

Introduction to Social Work Concepts

** Sony Jose*

Introduction

Social work is a relatively new profession, less visible owing to its inability to demonstrate tangible results that evolve from its practice. The lack of visibility is because of the profession's preoccupation and practice around the intangible aspects – its use of social relationships as the major medium of practice, as well as the attempt to change personality structure of people, social structures and systems. Although over a century old, there exist a lot of confusion in respect of various terms used in teaching, research as well as in the practice of the social work profession. Since effective professional practice demands clarity in terms of the varied kinds of concepts used, it becomes obligatory to clarify and define them and point out the distinction between similar concepts used in Social Work or the same concepts used in other social sciences such as Sociology and Psychology from which social work has heavily borrowed. Some of the noteworthy concepts dealt herein are: charity, *shramdan*, social action, social defense, social justice, social movement, social network, social policy, social reform, social security, social services, social welfare and social work. We further explore concepts such as social service, social welfare, social work, social policy, social justice, social security and social defence relevant to social work profession.

** Dr. Sony Jose, Loyola College, Trivandrum*

Charity, Voluntary Action and *Shramdan*

Charity

Quite often charity, particularly the giving of alms, is considered social work. The term *charity* in the Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary (1996) refers to "charitable actions, as alms giving or performing other benevolent actions of any sort for the needy with no expectation of material reward".

Most of the organized religions the world over, have advocated charity as an essential virtue their followers must possess and 'an essential element in the practice of all religions (Mujeeb, 1968). Hinduism's earliest reference to charity can be traced in the Rig Veda, wherein the god Rudra is highly praised for giving many gifts. Charity has been glorified as an exercise in spirituality and *rinās* (varied kinds of debts every Hindu owes) a duty to be performed by every Hindu. The Atri Samhita mentions that an undeserving who accepts help, commits theft, and the persons who help abets the theft.

Most Mediterranean religions too affirmed the same perception. The Old Testament has laid a great stress on charity. Jews have been enjoined upon to care and love the neighbours (the needy) as an important duty in Judaism. Christianity advocates brotherly love. St. Mathew writes how Jesus Christ himself exalts the parable of the Good Samaritan who 'fed when one was hungry; quenched when thirsty; clothed, when naked.' In Islam, charity has been equated with prayerfulness. Mujeeb (1968) insists every Muslim must pay, if he possessed the prescribed minimum of property, a contribution to the public treasury (*bait al mal*). Apart from obligatory payments, generosity and hospitality, feeding the hungry and providing for travellers were

obligations binding as any religious injunction. The giving of alms is one of the five basic tenets of Islam; and *waqf*, *zuckat*, *fitrah*, *sadqua* or *khairat* are noteworthy provisions under Islam under which mandated percentages be given away as charity. The Zorostrians, (commonly known as Parsis in India), affirmed "Happiness unto him, who renders Happiness unto others" (Gatha Ushtavaiti). Panchayats and Anjamans, as also Parsi trusts have done a commendable work in the area of helping the poor and needy (Desai, 1968).

Sikh history is replete with innumerable examples of voluntary service to the entire humanity, irrespective of any sect or cult for God's pleasure or divine grace. Guru Nanak Dev professed: "He who serves others in the world, getteth a seat in the court of God." Guru Govind Singh issued an edict requiring every Sikh to part one-tenth (*dasawandh*) of his income in favour of his community (Singh, 1968). Buddhism and Jainism too have advocated compassion for the poor and needy where from emanates all kinds of charity.

However, charity whether in cash or kind, is different from social work. The former results in temporary relief and renders the recipient dependent on the donor, whereas the latter though having its roots in charity, develops the capacity for self-help among people either by rendering service to them or by subtly introducing required changes and transforming obstructive social system and practices.

Voluntary Action

Compassion towards the suffering brethren, as well as the innate altruism, impels man to provide help to persons in distress. Beyond their bare survival, people also require affection, autonomy, respect, recognition,

self-actualization and above all, moral and spiritual development for which they distribute charity and provide varied kinds of help.

Generally, it is devotion and dedication to serve the entire mankind, not necessarily absolute selflessness. Quite often, this may come out of their desire to go to heaven after death, or, to rid the cycle of birth, death and rebirth by attaining salvation through charity that involves people in voluntary action. However, they generally do not expect any tangible material returns for the charity given, or help or services rendered.

Voluntary action is an action undertaken voluntarily, out of natural feeling of compassion and concern for well-being of others without expectation for any kind of tangible material gains in lieu of what is given. In other words, it is direct or indirect help or service which people individually or collectively provide out of their feeling of compassion to assist others, especially the marginalized. Voluntary action is characterized by:

- 1) an innate urge to help others and promote their well-being in all possible ways, not necessarily monetarily
- 2) the absence of any kind of expectation for any material gains in lieu of the help given
- 3) a sense of social concern and inclination to help those in need.
- 4) a faith in the highest virtue of service to humanity.
- 5) a conviction in the primacy of one's duty rather than rights.

There is however, another side to human nature. In this age of individualism, materialism and hedonism,

self-aggrandizement is on the increase. This has adversely affected the voluntarism and voluntary action. Despite all this, there are still people volunteering help.

In the changed context, the strict definition of voluntary action has to be reviewed to include such expectations of people, such as the payment of travelling and daily allowance to meet their travel expenses or even a modest token honorarium to meet their basic survival needs.

Voluntarism may be reinforced by numerous sources – moral or religious discourses, exemplary acts of philanthropy, some gruesome incidents or tragedies, significant role models (parents, teachers, seers, etc.) or the realization of one's mortality and finiteness of this world forcing them to renounce material possessions and contribute towards others' well-being.

***Shramdan* (voluntary manual labour)**

There is a widespread tendency among people to equate *shramdan* as Social Work, which is thoroughly incorrect and misleading. *shramdan* having its origin in Hindi, consists of two words — *shram* (manual labour) and *daan* (donation), which together, implies the act of undertaking voluntary labour – building, construction or plantation) - to promote collective good. The important characteristics of *shramdan* are:

- 1) manual labour
- 2) voluntarism
- 3) collective and cooperative endeavours, and
- 4) promotion or protection of public good or interest.

During the early stages of human (social) evolution people not only had to face the vagaries of weather, but also had to protect themselves from dangers, particularly beasts and poisonous reptiles. Communities had to work together voluntarily contributing their labour. Whether it was breaking or shifting of rocks, clearing of shrubs for construction of passages through forests, hunting of food, construction of improvised bridges across or bunds the banks of rivers, digging wells or ponds for storing drinking water, construction of shelters for the travellers alongside the roads, cooking of food for community feasts, etc. voluntary manual labour was essential. Such community living continued very well until the State, as an agency of society, took over the responsibility for people's welfare, by performing varied activities by hiring labour for compensation. Currently, government programmes such as the National Service Scheme, National Cadet Corps, National Reconstruction Corps, etc. require the aggregates of educated youth to voluntarily contribute their manual labour to bring about improvement in the living conditions of people in the areas in which they decide to work. Undoubtedly, *shramdan* is of immense significance for promoting socio-economic development because it finally culminates into many kinds of concrete achievements.

However, *shramdaan* differs from social work in terms of its objectives, methods, techniques as well as philosophy. *shramdaan* aims at getting some concrete work accomplished, particularly by pooling labour of aggregates of people who do not expect any thing in return for their efforts. It's philosophy acknowledges the duty of every person to contribute his best to the well-being of the brethren, at the same time providing holistic, multifaceted and integrated development of people's personality and the social system involved.

Unlike *shramdan*, social work is a specialized kind of activity requiring a body of knowledge as well as technical skills for its effective delivery. It aims at improving the social functioning of the individuals in society as well as bringing about desired changes in the social system, so that every one gets opportunities for optimum realization of one's potentials without being subjected to any kind of unwanted limitations and rewarding equitably. Social Work is based on democratic and humanitarian philosophy which reinforces the values of equality, justice, liberty and fraternity and that desires well-being of all, as envisioned by our great seers and sages thousands of years ago.

Social Movement and Social Reform

Social Movement

Diani (1992) mentioned about 'an implicit, "empirical" agreement about the use of the term is largely missing' reflecting the lack of agreement among the social activists and scientists regarding the term social movement. The term social movement refers to "various forms of collective action aimed at social reorganization." In general, social movements are not highly institutionalized, and arise from spontaneous social protest directed at specific or widespread grievances. (Ambercrombie, Hill and Turner, 1986). Paul Wilkinson (1971) perceives it as a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction by any means, including violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into a 'utopian' community. A social movement must evince a minimal degree of organization ranging from a loose, informal organization to the highly institutionalized or bureaucratized corporate group.

Madden (1995) describes a social movement as an 'organized attempt by a number of people united by a

shared belief to effect or resist changes in the existing social order by non-institutionized means'. Social movements aim at 'attaining of social recognition and the assertion of rights or existential interests hitherto denied to a group or category of people.' In short, social movements may be seen as deliberate and collective action undertaken by people without any established institutional structure, to bring about changes in society thought to be desirable and essential for enabling them to lead a decent and dignified life in accordance with normative standards.

The salient features of a social movement are:

- 1) discontentment with the existing social system, or the felt need to protect and promote far neglected interests or social identity at jeopardy
- 2) collective awareness of and commitment to a common cause
- 3) willingness to launch collective action through mobilization of like-minded people's efforts
- 4) initiation of some kind of commonly agreed upon activity according to a pre-determined programme schedule
- 5) reference to values of autonomy, equity, human dignity, human rights, etc.
- 6) revolt, rebellion, reform or revolution and employment of methods such as protest, demonstration, strike, *gherao*, *bandhs*, etc.
- 7) absence of any distinct point marking the beginning or termination of the social movement.

There may be a multiplicity of factors to trigger a movement. *Sati*, untouchability, dowry, deforestation, child labour, bonded labour, etc. may generate

discontentment with the existing situation. Other causes may include domination and harassment by criminals, mafia dons or dominant religious sects over other individuals or religions, generally in minority or even a dominant culture openly condemning another culture(s), endangering their basic existence or attempting to subtly alter their original culture. Other issues may include empowerment, sustainable development or preservation of distinct cultural identity or even social integration, all of which are considered vital for decent and dignified living. However, it has always to be borne in mind that proliferation of education, and science and technology, particularly — information technology, have accelerated the emergence of social movements.

All social movements motivate their participants to analyse and interpret how a situation promotes or thwarts their common collective interests and decide on course of actions necessary to achieve what they visualize to be desirable. However, once they achieve the desired results, they terminate, paving the way for other movements relevant to other needs in society, to emerge. It is certain that the social movements will prevail until such time that political, economic, educational and social institutions guaranteeing the development of the right kind of humans are established. Thus, as observed by T.K. Oommen (1977: 16), social movements are highly significant to social work, as they 'provide the stage for confluence between the old and new values and structures,' thereby challenging the existing social structure, eradicating social evils and preventing exploitation.

