

**Kuwaiti Social Workers' Orientation  
Toward Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)  
Supported by Kuwait University OS0216**

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## **Abstract:**

This study evaluated Kuwaiti clinical social workers' orientation toward the evidence-based practice (EBP) process and investigated the variables associated with it. A convenient sample of 300 clinical social workers was selected to participate in the study. The findings showed a high overall level of orientation toward the EBP process. The results showed that the female participants express more positive attitudes toward the EBP process than the male participants do. In addition, social workers who are not recently graduated and who have years of practical experience in the field are more likely to adopt the EBP into their practice than the social workers who are recently graduated. Moreover, the social workers who reported that they do not need to attend workshops on the EBP process were familiar with EBP and had more positive attitudes toward it than did those who reported that they need to attend workshops on the EBP process.

**Keywords:** clinical social work- evidence-based practice-social workers.

## توجه العاملين الاجتماعيين الكويتيين نحو الممارسة القائمة على الأدلة بدعم من جامعة الكويت OS0216

د. هند المعصب

### الملخص:

قيمة هذه الدراسة أنها توجه الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين الإكلينكيين الكويتيين نحو عملية الممارسة القائمة على الأدلة مع دراسة المتغيرات المرتبطة بها. تم اختيار عينة من ٣٠٠ من الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين الإكلينكيين للمشاركة في الدراسة. أظهرت النتائج وجود مستوى عالٍ من التوجه نحو الممارسة القائمة على الأدلة. وأظهرت النتائج أن المشاركين الإناث يعبرون عن مواقف أكثر إيجابية تجاه الممارسة القائمة على الأدلة من الرجال. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين الغير خريجين حديثاً ولديهم سنوات من الخبرة العملية في هذا المجال هم أكثر احتمالاً لتبني الممارسة القائمة على الأدلة في ممارستهم من الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين الخريجين حديثاً. علاوة على ذلك، فإن الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين الذين أفادوا بأنهم ليسوا بحاجة إلى حضور ورش عمل حول الممارسة القائمة على الأدلة كانوا على دراية بها وكان لديهم مواقف أكثر إيجابية تجاهها من أولئك الذين ذكروا أنهم بحاجة إلى حضور ورش عمل حول عملية الممارسة القائمة على الأدلة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الخدمة الاجتماعية الإكلينيكية، الممارسة القائمة على الأدلة، الأخصائيين الاجتماعيين.

## **Introduction:**

The evidence-based practice (EBP) process model was first used in medicine and spilled into other fields, among them, social work (Bender et al., 2013). It was quickly accepted into social work practice, literature, and curriculum (Adams et al., 2009). Furthermore, many social work research studies have pointed out the need to integrate research findings into field practice (Bender et al., 2013; Nyström & Åhsberg, 2016; Rubin & Parrish, 2007, 2011), which indicates the need for a new method to guide the practice of social work.

There are many definitions of the evidence-based practice process. Some studies defined the EBP as the “conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individuals” (Sackett, Rosenberg, Gray, Haynes, & Richardson, 1996, P.71). Others, such as Bender et al. (2013) defined EBP as a model that consists of decision-making. Another definition of the EBP is by Gromoske and Berger (2015), who defined EBP as the “integrating research evidence, clinical expertise and client values” (P.1). There was a consensus among the EBP process definitions that this method requires clinical social workers to be thoughtful when they are selecting the most recent empirical evidence to make a decision about the intervention for clients. The EBP process is based on the following criteria: clinical expertise when it is integrated with 1) the most recent evidence; 2) clients’ values, preferences, and actions; and

3) the circumstances of the practice where the clients receive the best care (Bender et al., 2013; Nyström & Åhsberg, 2016; Mullen et al., 2005). Bender et al. (2013) explained that the EBP process model encourages a positive and trusting relationship between clinical social workers and clients; it also encourages clinical social workers to provide an intervention based on empirical research to obtain better outcomes.

