implemented as follows:**

- Displaying professional situations and then discussing the actions of the social worker to determine the skills that have been applied through dialogue and discussion.

- The social worker working at the faculty was hosted to transfer her expertise of professional practice with client systems in the social work institutions and transfer her field experience to the students.

**Role play:** A female student plays the role of a social worker, and another student plays the role of a client. The role playing here is based on the text taken from the trainer. Through discussion and dialogue, they are taught to apply professional skill.

- Displaying videos on skills and then forming think tanks. The researcher divides the group into small groups to start quick dialogues. All groups meet together for 5-10 minutes to discuss the topic presented on the objectives. Then they propose new ideas, questions, and discuss together.

- Lecture and workshops for the skill of recording (at the level of micro, mezzo and macro units).

- At the end of each activity, cards are distributed asking them to discover the error in applying the skill and to clarify the right thing.

**Professional roles used:** assistant, mediator, teacher, evaluator, analyst.

**Skills used:** listening, observing, facilitating dialogue, decision-making.

**The Third Sub-objective:**

3- Developing ethical values that must be adhered in professional practice along with client systems.

**Program Content:**

- Personal behavior and moral responsibility of students towards (clients, colleagues, organizations, profession, society).

**Training strategies used to achieve the objective:** persuasion, behavior and direction modification, reinforcement, cooperative learning, modeling.

**Techniques:** role play, clarification and interpretation, brainstorming, persuasion.

**Implementation of training activities:**

- **Behavior modeling has been used:** The preferred behavior followed by the social worker is presented through explanation and representation by the researcher about one of the professional situations, and then an analysis, discussion, study of features, and feedback are provided.
- The field practicum director was hosted and held a dialogue and discussion session on the rights and duties of the student in the field practicum institutions.
- **Workshops:** Displaying a video clip for the discussion and interaction to monitor the characteristics that must be available in the social worker.
- Distribution of cards containing information on which dialogue and discussion are required.
- Distributing a card containing multiple sentences, and writing off wrong professional practices.

**Professional roles used:** interpreter, analyst, assistant, mediator, teacher, evaluator.

**Skills used:** interview, listening, observing, facilitating dialogue, decision making.

**Results:** Research results are described in the following table:

**First Sub-Hypothesis:**

Table No. (2)

clarifies "the significance of the differences between the pre and post measurements of the experimental group in Developing the knowledge of field practicum female students related to the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions" using the " T " Test

Dimensions	pre Intervention (N = 30)		post Intervention (N = 30)		T
	M	S.D	M	S.D	
knowledge related to the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions.	72.80	3.377	100.43	2.128	***40.50

\*\*\* Significant at < 0.001

**It is clear from the previous table that** there are statistically significant differences between the pre and post measurements of the preparatory program and developing the knowledge of field practicum female students related to the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions, at a level of

significance less than 0.001, where the value of  $T = 40.50$ , where the arithmetic average of the pre measurement was 72.80. On the other hand, the arithmetic mean for the post measurement has increased by 100.43, and this means that the preparatory program led to developing the awareness of field practicum female students in the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions, **thus** proving the validity of the first research sub-hypothesis.

### Second sub-hypothesis:

Table No. (3)

clarifies “the significance of the differences between the pre and post measurements of the experimental group in Development of professional practice skills for field practicum female students at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro)” using the " T " Test

Dimensions	pre Intervention (N = 30)		post Intervention (N = 30)		T
	M	S.D	M	S.D	
Professional practice skills at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro).	42.73	3.194	56.47	2.129	***20.10

\*\*\* Significant at  $< 0.001$

**It is clear from the previous table that** there are statistically significant differences between the pre and post measurements of the preparatory program and the development of professional practice skills for field practicum female students at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro ), at a level of significance less than 0.001, where the value of  $T = 20.10$ , where the average pre measurement was 42.73, while the average of post-measurement increased 56.47, which means that the preparatory program led to the development of professional skills for field practicum female students at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro). **Thus** proving the validity of the second research sub-hypothesis.

### Third sub-hypothesis:

Table No. (4)

clarifies "the significance of the differences between the pre and post measurements of the experimental group in development of ethical values that must be adhered in professional practice with client systems" using the " T " Test

Dimensions	pre Intervention (N = 30)		post Intervention (N = 30)		T
	M	S.D	M	S.D	
the ethical values that must be adhered to in professional practice with the client system	40.83	2.276	52.83	0.834	***25.81

\*\*\* Significant at < 0.001

**It is clear from the previous table that** there are statistically significant differences between the pre and post measurements of the preparatory program and the development of ethical values that must be adhered in professional practice with client systems, at a level of significance less than 0.001, where the value of T = 25.81, the mean of the pre measurement was 40.83, while the average post measurement became 52.83, which means that the preparatory program led to acquiring the ethical values that students of field practicum must adhere to in professional practice with the client systems. **Thus** proving the validity of the third research sub-hypothesis.