Social Reform

In every society, cultural degeneration sets in of some point of time, particularly when its followers forget the

basic purpose of various customs and traditions. They blindly observe various rites and rituals associated with them, only because their forefathers have been performing them. Consequently, they practice social evils that hamper personality development and effective social functioning. For example, in India the open *varna* system degenerated into a closed caste system abetting practices such as untouchability, unseeability and even unapproachability.

When social evils began to cause human misery, some enlightened individuals started giving a serious consideration in devising measures to get rid of them, thereby introducing social reforms. The term 'reform', according to Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary (1996) means "the improvement or amendment of what is wrong, corrupt, unsatisfactory, etc". According to M.S. Gore (1987), social reform "involves a deliberate effort to bring about a change in social attitudes, culturally defined role expectations and actual patterns of behaviour of people in a desired direction through processes of persuasion and public education." Social reform thus, broadly refers to the deliberate, collective non-violent attempt by a group of like-minded, to eradicate immoral, unhealthy, corrupt and wrong practices thwarting human and social development.

Major characteristics of social reform include:

- 1) perceived existence of some social evil impeding proper human growth and social development.
- 2) collective, focused efforts deliberately made by people to mitigate and eradicate social evil
- 3) an overall satisfaction with the prevailing situations in society and a belief that the overall system is not to be overthrown.

- 4) non-violent methods and means to bring about desired changes to evil practices existing through such measures such as persuasion and conscientisation.

It will be proper here to understand the similarities as well as differences between social reform and revolt. The most striking similarities between the two are:

- 1) existence of dissatisfaction with the existing conditions in society
- 2) an attempt to bring about desired changes in societal conditions to promote human and social development
- 3) initiators/leaders appeal to the passive members of the community to wake up and accord legitimacy to join their cause
- 4) if necessary, both may resort to violent means

The noteworthy differences between the two are:

- 1) Social reformers are more or less satisfied with the overall conditions existing in society and their discontentment is confined to certain specific areas of social life; on the contrary, in case of revolt, there is generally marked dissatisfaction with the existing social structure and system and the basic values that regulate them, and generally are prepared to overthrow them.
- 2) While social reformers influence powers that formulate policies and enact such laws necessary to bring about desired changes in certain areas of social life considered undesirable and baneful to personal and social development, revolutionaries attempt to radically overhaul or even overthrow,

existing social structure and system perceived to be degenerative, not necessarily always through bloodshed. (Pimpley in Sharma (Ed.), 1987).

Social reform is important for professional social workers because they challenge and do away with social evils, thereby improving the social functioning of the people and introducing desired changes in social structure and system.

Social Network

Scott (1996) described a social network as “any articulated pattern of connection in the social relations of individuals, groups and other collectivities” The term originated in the 1930s when social scientists started using the terms such as ‘web’, ‘fabric’, etc. to metaphorically indicate the interweaving and interlocking nature of social relationships. These words were initially used by Radcliff Brown in Anthropology, and later by Jacob L. Moreno who used a diagram (a *sociogram*) to depict a social network. It was George Homans, in the year 1951 who formalised the network metaphor giving it a distinct methodology. The basic idea underlying the network analysis is the interconnection of different points (nodes) by lines, and the pattern of lines which connect these points can be mathematically processed.

In Social Work parlance, a ‘network’ refers to social interconnections among various like minded voluntary organizations (VOs), community based organizations (CBOs) / non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in the pursuit of similar objectives, created with a view to working together in a coordinated and effective manner. Such an understanding will assist in increasing their effectiveness through their webbed existence and coordinated functioning.

Social Service, Social Defence, Social Security and Social Welfare

Social Service

Every civilized society makes provision for varied kinds of services such as health, housing, education, recreation, etc. Broadly speaking, social service connotes “an act of helpful activity; help” (Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary; 1996). Thus, social service in its broadest sense, means any aid or assistance provided by society to enable its members to optimally actualise their potentials to effectively perform the roles expected or prescribed by society and to remove obstacles that come in the way of personality development or social functioning. Cassidy (1943) describes “social services” as those organized activities primarily and directly concerned with the conservation, the protection and the improvement of human resources”, and may include “social assistance, social insurance, child welfare, corrections, mental hygiene, public health, education, recreation, labour protection and housing” (Friedlander, 1963). These services are rendered to all the members of a society, irrespective of their religion, caste, race, language, region, culture, etc.

The two other terms used in literature are: public services and social welfare services. Public services are envisaged and organized by the State as an institution created by society to manage its affairs. Social welfare services are envisioned and provided by people in society as enlightened persons for promoting human and social development. Despite this fine distinction, both the terms are quite often used interchangeably. On the other hand, social welfare services are those social/public services specifically visualized

and designed for the weaker and vulnerable sections of society to enable them to effectively compete with other sections of society.

The characteristic features of social services are:

- 1) they are visualized and organized by society/state.
- 2) such services directly benefit all sections of society.
- 3) the services encompass everything having a direct bearing on the quality of life of people.
- 4) these services aim at promoting human and social development, protecting human rights of people and creating a sense of duty among them towards society.

Social services are very important for social work because the latter:

- 1) concerns with promoting human and social development.
- 2) seeks to enhance effective social functioning and create new social institutions required to modify the existing institutions.
- 3) aims at promoting 'sustainable' development by conserving and developing environment, so that enough resources may be left for future generations also to enable them to lead proper life.

Social Defence

In an age where it is strongly advocated that criminals are not born but are created by adverse and oppressive social conditions, a concern for the protection of society, as also for promoting the interests of offender as a human person belonging to a civilized society, social defence is gaining wide currency. In its narrowest

sense social defence, confines to the treatment and welfare of persons coming in conflict with law. In the broader context, it includes within its ambit the entire gamut of preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitative services to control deviance in general, and crime, that may lead to social disorganization. Thus, social defence is a deliberate and organized effort made by society to defend itself against the onslaught of disruptive forces which endanger its law and order, impeding its' socio-economic development. The magnitude of violation of the prevalent laws has made it essential to formulate policies and plans and organize programmes to prevent illegal activities, as well as and treat and rehabilitate the offenders in order to help them contribute their best towards effective functioning of society.

Social defence includes measures to prevention and control of juvenile delinquency and crime, welfare services in prisons, aftercare services for discharged prisoners, probation services, suppression of immoral traffic, prevention of beggary and rehabilitation of beggars, prevention and control of drug abuse and alcoholism and treatment and rehabilitation of the affected. Correctional services which are part of social defence programmes employ social workers as care workers, probation officers, managers of juvenile cadres, etc.

Social Security

Every person wants protection against any kind of unforeseen event which may endanger his safety and threaten the continuity of his income. This security has been guaranteed to people through varied kinds of institutions. Initially, this was provided through the family, occupational guilds, and in India more so by the joint family and caste system which in the course of time is disintegrating. The proliferation of science and

technology, the increase in trade and commerce lead to widespread migration, a change in value systems – increase individualism and materialism – and rapid urbanization. This has forced a sizeable section of society that is unlettered, unemployed and poor to lead sub-human life added to this insecurity. Realizing that some deliberate efforts were required to ensure security, for the first time in 1935 in England, Sir William Beveridge², came forward with the idea of ‘social security’ as means of protection against five great giants: want, disease, ignorance, idleness and squalor.

The International Labour Organization³ (1942) defined social security “as the security that society furnishes through appropriate organization, against certain risks to which its members are exposed.” Friedlander (1963) thought social security as a programme of protection provided by society against those contingencies of modern life-sickness, unemployment, old age, dependence, industrial accidents and invalidism - against which the individual by his own ability or foresight, cannot protect himself or his family.

Thus, the major characteristic features of social security are:

- i) it is a security deliberately provided as a matter of right, by collective efforts of people in society
- ii) it protects people against different types of contingencies – biological, economic or even bio-economic – that confront people from cradle to grave.
- iii) such contingencies imperil the working capacity of people and disrupt the continuity of income and impair their ability to lead a decent and dignified life

- iv) contingencies are such that it is impossible for common people to effectively face the challenges posed by them, utilizing their own as well as their dependants' private resources.
- v) such collective endeavours made may or may not require the beneficiaries to contribute nominally, for the benefits which they may avail of in case of occurrence of certain specified kinds of contingencies
- vi) Social security benefits may be in the form of cash, kind or both
- vii) Social security provides the necessary confidence that, benefits adequate in quality and quantity will be available whenever required.

There are three major forms of social security:

- 1) Social insurance
- 2) Public/social assistance, and
- 3) Public or social services.

In *social insurance*, prospective beneficiaries are required to make some very nominal contribution for the benefits which they are given in case of occurrence of contingencies. These benefits are so decided that they may be able to cater to assumed average need. However, in certain cases, special exemption may be granted from the requirement of payment of contributions.

Public/social assistance may be given in cash and / or kind to enable people to meet the existing actual need and to lead a minimum desirable standard of living. There is a subtle difference between public and social assistance. *Public assistance* is provided through the

State exchequer after assessing the existing actual need and ensuring that prospective beneficiaries fulfill certain prescribed eligibility requirements – family responsibility and morality. Social assistance is provided to indigent people considered to be eligible based on specified criteria, by some civil society organizations to enable them to satisfy their basic minimum needs.

Public/social services are made available by the state/society to promote human/social development. Sometimes a very fine distinction is made between public and social services, the former organized and provided by the state and the latter by society through some civil society initiative.

A professional social worker needs to understand the concept of social security because he works for promoting human and social development, improving peoples' participation in various types of programmes directed towards guaranteeing a minimum desirable standard of living to every one.

Social Welfare

All civilizations since time immemorial have been striving for the well being of mankind. Our sages pray that 'all may be happy' and devised social systems and institutions to promote the welfare of all. Coming from *welfaren*, 'welfare' connotes "the state or condition with regard to good, fortune, health, happiness, prosperity, etc". (Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary, 1996). Dasgupta (1976) observed that social welfare refers 'to the entire package of services, social and economic, that deal with income support, welfare provisions and social security on one hand, and the whole range of social services, on the other.' Wilensky and Lebeaux (1957) define social welfare as those formally organized and socially sponsored institutions,

agencies and programs which function to maintain or improve the economic conditions, health or interpersonal competence of some parts or all of the population. Wilensky and Lebeaux identify two dominant conceptions to social welfare - the *residual*, that assumes social welfare institutions coming into play only when the normal structures of supply, the family and market break down, and the *institutional*, that holds welfare services as normal, "first line" functions of modern industrial society. According to Friedlander (1963), social welfare is the organized system of social services and institutions, designed to aid individuals and groups to attain satisfying standards of life and health, and personal and social relationships that permit them to develop their full capacities and to promote their well-being in harmony with the needs of their families and the community." The major traits distinguishing social welfare structure are:

- 1) a formal organizational structure
- 2) social sponsorship and accountability
- 3) absence of profit motive
- 4) integral view of human needs
- 5) direct focus on human consumption needs.