The evidence-based practice model has five steps. The first step includes creating questions that are related to evidence-based practice; the second step includes searching for the best evidence to answer these questions; the third step includes critically appraising the empirical evidence; the fourth step includes integrating the best evidence that the social worker finds with the client's values, preferences, and characteristics; and the last step includes evaluating the practice outcomes (Bender et al., 2013; Mullen, 2014; Nyström & Åhsberg, 2016; Rubin & Parrish, 2010; Van der Zwet et al., 2014).

Although some may argue that using the evidence-based practice process model could conflict with social work values, Thyer and Pignotti (2011) illustrated that the EBP is harmonious with clinical social work values because it is about searching for the best scientific evidence that would help with the intervention. In addition, social work values encourage social workers to base their practice on empirical knowledge.

Mullen et al. (2008) explained that social workers can achieve better outcomes when they are working with clients by selecting an intervention based on scientific knowledge, not by asserting their authority, relying on tradition, or simply using common sense. Still, a majority of social work practitioners rarely use the EBP model, do not read the research, and do not assess the work they conduct (Edmond et al., 2006; Kirk & Reid, 2002; Mullen & Bacon, 2004). In Edmond et al.'s (2006) study, the field instructors depended on their clinical experience when they selected an intervention, although the majority of their sample reported that the EBP was a useful practice idea.

There are some obstacles of using the EBP process in the field of social work, such as lack of time and misconceptions about the usefulness of the EBP (Edmond et al., 2006), lack of skills and training of social workers, and inadequate agency resources and supervision (Gray et al., 2013).

Bender et al., (2013) examined the effects of the evidence-based practice process material when it was integrated into a curriculum of social work master's program. They used the EBPPAS to evaluate the study outcomes. At the posttest, they found significant differences between the comparison and the EBP groups, where the EBP groups showed a higher rate on the familiarity subscale than the comparison group. In addition, Bender et al. (2013) showed that at the posttest there were no significant differences between the comparison and the EBP

groups on the four variables of the EBP: attitudes, feasibility, intentions, and engagement in the EBP process.

Parrish and Rubin (2012) examined the orientation toward and implementation of evidence-based practices of 865 social workers, psychologists, and licensed marriage and family therapists (LMFTs) in Texas. They found that psychologists who have a PhD reported stronger orientation toward evidence-based practice than social workers who have only a master's degree. In addition, social workers who have been graduated more recently had a more positive view of the EBP process than did those who have been graduated less recently.

Van der Zwet et al. (2014) evaluated 341 Dutch social workers' orientation toward the evidence-based practice process and the variables associated with it. They found that Dutch social workers' overall orientation toward the EBP process is low. Furthermore, the Dutch social workers' intentions and their actual engagement with the EBP process are also low. The results of Van der Zwet et al.'s (2014) study showed that social workers who are over 29 years old were less familiar with the EBP model than were social workers who are under 29 years old. In addition, participants who did not take a course on the EBP process when they were a student were less oriented toward it than social workers who did.

Many studies measure the social worker's orientation toward the EBP process (Rubin & Parrish, 2011; Van der

Zwet et al., 2014; Nyström & Åhsberg, 2016). Rubin and Parrish (2011) studied social workers and master's students in social work in the US. They found in their study that the participants had a higher per-item mean for the overall scale (3.3) and subscales had per-item means ranging between 2.9 and 3.5, where the midpoint is 3.0 of the 1 to 5 range scores. Nyström and Åhsberg (2016) studied community-based professionals in social work and health care services in Sweden. They found that "the mean scores of the total scale were 117.67" (p. 4) and the mean score of the subscales ranged between 20 and 51. Van der Zwet et al. (2014) measured Dutch social workers' orientation toward the EBP process. They found that the per-item mean for the entire scale was 2.9 and subscales had per-item means ranging between 2.3 and 3.2. The outcomes of the above studies indicated that the overall orientation toward the EBP was not high in these different samples, although some of the samples had taken courses in the EBP process. These outcomes lead us to an important issue: Do clinical social workers have an orientation toward the EBP process in Kuwait?