Table No. (5)

clarifies "the significance of the differences between the pre and post measurements of the experimental group in developing the professional competencies of field practicum female students within the framework of the Generalist Practice of Social Work using the " T " Test

Measurements	N	M	S.D	T
pre Intervention	30	156.37	4.375	***66.34
post Intervention	30	209.73	3.073	

\*\*\* Significant at < 0.001

**It is clear from the above that** there are statistically significant differences between the pre and post measurements of the scale for the preparatory program as a whole and the development of professional competencies for field practicum female students within the framework of the social work generalist practice, at a level of significance less than 0.001, where the value of T = 66.34, where the average degree of the pre measurement was 156.37, While it increased in dimensional measurement and was 209.73, which means that the preparatory

program used by the researcher had an impact in developing the professional competencies of field practicum female students. This means that the main study hypothesis is valid.

**Discussing Research Results:** In the light of the results of the study, the following is clear: The findings of the Statistical results of data pointed out the effectiveness of the preparatory program used in developing the professional competencies of field practicum female students in the context of social work generalist practice in general.

This may be due to the program's reliance on various practical applications by following many strategies, techniques and practical activities that have had an impact on the effectiveness of the preparatory program. The study of Abu Al-Hassan (2011) points out that the obstacles related to training methods were represented in the failure of using visual training methods, as well as failure of applying audio and visual training methods. The results of Al Arab and Rawashdeh (2016) confirm the necessity of linking theoretical information that students study during the training practice with realistic practice. The preparatory program sought to achieve the same in the current study.

The acquired competencies are accomplished through education and then refining the education with continuous training and practice experiences so that the individual is able to perform his job tasks with the best standards in the various professional situations that he deals with (Ronald & Edward, 2002, p 142). Qazhah (2011) confirms the continuous review of field practicum programs and their impact on developing students' professional competencies.

Social work studies paid much attention to preparing, implementing and evaluating training programs in many fields whose results have been consistent with the results of the study regarding the relationship and linkage of training programs in the professional preparation of social workers through the development of their knowledge and skills. This is consistent with Daley (2001) whose results showed that the continuous education and on-service training should go hand in hand with the professional practice in order to upgrade the professional knowledge and skills and the level of service delivery to clients. This

was confirmed by Zidan (2011) and Qasim (2013) which their results point out the effectiveness of the impact of applying the training program from a social work perspective in developing knowledge, experiences, skills and positive trends for students of the social work profession.

The results revealed that the effectiveness of the preparatory program was effective. The Statistical results of the data indicated the presence of statistical differences between the pre and post measurements in developing the knowledge of field practicum female students related to the nature of professional practice in field practicum institutions, which include the definition of the training package and fields of field practicum, and the steps of professional intervention for general practice in the social work.

In light of the social work profession search to raise the efficiency of the social worker by providing professional assistance to the various client systems at the highest level, the only way to do the same is through paying much attention for his professional preparation so that he can perform his role and raise the status of the profession. Tthe current study were in agreement with the Khatiri (2003), Mayads & Nazmeen (2004), Calitz (2005), regarding the importance of developing professional skills and updating the professional knowledge received by the trainees, as well as connecting the training with the reality of professional practice. Galalh (2011) recommended the importance of providing training programs for social work students to develop their knowledge and skills at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro). **This is what the preparatory program seeks to achieve in the current study.**

**Also**, the results show the effectiveness of the preparatory program. The statistical data processing results refer to the presence of statistically significant differences between the pre and post measurements in developing the skills of professional practice for field practicum female students at the level of units (micro, mezzo and macro), which includes the following skills (professional relationship, observation, communication, interview, recording). Ibrahim (2014) agrees with the results of the current study that the academic supervisor plays an important a role in providing students in the field of field practicum with contemporary skills.

Al-Khatib (2003) confirms the need to acquire field skills necessary for professional practice. This is what the preparatory program seeks to achieve in the current study. Gharib, Bahshwan & Al-Aidarous (2019) recommend working to efficiently providing the professional skills to field practicum female students. This is the aim that the preparatory program seeks to achieve in the current study.

**The results** prove the effectiveness of the preparatory program. The statistical data processing results refer to the presence of statistically significant differences between the pre and post measurements in developing ethical values that field practicum female students must adhere in professional practice with client systems. These values include personal behavior and ethical responsibility of field practicum female students towards (clients, colleagues, organizations, Profession, community).

This goes in line with the orientations of the CSWE so that field practicum clearly seeks to support students towards learning about the processes and procedures of practice, in addition to commitment to professional values and ethics (CSWE, 2001). Al-Awawdeh Study (2010) emphasizes the importance of field practicum in providing students with the profession's values and ethics. This is what the preparatory program seeks to achieve in the current study. **Finally**, the researcher attributes the success of the program, achieving the objectives of the research, and achieving the outputs to the good preparation of the program, the availability of resources, and the variety of training methods used. The faculty administration agreed on the preparatory program and a decision was taken to implement it at the beginning of each semester.

### **The study presents the following recommendations**

- Paying attention to identifying training needs for field practicum female students at different levels, and to be placed within the college's activities plan.
- The importance of providing a preparatory program for all levels of study (sixth, seventh and eighth) before students participate in field practicum, which helps them in professional practice in social institutions.
- Working to develop a specification of field experience course in terms of developing strategies to achieve a link between the theoretical and Field education

- Working to implement the preparatory program through distance education in light of dealing with the Covid -19 pandemic.

### **Associated limitations related to the research**

- Lack of studies and references on the subject of professional competencies in social work.
- Procedures for obtaining approval to provide the preparatory program from the college administration by providing the venue and taking the approval of field practicum supervisors.
- Working to modify academic schedule to suit the time of implementing the program.

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