Social Welfare as conceived by Skidmore, Thackeray and Farley (1991), 'encompasses the well-being and interests of large numbers of people, including their physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and economic needs... social welfare includes the basic institutions and processes related to facing and solving social problems." Zastrow (1978) thought social welfare aimed at 'fulfilling the social, financial, health and recreational requirements of all individuals in a society. Social welfare seeks to enhance the social functioning of all

age groups, both rich and poor'. Thus, social welfare operates when other institutions in our society such as the market economy and the family fail to meet the basic needs of individuals or groups of people. Durgabai Deshmukh, the first Chairperson of Central Social Welfare Board (1960) unequivocally thought social welfare to be distinct from the general social services such as education, health, etc. Social welfare is specialized work for the benefit of the weaker and more vulnerable sections of the population and included special services for the benefit of women, children, the aged as well as the physically, mentally and socially challenged.

In other words, social welfare is a specifically designed system of services and institutions aimed at protecting and promoting the interests of weaker and vulnerable sections of society, who left to themselves, will not be in a position to maximally develop and effectively compete to enter the mainstream and to live with liberty, decency and dignity. Important characteristics of social welfare are:

- 1) existence of a deliberately organized system of services and institutions
- 2) specifically catering to the needs of the weaker and vulnerable sections of society
- 3) recognizes that the weakness and vulnerability are not from any personal fault of people
- 4) it protects and promotes the interests of the vulnerable, enabling them to realize whatever potentials, talents, abilities they may have, to carve out a dignified place for themselves in society, and to effectively discharge the duties and responsibilities of positions they occupy.

Social Justice and Social Policy

Social Justice

Justice is the hallmark of any civilized society. *fiat justitia ruat coleum* (let heavens fall, justice has to be done) has been the guiding principle followed by all civilized societies. Aristotle perceived justice as a “virtue of the soul distributing that which each person deserved”. Its origin, according to Cicero, is traced to the divine law of eternal and immutable morality, making people duty bound.

The term justice is too broad that it eludes any precise definition (Dias; 1985). The nature and form as also the methods and manners of administration and systems of justice vary depending upon the values and norms prevailing at a point in time, in a particular society. These systems, broadly speaking, take two approaches: *protective* – safeguarding people against abuse and exploitation, and *promotive* – creating such conditions in society as may spontaneously ensure equality, freedom, fraternity and provide special opportunities to those who for some reason lag behind and are out of the mainstream.

The term ‘justice’ is used in two senses: the *abstract* – referring to a code of conduct, legal as well as moral, which promotes people’s welfare, and the *concrete* – denoting the faithful implementation of existing laws. Justice gives rise to a sense of duty and concern for others, as well as creates and sustains trust and confidence among people. Not only does it generate an atmosphere of peace and tranquility, but it also sustains law and order thereby optimizing the personal and social functioning.

Social justice, a part of the larger framework of justice, implies within its ambit the idea of 'just distribution' of benefits in order to create a just society. It is dynamic; what is socially just keeps changing with time and space. Allen (1950) thought the concept social justice to be vaguely defined. To some it meant 'distribution' or 'redistribution' of wealth; some others interpreted it as equality of opportunity - a misleading term, since opportunity can never be equal among beings, who have unequal capacities to grasp it.

Social Justice impels to establish a just social order by favouring the removal of structural and systemic inequalities in order to ensure equalization of opportunities to weaker and vulnerable sections of society, who either because of being subjected to social suppression and oppression or being the victims of varied kinds of disabilities and handicaps, are prone to be misused and even abused and exploited. Thus, social justice, in its narrowest sense, means rectification of injustice in personal relations of people and in broader terms refer to the removal of imbalances in the political, economic and social life of people.

Social justice, according to Justice Krishna Iyer (1980), is a generous concept assuring every member of society a fair deal - remedial of injury, injustice, inadequacy or disability suffered by a member for which he is not directly responsible. The concept broadly encompasses not only distribution of means, benefits, burdens, etc. throughout the society (Miller, 1972) but also biological, social, economic and cultural development of individual in a society (Govind, 1995). India characterized by fairly widespread and serious problems of unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, ill-health and insanitation, stood committed to promote welfare of people; Article 38 of the Constitution of India proclaims our commitment to

promote the welfare of people by securing and protecting as effectively, a social order in which justice – social, economic and political – are preserved. The specific objectives of social justice are to:

- 1) ensure the 'rule of law'
- 2) guarantee 'equality of opportunity'
- 3) ensure special opportunities to weaker and vulnerable sections
- 4) ensure equality of outcome
- 5) prevent abuse and exploitation of weaker and vulnerable sections
- 6) preserve the religion and culture of minorities, providing them the necessary freedom to pursue and propagate them without endangering public order and peace.

Wherever discrimination, abuse and exploitation existed in the name of colour, caste or creed, some kind of arrangement for social justice spontaneously evolved; e.g. in the United States, a system of affirmative action eventually evolved to provide special opportunities for the development of Blacks and the native Red Indians. In India, where social stratification in the form of caste prevails, the Constitution of India assigned special privileges to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as well as the 'Other Backward Classes'.

Social Policy

Policy, broadly speaking, refers to a framework within which a vowed objectives are to be attained. Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary (1996) defines policy as "a definite course of action adopted for the sake of expediency, facility, etc." Social policy includes those courses of action adopted by the government

which relate to the social aspects of life, action which is deliberately designed and taken to improve the welfare of its citizens (Eyden, 1969). Kulkarni (1987), explained that the key word 'policy' implied the adoption of a sagacious course of action in order to achieve the desired objective(s). In other words, what is pragmatic is called policy and what is based on principles is referred to as doctrinaire."

Kulkarni (1978) noted that 'social policy' denotes three specific areas;

- i) the social objectives of state policy, including economic growth;
- ii) the policy with regard to the promotion of social services as an integral part of a developing economy
- iii) the policy governing promotion of social welfare services as a part of development plans.

Thus, social policy is a framework within which, the state as protector and promoter of the interests of society as also of human rights of people, conduct its affairs so that the goal of welfare of all may be promoted by organizing a series of services in diverse fields of nutrition, water supply, education, health, housing, employment, recreation, etc. The salient features of social policy include:

- 1) responsibility for conducting the affairs of society
- 2) a specific framework within which or the affairs of society are to be conducted
- 3) addresses people in general and aims at providing social services – direct and general.
- 4) promotes human and social development.

Whereas social policy concerns itself with providing social services to improve the life and living of people in general, social welfare policy relates itself to the organization of specially designed social welfare services for weaker and vulnerable sections of society to enable them achieve parity with other sections of the society. Modernisation of society through adoption of science and technology, improving the national standard of living, building up civic and political institutions to suit the changing needs, and the establishment of an open, pluralistic society of equal opportunity, could with all these elements be regarded as the pith and substance of social policy (Kulkarni, 1987).

The basic source of social policy is the Constitution of a country and the various social enactments that ensue, promoting proper human and social development. The social policy in India is enunciated in the Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV of the Constitution). Noteworthy has been the drastic change in social welfare policy of the Government of India after 1991, during which the policy of liberalization, privatization and globalization were adopted as part of the Structural Adjustment Programme.

Social Work and Social Action

Social Work

Social work which emerged out of the need to provide poor relief in a systematic manner gradually evolved into a semi - profession and eventually into a profession having expert knowledge and technical skills intended at helping the needy. During the initial stages it was concerned with assisting people to resolve their psycho-social problems obstructing their effective social functioning. In course of time, it was realized that social living operated at three distinct levels: individual,

group and community. Social work eventually developed three distinct methods for each of these levels - Social Casework dealing with individuals, Social Group Work with groups and Community Organization with communities. In course of time, they were accepted as the three primary methods of social work.

The realization of a need to extend various social welfare services as well as gathering validated knowledge culminated in the development of two auxiliary methods of social work namely, Social Welfare Administration and Social Work Research. Later, it was understood that psycho-social problems had their origins in faulty social structures and systems. This led to the formulation of Social Action, another auxiliary method, as a weapon capable of bringing about desired social changes in society.

Experience with interventions and research on social services undertaken have continuously established that various dimensions of social reality remain largely inseparable, and that social reality has to be taken as an integrated whole. Consequently, Social Workers thought of integrating the primary and secondary methods and today social work practice is integrated involving all the six methods according to situational requirements.

In order to understand what Social Work is, it appears essential to examine some key definitions evolving over the years.

Social Work is a form of persistent and deliberate effort to improve living or working conditions in the community or to relieve, diminish or prevent distress, whether due to weakness of character or to pressure of external circumstances. All such efforts may be conceived as falling under the heads of charity, education or justice,

and the same action may sometimes appear as one or another according to the point of view (Flexner, 1915).’

Cheyney (1926) includes in Social Work all “voluntary attempts to extend benefits in response to needs which are concerned with social relationship and which avail themselves of scientific knowledge and employ scientific methods.” According to Arthur E. Fink (1942) “Social work is the provision of services to aid individuals, singly or in groups, in coping with present or future social and psychological obstacles that prevent or are likely to prevent full or effective participation in society,”

J. P. Anderson (1945) identifies Social work as ‘a professional service rendered to people for the purpose of assisting them as individual or in groups, to attain satisfying relationship and standards of life in accordance with their particular wishes or capacities and in harmony with those of the community.’

Helen I. Clarke (1945) defined Social Work to be ‘a form of professional service comprising a composite of knowledge and skills, parts of which are and parts of which are not distinctive of social work, which attempts, on the one hand, to help the individual to satisfy his needs in the social milieu and on the other to remove, as far as possible, the barriers which obstruct people from achieving the best of which they are capable.’

Friedlander (1963) opined Social Work to be ‘a professional service based upon scientific knowledge and skill in human relations which assists individuals, alone or in groups, to obtain social and personal satisfaction and independence.’

Boehm (1959) thought Social Work sought ‘to enhance the social functioning of individuals, singly and in groups, by activities focused upon their social relationship which constitute the interaction between man and his environment. These activities can be grouped into three functions, *restoration* of impaired capacity, provision of individual and social *resources* and *prevention* of social dysfunction.’

A perusal of the above definitions clearly indicate the difficulty in defining social work. Yet, keeping in mind its evolution from a service to profession, and its concern from helping people in need, to changing the social system, let us attempt to define Social Work:

“Social work is a professional kind of work, either honorary or paid, undertaken by making use of scientific knowledge and technical skills with humane and democratic outlook, to render help to people in need to enable them to realize their potentials and expend them optimally, to perform their social roles effectively and to live in a free, decent and dignified manner, particularly by introducing required changes in personality as well as social structure.”

The important characteristics of social work are:

- 1) it is a specialized kind of work
- 2) undertaken by persons with special training
- 3) social work education and training has specialized body of scientific knowledge and technical skills,
- 4) has a democratic and humanitarian value base
- 5) adopts an appropriate strategy depending on the nature of problem it deals with and its root causes - the personality structure, group dynamics and the defective social system – and introduces changes in the personality structure of person faced with problem and/or bring about transformation in social structure as well as system.
- 6) strives towards human and social development, guarantees human rights and ensures performance of social duties and obligations towards family, the community and society at large.