In the field of social work in Kuwait, there is a considerable gap between theory and practice; and Kuwaiti social workers are not able to apply the models and theories they learned in classes to their clinical practices (Al-Ma'seb et al., 2015). This gap may be due to the following reason: some social workers who work in the field do not have a social

work major but they have majored in something else like sociology or psychology. In these cases, the curriculum they followed needs to be developed to help the social workers to apply what they learned in school to their practices (Al-Ma'seb et al., 2015). This major reason still exists; no action has been taken to deal with the current situation in the field of clinical social work in Kuwait. The current situation in the field indicates the need of a method to bridge this gap. Some authors believe that the EBP process model can help to narrow the research-practice gap in the field (Rubin & Parrish, 2007; 2012). Therefore, it is important to understand the orientation of Kuwaiti social workers toward the EBP process, which might help to narrow the gap between theory and practice in the field of clinical social work in Kuwait. This study is the first empirical study in the field of social work in Kuwait that investigates social workers' orientation toward the EBP process. It will provide an evaluated tool to assess the EBP model when clinical social workers in Kuwait engage in this model. Furthermore, the current study will help to indicate whether or not the EBP model is a useful tool that clinical social workers in Kuwait can agree to use in their practices. The most important contribution of the current study is whether or not clinical social workers in Kuwait are familiar with and knowledgeable about the EBP model since it is a new method in the social work field in Kuwait.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The current study assessed the scale's internal consistency reliability, content validity, and factor validity for the EBPPAS scale. In addition, this study assessed social workers' opinions about the EBP process and implementation of the EBP process. Furthermore, the current study explored whether variables such as gender, years of experience, and the need of workshops are associated with the level of orientation toward the EBP process.

## **Methodology**

### *Participants*

The sample of this study consisted of Kuwaiti clinical social workers who worked with clients in private and public organizations who needed counseling. This study used the convenience-sampling method. A total of 300 social workers participated in the study. The participants had the following characteristics: the average age was 37.62 years (SD = 8.5); 43% were male and 56% were female; 82.3% were married, 13.3% were single, 3% were divorced, and 0.3% were widowed; 25.3% had five years or less of work experience in social work; 26.7% had between six and 10 years of work experience in social work; 20.3% had between 11 and 15 years of work experience in social work; 15.7% had between 16 and 20 years of work experience in social work; and 11.7% had between 21 and more years of work experience in social

work; 34.3% earned 500 KD or less; 12.3% earned between 501 KD and 800 KD; 18.7% earned between 801 KD and 1,100 KD; 9.7% earned between 1,101 KD and 1,400 KD; 3.7% earned between 1,401 KD and 1,700 KD; and 8.3% earned between 1,701 KD and 2,000 KD.

### **Data collection**

A survey approach was selected to address the research questions. The Evidence-Based Practice Process Assessment Scale (EBPPAS) was developed by Rubin and Parrish (2011); it contains 51 items to measure social workers' opinions about and accomplishment of the Evidence-Based Practice Process. Responses were made on a 5-point Likert scale. The revised shortened version of The EBPPAS of this study was composed of 44 items. The EBPPAS has five sub-scales. The first sub-scale is familiarity with the EBP process (10 items) and it included questions such as "I know how to skillfully apply the steps of the EBP process". The next sub-scale is the attitudes of social workers about the EBP process (13 items) and it included questions such as "EBP helps to improve the clients' outcomes". The third sub-scale is intentions to engage in the EBP process (8 items) and it included questions such as "I intend to engage in all steps of the EBP process." The fourth sub-scale is behavior (how often currently engaged in the EBP process - 8 items) and it included questions such as "I evaluate the outcomes of my practice decisions" The last sub-scale is feasibility to engage in the EBP process (5 items)

