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Decency Won't Save Us: Critical Considerations for Occupational Sustainability

Nia Johnson

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SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH *and* PRACTICE SEMINAR

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



Nia Johnson, Ph.D., MSW

Graduate Social Work
West Chester University

Decency Won't Save Us:

Critical Considerations for Occupational Sustainability

Nia Johnson, PhD, MSW



Social Work

- Child Welfare
- School-based therapist
- PRP/TBS
- Administrator
- Consultant

Research

- Professional identity
- Interdisciplinary work
- Mentorship

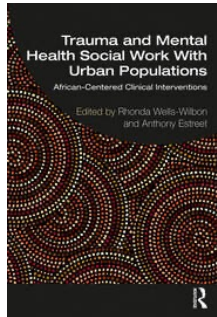
Pedagogy

- Curator > lecturer
- Knowing is in the doing
- Wherever you go there you are
- Self is the greatest tool





Johnson, N., Archibald, P., Estreet, A., & Morgan, A. (2021). **The Cost of Being Black in Social Work Practicum.** *Advances in Social Work, 21*(2/3), 331-353.



Archibald, P., & Johnson, N. (2021). **Culturally relevant, trauma-responsive, and healing-centered social work supervision.** In *Trauma and Mental Health Social Work with Urban Populations* (pp. 52-65). Routledge.



Geyton, T.A., Town, M., Hunte, R. & Johnson, N. (2022) **Magnifying inequality: How Black women found safety in the midst of dual pandemics.** *Journal of Social Issues, 00*, 1– 19).



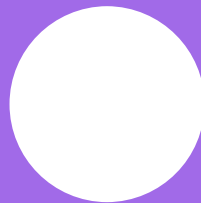
Contributing Publications





Agenda

- Contextualize UN SDG 8 w/in social work
- Explore challenges
- Recommendations for occupational sustainability
- Q&A



“If a society normalizes
indecencies, then
indecencies will be the
norm, without
countermeasures.”
— Henry Johnson Jr

Purpose of this presentation

For you to (re)consider
the notion of decent work
and its implications for
occupational
sustainability.

Occupational Sustainability

Continuity of a profession without compromising its future ability to thrive



The Great Resignation

Top reasons why U.S. workers left a job in 2021: Low pay, no advancement opportunities

Among those who quit a job at any point in 2021, % saying each was a ____ why they did so

	Major reason	Minor reason	Net
Pay was too low	37	26	63
No opportunities for advancement	33	30	63
Felt disrespected at work	35	21	57
Because of child care issues*	24	24	48
Not enough flexibility to choose when to put in hours	24	21	45
Benefits weren't good**	23	20	43
Wanted to relocate to a different area	22	13	35
Working too many hours	20	19	39
Working too few hours	16	14	30
Employer required a COVID-19 vaccine	8	10	18

*Among those with children younger than 18 living in the household.

**Question provided health insurance and paid time off as examples.

Note: Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 7-13, 2022.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

UN SDG 8:

Promote sustained, inclusive &
sustainable economic growth,
full & productive employment &
decent work for all



What is decent work?

Decent work means opportunities for everyone to get work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration.

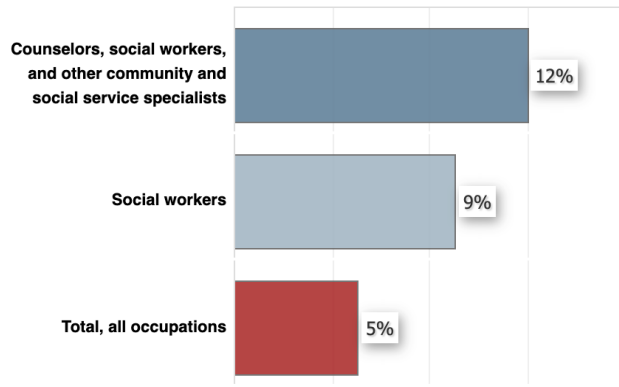
~ UN SDG 8



Is *decency* enough in the Social Work profession?

Social Workers

Percent change in employment, projected 2021-31



Note: All Occupations includes all occupations in the U.S. Economy.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program

First-time clinical social work licensure pass rates

Between 2018 and 2021, Black test-takers had the lowest pass rates.



Source: Association of Social Work Boards

What is *decency*?



Recommendations



Students



Social Workers



Institutions





Thank you!

Nia Johnson, Ph.D., MSW
Assistant Professor
Graduate Social Work
West Chester University
NJohnson2@wcupa.edu