- 7) The social worker may accept (and generally does accept) compensation for the work undertaken by her/him, either from those who engage her/him or benefit from her/him work. However, altruistic considerations may impel him/her to provide services in an honorary manner.

Social Action

The concept of Social Action, generally speaking comprises of three components: (1) the social being, (2) a social context or situation, and (3) inspiration. Social Action originated in Sociology, where it is 'analysed in terms of typical actors in typical situations, by identifying actors' goals, expectations and values, the means of achieving those goals, the nature of situation and the actor's knowledge of that situation' (Ambercombe, Hill and Turner, 1986). Action is to be distinguished from behaviour in that it involves meaning or intention.

Social Action as an auxiliary method of Social Work is considered different from that in Sociology. A review of available literature on social action reveals that there is no unanimity regarding the concept of Social Action; it has quite often been confused with community organization, community work and community action. It was Mary E. Richmond (1922) who coined this term for mass movement through propaganda and social legislation. Since then, a number of definitions have been given by various writers on the subject. Some noteworthy among them are as under:

Kenneth L.N. Prey (1945) defines Social Action as 'the systematic, conscious effort directed to influence the basic social conditions and problems out of which arise the problems of social adjustment and maladjustment to which our service as social workers is directed.' Social Action in its basic nature is non-violent.

Undoubtedly, there are times when vested interests (of the privileged, elite) in society and the powers which exercise domination and rule, want to perpetuate the status quo. They are threatened by the organized strength of the people (the deprived) involved in Social Action, and direct the state machinery to suppress the voice of dissent, by resorting to violent methods. Although there are some writers like Britto (1980), who advocate the conflictual nature of the social action process, at the practical plane it has to adopt and follow the methods and techniques, which are within the accepted legal framework and non-violent. Thus, these two types of approaches may bring about a change of heart among the elite and lead to a social transformation through changes in policies, laws and enforcement machinery, ultimately resulting in promotion of human and social development.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen some of the basic concepts related to social work. We have seen the differences and similarities, if any, between charity, voluntary action and *shramdan*. Charity refers to assistance in material terms or otherwise, to needy individuals. Voluntary action a voluntary undertaking by individuals, motivated by compassion for improving the conditions of others without expecting any tangible benefit in return. *shramdan* refers to undertaking free manual labour, for doing those activities aimed at common good. Social movements are collective actions outside an established institutional structure to resolve a common problem. Social reform aims at bringing about changes in the practices of people to eradicate social evils. When you go to the field, practice the social work methods or conduct research there will be greater scrutiny of these concepts. Social security, social

services, social welfare and social defense are primarily related to government policy and programmes. Social services refer to any aid or assistance provided to society to enable its members to perform effectively as a citizen. In other words, it consists of all efforts to improve the human resources of the society. Social defence on the other hand consists of all efforts by the society to prevent deviant behaviour which can lead to social disorganization. Social service is promotive whereas social defence is preventive and rehabilitative. Social security refers to the protection of citizens from various risks like disease, want, unemployment and idleness. Social welfare is the organized system of social services and institutions to provide the citizen with those services and goods which will help the citizen lead a productive and satisfying life. Social justice is a much discussed topic in our country. Clearly there are many dimensions to the concept. Basically it means that every member of the society get his or her due, that is a fair deal. It stands against all values which advocate inequality, violence, entrenched privileges etc. Social justice is part of the larger social policy which is also discussed. Policy can be defined as the framework within which a stated course is adopted to attain certain objectives. Though there are six methods in social work we have discussed only one method, social action as the term is used differently in different disciplines. One may notice the considerable difference in the way a social work professional and a lay person uses these words in order to integrate oneself better into this profession.

References

Allen, C.K. 1950. *Aspects of Justice*, London: Stevens and Sons.

Anderson, J.P. 1945. "Social work as a profession", *Social Work Year Book*, New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Ambercombe, N., S. Hill and B. S. Turner. 1986). *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd.

Beveridge, W. 1942. *Social Insurance and Allied Services* — Report presented to British Parliament.

Boehm, W.H. 1959. *Objectives of the Social Work Curriculum of the Future*. New York: Council on Social Work Education.

Cassidy, H. M. 1943). *Social Security and Reconstruction in Canada*, Boston: Humphries.

Cheyney, A. 1926. "Nature and Scope of Social Work." New York: American Association of Social Workers.

Clarke, H. L. 1947. *Principles and Practice of Social Work*, New York: Appleton Century Crofts.

Dasgupta, S.____. "Social Action", in Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India*, Vol. 3. New Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India.

Deshmukh, D. 1960. "*Social Welfare in India*". The Planning Commission, Government of India (Ed.). New Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India.

Desai, S.F. _____. "Social Welfare Activities by Religious Groups – Parsis." in the Planning Commission,

Government of India, *Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India*. Vol. 2. New Delhi: Publication Division.

Diani, M. 1992. "The Concept of Social Movement." *Sociological Review*, Vol. 40: 1.

Dias, R.W.M. 1985. *Jurisprudence*, London: Butterworths.

Dunham, A. 1958. *Community Welfare Organization: Principles and Practice*. New York: Thomas Y. Conwell Company.

Eyden, Joan L.M. (1969), *Social Policy in Action*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Fink, A. E. 1942. *The Field of Social Work*. New York: Henry Holt Co..

Flexner, A. 1915. "Is social work a profession"? *Studies in Social Work*. Vol. 4. New York: New York School of Philanthropy.

Friedlander, W.A. 1963. *Introduction to Social Welfare*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India.

Fuchs, Martin and Antje Linken-bach. 2003. "Social Movements" in Veena Das (Ed.). *The Oxford India Companion to Sociology and Social Anthropology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Gore, M.S. _____. *Social Reform*, Ministry of Welfare, Government of India.

Govind, K.B. 1995. *Reformative Law and Social Justice in Indian Society*. New Delhi: Regency Publications.

Jacob, K.K. 1985. *Methods and Fields of Social Work in India*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House.

Kenneth L. M. 1945. "Social Work and Social Action", *Proceedings, National Conference of Social Work*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Madden, P. 1995. "Social Movements", in Frank N. Magill (Ed.). *International Encyclopaedia of Sociology*, Vol. 2. London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers.

Oommen T. K. 1977. "Sociological Issues in the Analysis of Social Movements in Independent India." *Sociological Bulletin*. Vol. 26 :1.

Pimpley, P.N. (1987), "Social Reforms and Change" in Satish K.Sharma (Ed.). *Social Protest and Social Transformation*. New Delhi: Asia Publishing House.

Richmond, M. E. 1922. *What is Social Casework?* New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Scott, J. 1996. "Social Networks" in A. Kuper and J. Kuper (Eds.). *The Social Science Encyclopaedia*, 2nd Ed. London: Routledge.

Singh, Gopal, "Social Welfare Activities by Religions Group-Sikhs", in the Planning Commission, Government of India (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Social Work*. Vol. 2. New Delhi: Publication Division, Government of India.

Wilkinson, P. 1971. *Social Movements*. London: Pall Mall.

Zastrow, C. 1978. *Practice of Social Work*. NJ: Prentice Hall.

Social Case Work

** Archana Dassi*

Introduction

Social case work is one of the methods of social work which is being practiced by social workers across the globe. It is one of the primary methods that enable the social functioning of individuals. It is a method which is based on one to one relationship.

A method is well understood to be an orderly way of procedure and therefore it is always carried out towards achievement of a specific aim. Case work is one such method that social workers use to help people of all ages and from various sections of society to enhance their social functioning and to cope more effectively with their problems. In this Chapter, you will gain an understanding of historical development of case work, its scope, importance and other related concepts. This chapter will provide you certain basic understanding about social case work.

Historical Development of Case Work in the West and India

The focus of charity throughout the centuries has always been that of services or care given by individual to an individual. The specific association of relief giving with the idea of charity is of long duration. The true meaning of charity as love or philanthropy as love

** Dr. Archana Dassi, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi*

of men has often been obscured by practices, which have associated these attitudes with the giver rather than with the recipient. The essence of charity is reciprocity and must imply that every individual will have his assets realized and capitalized in the common purpose. The spread of democracy first through political and then through economic and social institutions should mean a quality of human behaviour and not that all human values are to be reduced to quantitative levels. Self-determination and self-realization remain the foundations of any society.

The individualization of social case problems began almost wholly with individualizing persons in relief situation. The work of St. Vincent de Paul in the 16th and 17th centuries and of Ozanam in the 19th century through the art of friendly visiting helped to individualize people at home; directed perhaps more to the control of mendicancy than to the study of individuals, nevertheless yielded data on social conditions and on behaviour. Edward Denison, Sir Charles Loch, Octavia Hill, to name a few of the English leaders, developed to a high point the theory and practice of personal service, personal responsibility, and careful study of each case. Finally Mary Richmond set out the first rational and systematic approach to the analysis of individual social situations.

Individuals in every society, right from ancient times were helped by others to solve their problems. All religions encouraged the helping of poor and helpless people. However it took professional shape in the late 19th and early 20th century. To date the actual beginning of social case work in the West is impossible, to trace, but some important landmarks in its growth are given below.

Early beginnings

The Association for Improving the Conditions of the Poor (AICP) formed in America in 1843 approached the problem of poverty more individually than had been previously handled. The aims of the AICP were to visit the poor at homes, to give counsel, to assist them practically in obtaining employment, to instill in them self-respect and self reliance, to inculcate the habits of economy and whenever absolutely necessary to provide such relief as should be suited to their wants.

Charity Organisation Society

The earliest organized effort in USA was the establishment of American Charity Organization Society in 1877. One of the aims of the society was to find out the ways and means of helping the poor and needy and thus to organize individualized service. This organization's work included the investigation of applicants to assess the need, central registration, recording and relief giving to poor and needy. The society used volunteers called 'friendly visitors'. They were kindhearted volunteers who visited poor families to assess their needs and to provide help, guidance and advice. They made their visits in act of charity and not expecting any monetary reward. There were hundreds of volunteers who made their visits to the home of poor and brought whatever they could in the way of understanding, sympathy, encouragement and general goodwill. However, there was comparatively little consciousness or the analysis of factors at work in the relationship. At the same time it was probably through the efforts of Friendly Visitors that the concept of scientific charity evolved and the seeds of social case work were sown. The visitor found that the problem of all poor people is not alike and they should not be treated in the same manner.

Friendly Visitors

The term Friendly Visitors was subsequently supplemented by the term 'Paid Agents'. These Paid Agents developed systematic procedures in performing their task. They collected data about the needy individuals and families and helped them after assessing their needs. Paid Agents also maintained records including personal data and the type of help given to the clients. The collective experience of Friendly Visitors and Paid Agents facilitated the understanding of human behaviour. With the development of Schools Of Social Work, Friendly Visitors received training and instructions about the method of investigation, diagnosis and treatment from experienced social worker.