and it included questions such as “I have enough time to engage in the EBP process.” According to Rubin and Parrish (2011), the “higher scores indicate a more favorable response in each section and for the overall scale” (p. 107). Rubin and Parrish (2011) found the EBPPAS valid and reliable with 0.94 alphas for the total scale and they explained that the alpha values for the five subscales ranged between 0.63 and 0.91. Nyström and Åhsberg (2016) examined the satisfactoriness of the short version of the EBPPAS when translated to the context of Swedish welfare service. They found that the Swedish version of the EBPPAS is reliable and can assess the evidence-based practice in Sweden.

The participants in this study completed a questionnaire that included two parts. The first part asked about relevant demographic information. The other part included the Evidence-Based Practice Process Assessment Scale. However, the language of this scale was in English. Therefore, the EBPPAS was translated back to back from English to Arabic by two specialists in Arabic and English languages.

### **Data analysis**

Data analyses were conducted in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (version 25). Descriptive analyses were conducted to provide information about the sample and find the means and standard deviations. The internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Furthermore, factor

analysis was used to assess the validity of the scales. T-test and one-way between-group analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to investigate the impact of gender, years of experience, and the need for workshops on each of the five sub-scale scores.

## **Results**

### *Internal consistency*

The internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The alpha of the five subscales was found to be as follows: familiarity ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ), attitudes ( $\alpha = 0.63$ ), intention to engage in the EBP process ( $\alpha = 0.83$ ), behavior ( $\alpha = 0.84$ ), feasibility ( $\alpha = 0.54$ ). Cronbach's alpha for the entire scale was 0.88, which is excellent.

Although the alpha for the attitudes and feasibility subscales are not very high, the results of alpha for those subscales are still acceptable based on Kline (2000) and George and Mallery (2003). Moreover, the attitudes and feasibility subscales in the current study have the lowest alpha among the other subscales, which confirms the findings of Rubin and Parrish (2011) and Van der Zwet et al. (2014).

### *Content validity*

To ensure the validity of the instrument, a field test was conducted for the EBPPAS of the Arabic version. The researcher utilized a panel of judges consisting of professors who are

familiar with the current study. This panel evaluated a draft of the questionnaire. The panel found all items were good, except for one item that does not apply to the social work field in Kuwait, where “EBP is nothing more than a way to cut treatment costs.” They suggested removing the item from the attitudes of social workers about the EBP sub-scale. The reason behind removing this item from the EBPPAS was that most counseling services that serve clients in government organizations are free in Kuwait. Therefore, this item did not apply to the services that the participants of this study provided to their clients. The author of this study consequently removed this item from the questionnaire.

### *Factor analysis*

The factor analysis of the 44 items of the EBPPAS scale, using the principal component method, yielded five factors, which are familiarity, attitudes, intentions, behavior, and feasibility. Factor 1 accounted for 20.32% of the variance; the eigenvalue associated with this factor was 8.9. Factor 2 accounted for 28.88% of the variance; the eigenvalue associated with this factor was 3.7. Factor 3 accounted for 36.22% of the variance; the eigenvalue associated with this factor was 3.2. Factor 4 accounted for 41.16% of the variance; the eigenvalue associated with this factor was 2.17. Factor 5 accounted for 45.48% of the variance; the eigenvalue associated with this factor was 1.9.

Items 1 through 10 were designed to measure familiarity. All the ten items loaded on a single factor. In addition, items 11 through 23 were designed to measure attitudes and all the 13 items loaded on a single factor. Furthermore, items 24 through 28 were designed to measure the feasibility and all the five items loaded on a single factor. Items 29 through 36 were designed to measure intentions and all the eight items loaded on a single factor. Items 35 through 44 were designed to measure behavior and all the eight items loaded on a single factor. The majority of the loading on the five factors was greater than or equal to 0.50, which is considered significant (Hair et al., 1998). However, few of the loadings were greater than 0.40, which is still considered practically significant. Therefore, the EBPPAS measure in the Arabic version is considered valid.

#### *Social Workers' Orientation Toward the EBP Process*

The mean of the total scores (orientation) was 153.25 (3.48 per item mean) which is considered a little higher than the midpoint of 3 on the 1 to 5 range scores. Five sub-scales per item means a range between 3.1 and 3.8. The familiarity subscale has the highest per-item mean of 3.86 and the feasibility subscale has the lowest per-item mean of 3.15, which means that all the per-item means for the five subscales are above the midpoint of 3. These results indicated that Kuwaiti social workers who participated in this study are familiar with the EBP process, have slightly positive attitudes toward

the EBP process, and their intention and actual engagement in the EBP process are considerably high. (See Table 1).

Scale (Number of Items)	Coefficient $\alpha$	Mean Score	SD	Per-Item Mean
<b>Total scores (Orientation) (44)</b>	0.88	153.25	15.80	3.48
<b>Familiarity with the EBP process (10)</b>	0.86	38.60	5.13	3.86
<b>Attitudes of social workers about the EBP process (13)</b>	0.63	44.32	4.86	3.41
<b>Intentions to engage in the EBP process (8)</b>	0.83	27.46	5.30	3.43
<b>Behavior (8)</b>	0.84	26.97	5.5	3.37
<b>Feasibility to engage in the EBP process (5)</b>	0.54	15.76	2.90	3.15

**Table 1. Coefficient  $\alpha$ , Mean Score, and Standard Deviation for the Entire Scale and Subscales (N = 300)**

### *Gender*

A t-test was conducted to compare the EBPPAS and five sub-scale scores (familiarity, attitudes, intentions, behavior, & feasibility) for male and female social workers. The results showed that there are significant differences between males and females in terms of attitudes ( $t = 2.63$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), with a mean score of 42.50 for Kuwaiti male social workers and a mean score of 44.23 for Kuwaiti female social workers. However, the analysis indicated that the means of familiarity, intentions, behavior, feasibility, and orientation did not differ significantly, at  $p < 0.05$  (See Table 2).

	Male		Female		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
<b>Familiarity</b>	38.67	5.75	37.86	4.84	294	1.30
<b>Attitudes</b>	42.50	6.57	44.23	4.77	295	2.63**
<b>Intentions</b>	27.10	4.95	27.20	5.67	295	0.16
<b>Behavior</b>	27.26	5.66	26.52	5.26	295	1.15
<b>Feasibility</b>	15.78	2.66	15.57	3.17	295	0.61
<b>Orientation</b>	151.02	19.28	151.41	15.24	295	0.19

\*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < 0.001, (2-tailed).

**Table 2. The t-test between gender & Scale and sub-scale scores.**

### *The Need for Workshops on the EBP Process*

The purpose of the current study is to investigate whether there was a difference in orientation toward the EBP process between social workers who reported a need for workshops on the EBP process and those who did not see a need for workshops on the EBP process. The author made sure that there was no overlap between the EBPPAS scale and the need for workshop measure. The EBPPAS scale contains no items that address the need for a workshop among social workers. The results showed significant differences when considering the familiarity ( $t = 2.21$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), with a mean of 37.72 for social workers who reported that there is a need for workshops on the EBP process and a mean of 39.17 for social workers who reported that there is no need for workshops on the EBP process. In addition, the results showed significant differences with regard to attitudes ( $t = 2.29$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), with

a mean of 43.01 for social workers who reported that there is a need for workshops on the EBP process and a mean of 44.62 for social workers who reported that there is no need for workshops on the EBP process. However, the analysis indicated that the means of intentions, behavior, feasibility, and orientation scores did not differ significantly, at  $p < 0.05$  (See Table 3).