The first training programme for the case work started at this time. Case work at this time was based more on medical model. For sometime case work was only confined to sick persons, a sick person to be treated was the priority. The term 'work with case' was used for the first time in national conference in USA. The first professional training programme especially for the case work was started in the form of summer training. The impact of this training programme resulted in the need for more substantial training and schools of social work attached to the agencies came into existence. When these schools started regular training programme, they were recognized as professionals.

Mary Richmond and Francis McLean, offered specialized services to thousand of clients. Social case work journal of family service association grew out of efforts of this great pioneer movement. Miss Richmond published the first book in case work "Social Diagnosis" in 1917. It set the methodology of helping

clients through systematic ways of assessing their problems in handling them. Besides, the book introduced the principle of individualization and acknowledged the client's right to self-determination. The first training programme for case workers was in the form of summer courses. Then the need for more substantial training was found necessary and schools of social work, attached to the agencies, came into existence. When these schools attained a certain standing in the community, they were recognized as professional schools under the administrative authority of universities.

Freudian psychology, which emerged in the 1920s, had a strong impact on the case work. The new psychoanalytical knowledge pertaining to human behaviour was easily absorbed by case workers, which was found useful in understanding clients and their problems. During this period of development case workers focused their attention on psychic forces within the individual. During the economic depression of the 1930s case work had to consider the economic factors that were causing distress to the clients. There was also the realization that the economic distress could lead to emotional distress and breakdown. One major outcome of the depression was the establishment of governmental public assistance programmes. It relieved the voluntary agencies from the tasks of providing economic help which enabled the case workers to devote more time in dealing with clients' interpersonal problems.

During the 1940s, case workers were exposed to the formulations of ego psychology based on the observations of human beings as regards their differential coping and adapting abilities in times of stress. The new studies on human behaviour brought to light the

potentialities of the human personality for healthy adaptation to life's stresses. During the next two decades, some case work theoreticians began to examine sociological concepts like social role, social system, social class, etc. with reference to their applicability to case work situations. The result was the shifting of the focus from the self of the individual to his continuous interactions with his significant others in the social setting.

American Influence on India

American case work did influence the use of case work in India as the first professional social workers that did case work in Indian setting were trained in the American Schools of Social work. Case work was one of the courses taught when the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work, currently known as Tata Institute of Social Sciences, was started in Bombay in 1936, and it became a method of practice in helping people with their problems of social functioning. Some social welfare agencies employed case workers particularly with the purpose of helping their clients in a one-to-one relationship. Currently the so-called case workers attached to some welfare services are not trained social workers who use the method of case work considerably in their work are not given the designation of case workers as they are likely to use other methods as well.

Definition

The first thing anyone wants to know about a subject is its definition, but definitions have little meaning until one has some comprehension of the larger area within which a part is to be described. A definition of social case work is not grasped until one has a picture of social work as a whole. This is particularly important

since many people have imagined that social case work and social work are coextensive, which they are not. To understand social work one needs to look into its objectives. This enormous work can be compassed into two major objectives i.e. improving physical quality of life that is socio-economic development and satisfying social relationships. Probably all professions would stake out an interest in these objectives, but there is little doubt that social work occupies a peculiarly inclusive position in this regard to both. For the social worker the problems involved in social-economic development and social behaviour are interwoven. It is this essentially dualistic relationship, which consistently has shaped social work and given it its distinguishable pattern. To illustrate, no one can presume to understand the problem of poverty without some knowledge of human behaviour, and no one can treat a problem of human behaviour without reference to its socio-economic framework.

Mary Richmond gave us the deepest insights into the nature of social work and provided the best definitions of case work. The most famous definition of case work is:

‘Social case work consists of those processes which develop personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment’.

But the definition most preferred by her students is:

‘Social case work may be defined as the art of doing different things for and with different people by cooperating with them to achieve at one and the same time their own and society’s betterment’.

Over an interval of time since the days of Richmond’s pioneering work several elements have emerged from

various definitions of social case work. The authors have combined these elements with their own definitions that follow:

‘Social case work is a method of helping people based on knowledge, understanding and the use of techniques skillfully applied to helping people to solve the problems. It is individualized although it is scientific, that is, it derives its understanding from the disciplines of science, its method also includes artistic effort. It helps individuals with personal as well as external and environmental matters. It is a method of helping through a relationship that taps personal and other resources for coping with problems. Interviewing is supposed to be the major tool of case work. Change in attitudes and feelings is affected by the dynamics of case work relationship. The possible need for the person to obtain help from one or more community services, facilitated by the case work process, is explained and interpreted. It is neither environmental manipulation nor preoccupation with wholly subjective considerations. It involves an understanding and potential influence of the biological, psychological and social elements on the behaviour of the individual. Thus, it is bio-psycho-social.

Thus, social case work is “ The orientation, value system, and type of practice used by professional social workers in which psychosocial, behavioural and systems concepts are translated into skills designed to help individuals and families solve intrapsychic, interpersonal, socioeconomic and environmental problems through direct face-to-face relationships.” In recent years, an additional thrust has aimed towards the incorporation of multicultural sensitive practice case work. Race, ethnicity and culture are important factors, which influence a person’s identity, choices

and opportunities. In order to more effectively serve people from differing backgrounds and minority groups, Jackson (1995) writes that we need to incorporate the following common set of professional beliefs and practices:

- An appreciation of clients' identities and worldviews.
- Attention to contextual factors that influence clients' needs, concerns and problems.
- Anticipation of clients' initial suspicion and lack of trust. the designation of case workers as they are likely to use other methods as well.

Place of Case Work in Social Work Profession

The individual is the basic unit of the society. If the individuals are satisfied in their life and efforts are made to minimize the maladjustments, then it leads to formation of peaceful society. Like any other profession, social work as a profession has developed a body of knowledge, which include methods and tools, and terminology of its own. Social work profession aims at the social betterment of the society thereby aspiring for the fulfillment of highest need of self-actualization. Esteemed goals of self-realization are embedded in the theory and practice of social work, exemplified by the traditional social work method, social case work. Social case work as method of social work aims at helping individual to solve his / her problem in the society to perform in better way and to enhance his/her own capabilities. In the sphere of social work, case work as a method demands a dual orientation. Firstly, orientation in human psychology, secondly, orientation in knowing cultural force of the society in which it works.

In organizing itself to play a professional role in forwarding the above said objectives, social work has identified a set of methods to cater to mass needs, community needs, group needs and individual needs. It is these individual needs that are being addressed by social case work method. It now becomes possible to arrive at a definition of social case work without confusing it with the total process of social work. Some of the criticism leveled at the case work in the past has been because the part was mistaken for the whole. Case work is indispensable as a foundation for social planning and social action.

Case work is recognizable, according to Richmond, by its aim of social betterment and its method of differential treatment. Case work is concerned with the release of resource in the immediate environment and capacities in the individual, which may give him a fuller and more satisfying life, both economic and personal. The case worker deals with people and situations one by one. Case worker is a retailer and not a wholesaler.

It is easy to underestimate the importance of what case workers know – just homes, parents, children, school, play and people at work – because everyone has these experiences; but to have experiences does not mean to be aware of them in all their implications, and certainly having them does not necessarily translate them into the warp and woof of social programmes. In case work situations, one by one, can be found the nodes of a complete educational process. Just as the individual is the part of family, so the family is the part of community, and so outward into national and international fellowship. Society would wage no wars if it really remembered the individual and its family group. In the same way the unit personality has the power to socialize the community, for quality of attainment rests ultimately on the development of the

individual personality. So case work makes no confession for being interested in the child at home or foster care, in the troubled adolescent, the transplanted alien, the disabled person or the frustrated and abused housewife, but at the same time it makes no pretense that treating cases one by one is a substitute for changing the broad environmental systems which may fundamentally cause the maladjustment. The idea that case work always trying to convey is that differences and unlikeness must be considered in forming the pattern and changing the pattern. There is always a polarity in social planning – to look at society from the basis of whole and from the basis of the individual. Social institutions must be based on the relevant inter-connections, which means that the properties of the things themselves must be understood. It is equally fallacious to think one can solve the problems of the social order by the case work method, or to think that one can solve individual problems with mass formulas. The case method addresses itself to individual adjustments and the solutions that the meaning of these cases taken one by one may prove to be of far reaching significance.

Social workers have begun to develop a differential approach to those socio-economic needs, which require control of the environment in a rational way, and those needs which in any socio-economic system will require individualized or so-called case approach. For example, it does not mean that one can divide cases into pure 'unemployment' and 'personality' cases, but the causes of maladjustment, which are broadly socio-economic will be seen as such, while stresses which lead to 'more personal search and action' whether or not the economic factor is involved, come within the case work objective. Case workers treat many people whose problems of social relationships have nothing to do with their financial status.

Importance of Case Work

All human beings are part of society and everyone in the society has different social roles and duties. While performing his role and duties, individual faces many problems in one or other form, which hinder his performance as a social being. Every individual is unique with different set of needs from others in society and has a different way of handling his / her life situations. To understand the uniqueness of human behaviour and the individual differences, one needs to understand human being vis-à-vis his/her social environment and life experiences. A person is a net product of interaction between biological, psychological and environmental factors. The unique pattern that emerges from this interaction is his personality, which comprises of his capacities and abilities, attitudes, beliefs and values, feelings and thinking and his approach, or strategies to deal with various situations of life. Individual problems may arise either because of his unsuitable approach to social situations he encounters in his life or because of situations demanding something different or more than he possesses. These unresolved problems would affect the social functioning of an individual, which will in turn cause stress to the individual, affect his family and community life and all the social roles which s/he performs in the society. Social case work method tries to resolve individual problems mainly by restoring, maintaining or improving the person's social functioning using the knowledge of human behaviour, communication and relationship skills and the available resources. The case worker helps an individual in all his aspects of life to enable the person to function adequately and properly in his various social roles.

Concept and Assumptions of Case Work

According to Gordon and Hamilton, “social case work which is both a tool and area of work consists of processes which develop personality through adjustment, consciously affect individual by individual between man and his social environment”. Mary Richmond defines “case work as an art of doing different things for and with different people by cooperating with them to achieve at one and at the same time their own and their society’s betterment.” Thus it is both an art and a science of resolving individual problems in social area, for individual and society are interdependent and social forces influence behaviour and attitude of an individual.

There are theoretical concepts or set of ideas, which are accepted as true about the human beings functioning. These are known as basic assumptions of social case work. They give us a frame of reference to understand man in interaction with his environment and help in exploration, diagnosis and evaluation of the cases. According to Hamilton the basic assumptions of social case work are:

- Individual and society are interdependent and complimentary to each other.
- Various factors operative in the society influence human behaviour and attitude.
- Some problems are psychological and some are interpersonal in nature.
- Within certain limits, man can be understood and helped.
- Man can grow and change as per his/her inherent capacities and potentials.
- Every person is unique as well as similar to others.