	Yes		No		<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
<b>Familiarity</b>	37.7	5.29	39.17	5.07	295	2.21*
<b>Attitudes</b>	43.01	5.63	44.62	5.52	296	2.29*
<b>Intentions</b>	27.13	5.13	27.05	5.83	296	0.11
<b>Behavior</b>	26.69	5.35	27.03	5.88	296	0.48
<b>Feasibility</b>	15.56	2.82	15.79	3.20	296	0.62
<b>Orientation</b>	149.9	16.99	153.6	17.24	296	1.74

\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , (2-tailed).

**Table 3. The t-test between “need for workshops” & Scale and sub-scale scores.**

### *Participants' Years of Experience*

One way ANOVA was conducted to test the differences between groups in terms of the participants experience in working in the field of social work, and the EBPPAS and five sub-scale scores (familiarity, attitudes, intentions, behavior, and feasibility). The participants' years of experience in social works were categorized as follows: 5 years or less, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 21 years and more. There were statistically significant differences in the familiarity sub-scale

scores for the five different years of experience groups,  $F(4,293) = 3.22, p < 0.01$ . However, the analysis indicated that the means of intentions, attitudes, behavior, feasibility, and orientation scores did not differ significantly at  $p < 0.05$  (See Table 4).

	5 or less		6 - 10		11 - 15		16 - 20		21 & more		F	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		df
<b>Familiarity</b>	36.9	4.5	38.5	5.5	37.3	5.9	39.5	5.1	39.8	4.0	297	3.2**
<b>Attitudes</b>	43.7	5.7	43.1	5.7	42.3	6.0	44.1	5.1	44.5	5.1	298	1.1
<b>Intentions</b>	27.1	5.2	26.6	5.8	27.5	4.7	27.9	5.2	26.4	5.5	298	0.1
<b>Behavior</b>	26.8	5.4	26.26	6.1	27.3	5.2	27.3	5.3	26.4	4.9	298	0.6
<b>Feasibility</b>	15.4	3.1	15.6	2.8	15.7	2.7	15.7	2.9	15.9	3.2	298	0.4
<b>Orientation</b>	150.2	17.4	150.2	18.7	149.7	16.4	154.7	15.9	153.2	14.8	298	0.8

\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , (2-tailed).

**Table 4. One-way ANOVA between the participants' years of experience & Scale and sub-scale scores.**

## **Discussion**

The current study is measuring the levels of social workers' orientation toward and implementation of the EBP process. This is the first empirical study in Kuwait and in the Arabian Gulf that investigated this issue. The findings indicated that Kuwaiti social workers who participated in this study have a slightly high overall orientation toward the EBP process. They are familiar with the EBP process, they have high positive attitudes, they have high intentions to engage in the EBP process, and their actual engagement with it is high. When comparing the results of this study to other studies measuring social workers' orientation toward the EBP process, the findings showed that the sample of this study had a higher overall orientation (3.48 per-item) than three other study samples: (1) US social workers and students (3.3 per-item) used in Rubin and Parrish's (2011) study, where the researchers used a simple random sample to collect their data; (2) Dutch social workers (2.9 per-item) used in Van der Zwet et al.'s (2014) study, where they used a convenience sampling method to collect their data; and (3) Swedish social workers (3.2 per-item) used in Nyström and Åhsberg's (2016) study, where they used a voluntary sampling method to collect their data. In addition, the Kuwaiti social workers who participated in this study had higher per-item mean scores than the social workers surveyed in the other studies in the following subscales: familiarity with the EBP process, intention to engage in the EBP

process, and the actual engagement in the EBP process. However, the Kuwaiti social workers in this study had lower per-item scores than those in the US sample in the feasibility to engage in the EBP process; the samples had similar per-item scores on attitudes about the EBP process. All of the participants in this study worked in the government sectors, which provided to their employees regular workshops about the latest knowledge in the field of social work, which helps them developing their skills. Participants in this study were asked if they have taken workshops in the EBP process; 54.3% reported that they have taken workshops in the EBP process and 44% reported that they have not taken workshops in the EBP process.