Philosophical assumptions

The ultimate goal of social case work is to establish harmonious relationship between individual and society to which he belongs. According to Grace Mathew there are certain assumptions, which constitute the fundamental structure of social case work. These are generated out of the collective thinking and traditions in case work.

These philosophical assumptions are:

- Every human being has to be considered as a person with dignity and worth.
- Human beings are interdependent and it governs their interaction in social groups.
- There are common human needs for growth and development of individuals. The existence of common human needs does not negate the uniqueness of individual. Every individual is like all other human beings in some aspects and like no other individual in certain aspects.
- Every individual has within him / her, the potential for growth an achievement and s/he has right to the realization of this potential. Form this it follows that people have the capacity to change.
- Society has an obligation to help those who do not have the means for the realization of their potentials.

Application of Social Case Work

Case work is practiced in a variety of agencies or organizations. It is practiced in primary settings like a family service agency, the primary or the main function of which is to help people with social problems. It is

also practiced in secondary settings i.e. agencies and institutions such as hospitals, schools, courts, etc. which have some primary function but in which service to people and the promotion of human welfare are the key note of work.

Though case work is a generic method, when it is combined with activities of other field or profession (other than social work), differences arise from the special contribution of that field be it medicine, psychiatry or criminology. The practice of case work is conditioned by the primary or major functions of a secondary setting for case work. For instance, one of the principles of the case work is that client should be helped to verbalize his difficulties. In a medical setting, which is a secondary setting for case work, this principle has to be modified in certain cases e.g. the patient's condition may not be such that medically it would be advisable to make the client talk. Under such circumstances the case worker has to modify his / her approach and find out how best without coming into clash with the practice of another profession. A case worker has also to see how the practice of case work in collaboration with other professions can make both the professions more effective so far as human welfare is concerned.

Medical Setting

In India case work is practiced in some places in connection with medicine, e.g., medical social work in hospitals and clinics run by government and other private bodies. In the field of psychiatry, case work is practiced in child guidance clinics, mental hospitals, psychiatric clinics, psychiatry departments in general hospitals and crisis intervention centers as a part of psychiatric case work.

Family Setting

In family case work, efforts are concentrated upon family as a social unit and the individuals as members thereof. The problems centre on family relationships or adjustment and / or any aspect of a family life. Family case work can be said to be the basic to all case work. For instance, in the practice of case work in any setting like medical case work or psychiatric case work, family case work is included. However in family service agencies where case work should be practiced today an effort to limit the scope of work to certain family problems such as child placement, marriage counseling, problems of unmarried mothers etc, instead of dealing with all problems relating to the family indebtedness, involving financial relief, parent-child relationship and marital disharmony.

Correctional Setting

Case work has also entered the field of criminology and in some places is practiced in connection with juvenile welfare board, adult courts, probation, parole and aftercare work. Case work treatment in institutional settings relies as heavily upon efforts toward role-adaptation in the client as upon role-adjustment in the primary groups, of which both the client and the persons who referred him are his members. In the correctional field, the probation officer interprets the delinquent's behaviour to the judge and to the police officers. The delinquent mode of adaptation to the combination of internal and external forces that directed him into the role of delinquent requires the same kind of study and assessment as pursued with case work's other clients. In work with institutionalized delinquents and criminals, the case worker has ready access to those who define the social role of inmate and who observe the client's daily role-performance.

In such institutional settings, the case worker is part of the world to which he is trying to help the client adapt more satisfactorily.

Educational Setting

Case work practice is very popular in the school setting. The school case worker, working with the pupil in trouble in a school setting, goes through a similar course of study and assessments, usually knowing through a referral statement from a classroom teacher or principal what social expectations the child is failing to meet. Case work in such situations may involve direct work not only with the child but also with his parents. The child's performance of roles in extra familial settings is related theoretically to current experience and probably the past experience in the central role relationships between parents and children. The goal of the school social work is to reinforce the child's potential strengths and capacities for satisfying, effective, and acceptable performance in the role of pupil. To achieve this goal in an institutional setting like the school, the case worker directly works with teacher and also with other school personnel, in an effort to help them understand some of what underlies the child's behaviour, and to adjust their expectations for the role of pupil, so that a given child's capacities for role-adaptation to these standards may be understood and seen as falling within a somewhat broadened definition of acceptable behaviour for the pupil.

Child Welfare Setting

Case worker has an important role to play in child welfare. One of the important roles that child welfare agencies are supposed to play is foster care and adoption services. The case worker has a good idea

about the behaviour that child is going to manifest in foster home and hence the case worker tries to match the attributes of the child with that of the family environment. Similar is the role of case worker in the adoption services. The case worker sees to it that role demands of a family do not exceed the child's capacities for role-adaptation. In the child welfare the primary concern of the case worker is to keep the child in his home with his / her parents as far as possible. Otherwise the next possible thing that a case worker tries is to provide an environment where the child's growth and development will occur in the desired direction.

Corporate Setting

In the field of labour welfare there is a great need for introducing case work to deal with varied social problems of workers in industries. Individual problems of absenteeism, alcoholism, depression, stress related disorders, drug addiction etc among the factory workers are the concerns for the case workers.

In the end it may be stated that a human being, be s/he a patient, factory worker, a student, a probationer or a prisoner, if his problem is of social adjustment (either because his personality, adversely affects the environment and / or because his environment creates problems of adjustment for him) deserves help through the case work method. This method in turn, with its ever widening horizon, needs to be in search of numerous and novel skills to be of service to the suffering.

Conclusion

In this Chapter we studied case work as a method of social work. The case work method is the pioneer to social work methods. This method emerged in West

with its roots embedded in charity. The individualization of social case problems began almost wholly with individualizing persons in relief situation. Gradually it was realized that helping people in need was a skill oriented process and hence the volunteers who are involved in this helping process require some sort of training. Mary Richmond defined case work as the art of doing different things for and with different people by cooperating with them to achieve at one and the same time their own and society's betterment. In the sphere of social work, case work as a method demands a dual orientation. Firstly, orientation in human psychology, secondly, orientation in knowing cultural force of the society in which it works. Social case work method tries to resolve individual problems mainly by restoring, maintaining or improving the person's social functioning using the knowledge of human behaviour, communication and relationship skills and the available resources. Basic assumptions of social case work give us a frame of reference to understand man in interaction with his environment and help in exploration, diagnosis and evaluation of the cases. Social case work is practiced in primary settings like a family service agency as well as in secondary settings i.e. agencies and institutions such as hospitals, schools, courts, etc. which have some primary function but in which service to people and the promotion of human welfare are the key note of work.

References

- Mathew Grace, (1992) : *An Introduction to Social Case Work*, TISS, Bombay.
- Biestek, F.P. (1957) : *Case work Relationship*, Unwin Hyman Ltd, London.

Hamilton, G.(1951) : *Theory and Practice of Social Case Work*, Columbia University Press, New York.

Perlman, H. (1957) : *Social Case Work: A Problem solving Process*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Skidmore, R.A.,Thackeray, M.G. and Farley, O.M. (1994): *Introduction to Social Work, Eaglewood Cliffs: N.J. Prentice Hall*

Friedlander, W. A. (1982) : *Introduction to Social Welfare, Prentice Hall of India: New Delhi.*

Davidson, E.H. (1970) : *Social Case work*, Williams & Williams Company, Baltimore.

Younghusband, E. (1971) : *New Developments in Case Work*, Volume II, London: George Allan & Unwin Ltd.

Nicholas, E. (1963) : *A primer in Social Case Work*, New York: Columbia University Press

Mehetras, V.G. (1979) : *Social Case Work in India*, Ajmer: Sachin Publications

Banerjee, Gauri Rani (19—);

Case Work, in Encyclopedia of Social Work in India by Deshmukh.

Mathew Grace (1987) : *Case Work, In Encyclopeddia of Social Work in India*, Ministry of Welfare, Govt. of India.

Upadhyay, R.K. (2003) : *Social Case work; A Therapeutic Approach*, Jaipur: Rawatr Publications.

Social Group Work

** Jyoti Kakkar*

Introduction

Social Work has been defined as an art, a science, a profession that helps people to solve personal, group (especially family) and community problems and to attain satisfying personal, group and community relationships through social work practice (Farley and others). The main focus is to help people to improve their social functioning, their ability to interact and relate to others. The approach is generic and involves the use of all the three methods, namely, case work, group work and community organization.

The social work profession has over the years been seen to be in search of a practice approach. It has attempted to identify a distinctive method of practice and the first method to develop was social casework. Later on there was emergence of group work and community organization. In the 1940s two other practice methods, namely administration and research evolved.

The group work method is well accepted by social workers as a foundation method that helps towards improvement of social functioning of individuals. It is a method that uses groups as a medium of action. A method is well understood to be an orderly way of procedure and therefore it is always carried out towards achievement of a specific aim. Group

** Dr. Jyoti Kakkar, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi*

work is one such method that social workers use to help people of all ages and all sections of society to enhance their social functioning and to cope more effectively with their problems. In doing so, social workers have become important members of clinical teams attempting to respond to social, emotional and mental problems. In addition, social workers also work in non-clinical settings in which they work towards social cohesiveness and integration. In these settings they may work with groups of children, women and youth in a community. These groups become instrumental in evolving a community based response for mitigating problems at hand or for community change and development.

Nature And Purpose

Group work is a method of social work practice through which individuals are helped in solving their problems and it is also directed towards bringing about desired changes at the individual, group and community levels. The group work method is functional at two levels the individual and the entire group. Social group work helps individuals to develop their inherent potential and identify their innate abilities to cope better with their environment. It helps them to learn and inculcate new patterns of behaviour, which in no way are limited to their place within the group but need to be sustained beyond their participation in their life. Thus group work provides emotional and social support to its members; encourages democratic participation and citizenship; assists them in learning and performing new roles and remedies their maladjustments.

The group work process is different from case work. Here the interaction between members is the platform

for bringing about change. The relationship between worker and member, worker and group, member and member, and member to group generate a lot of forces of attraction and interaction. Using these bonds the group becomes an instrument for meeting the basic needs and strengthening human capacities.

A unique feature of the group work process is its use of programme media. The media which are commonly used in group work are play, discussion, theatre, arts and crafts, music, dance, outings and parties. Through involvement in these activities, assuming various roles and responsibilities, abiding by rules and regulations and performing activities the members grow in multiple ways.

Definition

Group work is a method of working with people in groups. A group can be made up of two or more people. Group work is an approach aimed at personal growth, enhancement of social functioning, and for the achievement of socially desirable goals. Recognizing the fact that people are interdependent, the group work method works towards reduction of roadblocks to social interaction and for accomplishing socially desirable purposes. Some definitions of group work can be looked into:

Helen Northen (1988) states that within the general purpose of the profession, social work with small groups may be directed toward helping the members to use the group for coping with and resolving existing problems in psychosocial functioning, toward preventing anticipated problems or maintaining a current level of functioning in situations in which there is danger of deterioration. Further, it may be directed towards developing more effective patterns of group and

organizational functioning and removing environmental obstacles. With any group, the specific outcomes sought vary with the desires, needs, capacities, and situations of the members who comprise the group and with the purpose and nature of the group itself.

Kanopka (1960) describes group work as 'an approach consciously directed toward developing the individual's greatest capacity while relating him to the group and learning when he has to contribute and when he has to withdraw'. According to her social group work is a method of social work which helps persons to enhance their social functioning through purposeful group experiences

According to Reid (1997) the purpose of group work is to help improve the well being of the members and relieve personal suffering. This is accomplished because groups have the 'power to enhance problem-solving capacity, prevent the development of serious social problems, and restore and maintain the social functioning of members'.

Toseland and Rivas (1984) describe group work as a goal directed activity done with small treatment and task groups aimed at meeting their socio-emotional needs and accomplishing tasks. This activity is directed to individual members of a group and to the group as a whole within a system of service delivery. According to them the group workers may aim to support or educate members, help them socialize and achieve personal growth, or provide treatment for their problems and concerns, to rehabilitate members, or to help them grow. Workers should also enable members to change their social environment. Members should therefore gain control over the organizations and communities that affect their lives.

It is important to differentiate between Group Work and Group Therapy. The definition of group work clearly implies that it is addressed to both healthy and sick individuals. Corsini (1957) and Frank (1952) have delved into these concepts. According to Corsini (1957) Group Psychotherapy consists of processes occurring in formally organized, protected groups and calculated to attain rapid ameliorations in personality and behaviour of individual members through specified and controlled group interactions. Frank (1952) focuses group therapy interventions specifically to psychiatrist patients in groups under the leadership of a psychotherapist. Mostly group members are clients who are in emotional distress arising from disturbances in their interactions and the goal of these groups is to ameliorate the suffering and improve the personal and social functioning of their members.

When the definitions are compared one finds a clear cut overlap. In many instances group work practice is directed toward groups with emotional or mental problems. The difference is that group work is also concerned with groups consisting of healthy individuals and with social action groups.

Group work is used in all settings of social work. Professional social workers use their knowledge of group organization and functioning to affect the performance and adjustment of the individual. The focus is always on the individual and the group is the medium to bring about the change. The aim is advancement of social functioning. Programs are used as dynamics in fostering member to member interaction and change. To conclude the goals of group work are not limited to therapeutic interventions and treatment of emotional problems (see Barker, 1995). The objectives could be exchange of information, development of social

and manual skills, changing of attitudes and values, and diverting energies towards positive and productive channels. A range of activities can be part of group activities such as discussions on subjects of relevance and common interest, sports, educational activities and arts and crafts.

Historical Development

Charity Organisation Societies and Group Work

The history of social group work cannot be traced back and focused on the contribution of any one person. Also there is no particular date that marks its inception. However its early beginning is linked to one particular organization the Charity Organization Societies (COS). Many authors link the development of modern group work to the history of social agencies. As is known, industrialization resulted in a mass movement of people from rural to urban areas. The old social agencies always had a base of philanthropy but the newly emerging ones came up with the approach of 'self help'. A need was felt for mutual help and support. The labour movement that developed talked of adult education and outings such as camps for the workers and their families. There were a number of youth agencies with a strong participation of the youth. The spirit behind all these endeavours was of citizen action and a concerted effort to involve the ones who were being helped. The recreation movement too was at the base of group work. As a social movement related closely to the union's fight for an eight hour day, it emphasized the rights of the educationally and culturally disadvantaged sections. It promoted the setting up of playgrounds for slum children and for summer camps. Most activities that were introduced were in groups and consequently group interaction

became a dominant concern. Thus agencies such as the settlement houses, neighbourhood centers, Jewish centers, camp fires, were the early group work agencies.

After First World War

The period following the first world war was one in which social casework was used predominantly by the Charity Organisation Societies and at that time social group work was hardly developed. However a large number of services with a democratic outlook were developed in society.

In the United States of America there was emergence of a large number of voluntary organizations where group behaviour was emphasized as a democratic way of life. Therefore, it is seen that social group work at that time was conceived as a goal, a philosophy, a movement, a psychology and a profession (see Kanopka). Delineating the importance of worker's education, many thinkers like Mark Starr (1937) emphasized concepts of group work such as 'learning by doing', starting where the group is' and the use of informality.

Group Work Curriculum

The beginnings of social group work in social work curriculum were made by Clara Kaiser who offered the first course as part of professional social work curriculum in School of Social Work in Cleveland and her work was later taken up by Grace Coyle. The integration of group work into social work practice was not easy and was gradual. In case the objective of rendering help to individuals in need was easy to comprehend. The neighborhood approach and self help movements behind group work had little to do with individual help and coping.

In the 1920s, group work got a lot of input from different disciplines such as education, psychology and social work. In 1936, the American Association for Study of Group Work was constituted. Its aim was to clarify the concept of group work, yet this confusion prevailed for a number of years. Kanopka reports that the group workers saw themselves as a separate profession from social work.

Second World War and Group Work

The period during the second world war was one that made an impact on the integration of group work with social work profession. It was the war services that brought group workers and case workers together. Professionals in the field of psychiatry now started to experiment with groups in their therapeutic interventions. Gradually the concept of individualization in and through groups enthralled many.

Grace Longwell Coyle

In the years that followed there prevailed a lot of uncertainties for supporters of group work. The American Association for Study of Group Work found it difficult to associate with any specific profession. Some suggested its integration with the profession of education. However the fact that it was being taught in some schools of social work brought it closer here. Although it is difficult to name a person or mention a date for the origin of group work, the turning point where it came to be associated with social work was 1946 and the person to which this can be attributed is Grace Longwell Coyle. She built up the case for the integration of group work into professional social work and this process was finalized in the year 1955 when the American Association for Study of Group Work joined the newly formed National Association of Social

Workers. The history of social group work shows how it changed from the design of a field, a movement, a goal, to a social work method.

The 1960s saw a decline in the importance given to group work practice. This was a result of the new thought that gave importance to generic social work practice. Specializations were no more offered in schools of Social Work to train people in case work, group work and community organization. This trend continued in the next decade too. However, in 1979, group workers in United States and Canada came together and organized the first Annual Symposium for the Advancement of Group Work with the aim of making practitioners aware of the benefits of groups.

Historical Development in India

Group Work came to India in the year 1936 alongwith the introduction of professional social work education with the establishment of the first School of Social Work, that is, the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work in Mumbai. This was followed by the establishment of the second school of Social Work in Delhi which also had teaching of the Social Group Work Method as part of the curriculum. The third school came up in Baroda with a strong trend of group work practice. Infact, this School came up with some of the first publications of records of Group Work in 1960. The Association of Schools of Social Work in association with Technical Cooperation Mission (U.S.A) laid down minimum standards for group work. By and large all schools offered courses on case work, group work and community organization on an American Model and there were no specializations. Also there were no efforts to indigenize the western model of group work practice to the Indian context.

At present group work is taught as a generic method alongwith case work and community organization in most schools of Social Work in India. The group work method is used in correctional and residential institutional setting, hospitals and in special schools. It has been extensively applied in community work, esp. with children, women and youth groups. The general activities in these groups are recreational, educational and cultural in character. The objectives are mainly socialization, structured recreation, functional literacy, awareness generation on health and hygiene, and issues related to family life education. Professional social workers have been working with self-help groups and emphasizing mutual support and assistance. In addition, hospitals, child guidance clinics, special schools and drug de-addiction centres use therapeutic group interventions as part of their treatment plan.

Social work discipline as a profession is being practiced with all most all problems of the individual, community and society. This unit will concentrate on the group work method of social work practice through which individuals are helped in solving their problems and it is also directed towards bringing about desired changes at the individual, group and community levels.

Scope of Social Group Work

Human beings are always learning and growing. They have an inherent potential for high achievement. In professional social work, the aim is to help individuals with the integration of their inner motives and the demands of their social environment and to help change social environment if it is detrimental to the social development of the individuals. There is no more a status quo. It is a change of one or the other, as may be required.

The group is essentially made up of individuals in interaction. Eubank ((1932) defines a group as 'two or more persons in a relationship of social interaction, whose relationships with one another may be abstracted and distinguished from their relationships with all others so that they might be thought to be an entity'. Olmsted ((1959) states that a group is a 'plurality of individuals who are in contact with one another, who take one another into account and who are aware of some significant commonality'. Hare (1962) has distinguished a group from a collection of individuals. The former is characterized by having members who are in interaction with one another, share a common purpose and a set of norms which give direction and limits to their activity, and develop a network of interpersonal attractions and a set of roles which serve to differentiate the group from other groups. There may be a number of different situations in which the group work method is utilized by a social worker. Sometimes, an individual with a problem, e.g. an AIDS afflicted person facing workplace discrimination, and loosing his job, seeks assistance. In other cases, individuals with a problem are referred to a welfare service as is the case with a woman who has been a victim of domestic violence, or a drug addict who has to be rehabilitated. Integrating them with others having similar problems helps them learn to cope and view their problem with a changed perspective. Oftentimes, group sharing and experience become the turning point where some members learn to cope with their problem better.

It is not only individuals seeking help, sometimes it is an entire group. For example, parents of children who are mentally challenged may find it very helpful to discuss their problems and find solutions with others. They may be trained to cope better with their child

within a group. In other situations the groups may be formed to handle simple tasks. This may be a cleanliness drive in a community, or a group formulated to organize a cultural evening in aid of destitute children. It goes without saying that these task groups terminate when their objective is achieved.

Small groups have a lot of scope in participatory approaches to development. Groups are well known to have a lot of inherent potential for social change. Many times, the groups from the disadvantaged sections of society are organized, informed, mobilized and empowered to identify their needs and struggle for their interests. In doing so, they become a fertile ground for learning and empowerment of the members.

Advantages of Group Work

The advantages of groups are multi-fold. (a) They promote interaction and intermixing between individuals who join as members. A lot of learning comes through sharing of experiences and reflecting upon them in group situations. Through group experiences members learn to share, adjust, cooperate, lead, and tolerate; (b) This type of facilitated learning within groups brings forth a lot of change. Members can experiment with new actions in their groups, and learn to use them outside the group. The nature of group work promotes collective action and the group is a place where members learn to plan, understand and initiate collective actions; (c) As is well known, organizations are made up of collectivity of individuals, that is groups. At the community level, when efforts of small groups succeed, they are used for building and strengthening people organizations. They become the foundation stone of organizations of youth, women or the older men. Groups thus prepare people for these larger roles they take up.

This apart, groups are a place where the very fact that an interaction would take place with others who are having similar problems, provides immense security to the members. The individual problems when shared in groups become shared problems. Members feel less threatened with their problems when they perceive the problems of others being as much, if not more, grave. Members share their experiences, feel secure and find support within the group. Social Groups are a place where activities facilitate interaction and help members are helped to overcome their isolation and loneliness.