The current study explored whether variables such as gender, years of experience, and the need for workshops are associated with the social worker's level of orientation toward the EBP process or not. The results showed that the female participants express more positive attitudes toward the EBP process than the male participants do. In addition, there are no statistically significant differences between gender and the overall orientation toward the EBP process and the other four sub-scales (familiarity, intentions, behavior, & feasibility).

The findings of this study also indicated that social workers who have graduated recently and who did not learn about evidence-based practice are less likely to use it in their cases. In contrast, social workers who are not recently graduated

and who have years of practical experience in the field will be more likely to adopt the EBP into their practice because they will feel pressured to acquire new knowledge and new strategies that can help them in their work if they want to get a promotion. This finding differs from Van der Zwet et al.'s (2014) finding, where the older social workers were less familiar with the EBP model than were social workers under 29 years old. This difference in the findings may be related to social workers' self-efficacy, where the social workers (young and older) would like to develop their skills, and they realize the need to learn new information in their field and do not want to depend only on their experience with their work with clients. Furthermore, the social workers who reported that they do not need to attend workshops on the EBP process were already familiar with it and had more positive attitudes toward it than the social workers who reported that they need to attend workshops on the EBP process. According to Van der Zwet et al. (2014), "social workers who feel more confident in their knowledge of the EBP process may be better equipped to apply it in practice" (p. 10).

The findings of the current study will help us to realize the clinical social workers' views of the EBP process and how they perceive it. Therefore, it is important to improve the knowledge of social workers in Kuwait about the EBP process by requiring them to attend workshops after graduation as well as incorporating the principles of the EBP process

in the curriculum of the social work program at Kuwait University.

### **Implications for Clinical Social Work**

The Arabic version of the EBPPAS is valid and reliable. The EBPPAS is useful to assess the EBP process and the decision-making process among Kuwaiti clinical social workers. In addition, The EBPPAS can be used by researchers who wish to study the EBP process in Kuwait or in an Arabic country.

The clinical social workers, who participated in this study who showed a high overall orientation toward the EBP process, were more familiar with the EBP process, they had high positive attitudes, they had high intentions to engage in the EBP process, and their actual engagement to it was high. However, their feasibility score is lower among the other sub-scales of the EBP process. Bender et al. (2013) indicated that one of the main barriers affecting the application of one's knowledge of the EBP process into a real practice is feasibility. Therefore, there is a need to assess Kuwaiti clinical social workers to translate their knowledge to their work with clients.

### **Limitations, Recommendations, and Future Research**

Although this study is considered a pioneering research on the evidence-based practice process in Kuwait, but there is a prominent limitation. In this study, the author uses a conve-

nient sample, which limits the study's generalizability. Future research needs to attend to this point and recruit a random sample. In addition, future research needs to conduct a comparison study between Kuwaiti social workers who have, and those who do not have, experience with the EBP process in terms of their work with clients. Future studies also need to evaluate the effect of other variables such as work sectors in Kuwait, and the nationality of the social workers on the EBP process.

Here are some recommendations based on the findings of the current study. There is a need to adopt the principle of the EBP process in the curriculum of social work programs on both the undergraduate and master's levels. Furthermore, there is a need for more workshops on the EBP process for social workers who are not familiar with evidence-based practice.

## **Conclusion**

This study presents the results of the investigation of the social workers' orientation toward the EBP process and its association with variables such as gender, years of experience, and the need for workshops. The results of the current study reveal that Kuwaiti social workers had a slightly high orientation toward the EBP process. Furthermore, the results showed that there is a gender difference toward the EBP process, the recently graduated social workers are less likely to

use the EBP in their cases, and social workers who do not need to attend workshops on the EBP process were familiar with it. The findings of this study contribute to the research knowledge and clinical training in social work in Kuwait. In addition, the findings of the current study will permit a greater understanding of the EBP process. There is hope that this study will open the door for more research in the EBPs in the field of clinical social work practice in Kuwait.

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