Relevance of Social Group Work

As is well understood, human beings are strongly dependent upon their interactions with one another (see Farley and others). They do not live in isolation. Their group participation is inevitable. It is considered socially desirable to be a part of many groups and always keep getting familiar with new ones. Apart from the need of survival, human beings have a strong need for self-respect and 'belonging'. There is a continuous attempt to fulfill many roles according to the stage of development and the potential of the individual. No doubt the individual has to be prepared to face innumerable challenges, and also to accept and cope with failure as he cannot always have success. He has to learn to accept frustration and cope with it in an acceptable manner. He needs to learn to work and relax, to think and feel, to be happy and cope with sorrow, to express anger and fear, both in a way so as not to harm anyone. These are all learnt behavioural responses, emerging from the learning that essentially is within the realm of interaction with other human beings and never in isolation. Oftentimes, the human being learns this as he grows within his family, and

with friends, neighbours and relatives. The place of work is also a place where learning comes through interaction with co-workers. By and large this is the way in which most people learn to cope with different life situations. Sometimes human beings find themselves in situations where they need help from others to cope with a situation. This is usually attained with the help of a close friend or relative. However in some cases they need the help of a professional social worker. This professional help may be direct in the form of guided social interaction and resolving the issue at hand. On the other hand it may be in the form of mobilizing resources or enlisting support of others who can help. Thus in a wide sense social group work tasks may target an individual or an entire community. It may give such planned group experiences to individuals as would equip them for useful and satisfying social interaction. It may involve work with healthy and capable persons or it may work for the disabled, marginalized and rejected. Group work is one of the methods of social work which is used when appropriate to fulfill the objectives of social work practice (see Kanopka, 1972).

It goes without saying that groups have a lot of relevance for those whom they directly or indirectly impact. Groups primarily are powerful vehicles of learning. The experiential nature of a small group especially makes it inevitable that members participate, act and learn in a small group.

Settings of Social Group Work

Social group work method deals with situations of individuals, groups or entire communities. Groups are usually used by agencies whose primary purpose is education and recreation. For example, many

primary schools use classroom groupings or family groupings (see Davis, 1975). Many youth groups are formed for a specific activity or purpose. Peer groupings of teenagers take up issues of their interest. Also for the elderly there are community centers and old people's clubs. Groups are formed and also used by psychiatric clinics and mental health clinics. Oftentimes the free and unstructured groups used by social workers help patients to talk and act out their feelings. These treatment groups are used in many medical settings. Many times individuals in distress ask for help or are referred to groups to get assistance to deal with their problems. This is very often the case in family welfare services, mental health services, correctional settings, school social work, agencies working with the physically and mentally challenged, and others. In the case of groups seeking assistance it can be those who are marginalized or discriminated against in a community, parents groups who want to learn more about the special needs of their children, groups of persons who are into alcoholism and drug abuse, community action groups who want to learn more and together mobilize resources from within the community to tackle problems such as of hygiene, domestic violence, etc. Also a very important area of social work intervention with groups is when there is no specific request for help but the community by and large feels that there is a need for services on a preventive or ameliorative basis. This includes services for children and youth in institutional care, groups work with the street children, etc.

Small groups are very important instruments of community change and development. In the present context, self help groups in the area of micro credit

and savings are important in organization of programmes for the poor.

Value Base of Social Group Work

In any profession that deals so closely with human beings, the value base assumes great significance. Values refer to our beliefs that influence our preferences on how one ought or ought not to behave. Each group has a worker who develops programmes and interventions for individual members and the whole group with an approach determined by a value base. He has certain values and assumptions regarding the nature of man and his potential, the role of members and the role of the group worker. Values influence the methods used in working with the groups. There are three value systems that come into play: the contextual values, the values of the clients and the values of the group worker (see Morales and Sheafor, 1977). The contextual sources of values are the values of that society, values of the agency sponsoring the group, and the values of the social work profession. Social values such as equality of both sexes, responsibility for own growth, and democratic participation impact group interaction.

Agencies which sponsor group work also have their own values that prevail on the group worker and the leaders. For example, are decisions to be made within the group or outside? Are groups allowed to intermix and interact with other groups outside? What are the loci of power?

Another impact of values upon the groups comes from the profession. The group worker works within the broader premise of Social Work and the professional values he or she upholds have a bearing on his work. From here emerge the values of human worth and

dignity, respect for a person's autonomy, importance of participation, maintaining a non-judgmental attitude and affirming the interdependence of the individual and society (see Siporin, 1975).

Group members also have their own set of values. Group workers are aware of these and also of the fact that member values are influenced by race, culture and ethnicity. Group workers have to continuously help members understand their own values and respect those of other members. Where required he has to clarify their values and resolve value conflicts.

Worker's personal value systems also influence their way of working with groups. It is important that they are aware of their values and do not let these come in the way they approach their professional tasks in groups.

Apart from the above, group workers share a common concern and interest in certain values common to group work practice. According to Kanopka (1963) these values are:

- a) Participation and positive relations among people of different colour, creed, age, national origin, and social class in the group.
- b) The value of cooperation and mutual decision making embodied in the principles of a participatory democracy.
- c) The importance of individual initiative within the group.
- d) The importance of freedom to participate, including expressing thoughts and feelings about matters of concern to individual members or the group as a whole, and having the right to be involved in the decision making process of the group.

- e) The value of high individualization in the group so that each member's unique concerns are addressed.

Groups are best suited for the exercise of these values and group workers need to be well trained and sensitive to the different values systems so as to bring out the best results from their group work practice.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined social group work as a method of social work. We also discussed the definition, nature and purpose, historical background of social group work, its scope, relevance and some of the settings in which group work is being practiced. Social work has its own values. As a method social group work too has its own value base. These were examined in this chapter. By reading this chapter, you have become aware of some of the basics of social work as a method of social work. You will be learning more about Social Group during the second year of your programme.

References

- Davis, Bernard (1975): *The Use of Groups in Social Work Practice*, *Dept. of Applied Social Studies*, University of Warwick, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Eubank, Earl E. (1932): *The Concepts of Sociology*. Boston, D.D. Heath. In Northen, Helen (1969): *Social Work with Groups*, Columbia university Press, New York, London.
- Farley, W.O; Larry, L.S. and Boyle, S.W. (2003): *Introduction to Social Work*. Pearson Custom Publishing, USA.

Northern Helen (1988): *Social Work with Groups*, 2nd Edition, New York: Columbia University Press.

Reid, Kenneth E. (1997): *Social Work Practice with Groups: A clinical perspective*, 2nd ed. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co. In Farley, W.O; Larry, L.S. and Boyle, S.W. (2003): *Introduction to Social Work*. Pearson Custom Publishing, USA.

Toseland, R.W. and Rivas, R.F. (1984): *An Introduction to Group Work Practice*, Macmillan Publishing Co. New York.

Hare, A. Paul (1962): *Handbook of Small Groups Research*. New York, Free Press of Glencoe.

Kanopka, Gisela (1972): *Social Group Work: A Helping Process*. Second Edition; Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Olmsted, M.S. (1959): *The Small Group*. New York, Random House.

Siporin, M (1975): *Introduction to Social Work Practice*. New York; Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.

Kanopka, G. (1960): " Group Work: A Heritage and a Challenge", Selected Papers in Social Work With Groups. New York: *National Association of Social Welfare*.

Morales, A.T and Sheafor, B.W (1977): *A Profession of Many Faces*. Seventh Edition. Allyn and Bacon, USA.

Corsini, R. J. (1957): *Methods of Group Psychotherapy*. New York: Mc Graw – Hill.

Kanopka, Gisela (1972) *Social Group Work: A Helping Process*. Second Edition; Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Frank, J.D (1952): Group Methods in Psychotherapy; *Journal of Social Issues*. In Kanopka, Gisela (1972): *Social Group Work: A Helping Process*. Second Edition; Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Community Work in Social Work

** Archana Dassi*

Introduction

Community development was defined as a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community, with the active participation and if possible at the initiative of the community. While Community Organisation is the process of mobilizing and empowering communities through their institutions, organizations, groups, leaders, advocates, and volunteers.

It is a long-term process whereby people who are marginalized or living in poverty work together to identify their needs, create change, exert more influence in the decisions which affect their lives and work to improve the quality of their lives, the communities in which they live. In this chapter you will be able to understand the basic knowledge of community development and organization.

Historical Development of Community Work in the West and India

Community organization viewed from a humanitarian approach is meant to solve the problems of the community is as old as society itself. But viewed as one of the methods of social work profession it is of very recent origin.

** Dr. Archana Dassi, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi*

The first efforts at the community organization for the social welfare were initiated in the United Kingdom during the nineteenth century to overcome the problem of acute poverty which led to beggary. Thus the London Society for Organising Charitable Relief and repressing mendicancy was formed. Its functions were to organize the poor, collect funds to meet their basic needs and enable them to lead moral lives through education and thus assimilate them into English society.

The settlement house movement originated in England during 1880. Such houses catered to the needs of rural poor who flocked into the cities. Professors and students left their homes in better class neighborhoods and lived in areas inhabited by the working class. They identified with the poor and became their spokesperson. They paid attention to the physical and social aspects of slum living.

These two movements – organizing charity and serving neighborhoods through settlement houses – had their impact in the United States, which maintained close links with England. Thus in 1880, the Charity Organization Society sprang up in the USA to put rational order in the area of charity and relief. The chaos in the efforts to compact social problems created by the economic depression of 1873 and the rapid movement of the rural areas due to industrialization called for coordination to prevent indiscriminate charity, fraud and duplication.

The settlement movement which reached the USA around 1886 was neighbourhood based and catered to poor immigrants from Europe. In addition, the leadership of this movement engaged in social action resulting in reform and social legislation. Thus they tried to change society in order to meet the needs of the people.

The early part of the 20th century saw the birth of community councils in USA. These functioned to increase efficiency, encourage specialization, set standards for service and provide leadership to member agencies for joint planning. Later, World War I gave rise to war chests in many communities to promote central fund raising, coordination of services and control of spending. Most community organization practitioners during the period were employed in community councils and chests. Thus community organization during this period was looked upon as working with member agencies and not directly with communities. Due to the dominance of this type of practitioners in community organization, the method was equated with coordination, raising standards of services, collecting and distributing funds and supervising spending during the 50's and early 60's.

Gradually, welfare responsibilities shifted from voluntary effort to public welfare departments of governments. This retarded the use of community organization to some extent since counseling; health and recreation were the only areas on which voluntary effort could concentrate. The wider use of community organization was further restricted due to the preoccupation of the social work profession with casework practice. However, urban renewal projects and programmes and the war on poverty of the 60's again completed the circle. Practitioners again focused attention on people in neighbourhood and communities giving direct service to them.

Historical Development of Community Work in India

No serious note of the community work was taken before the 1950s when a massive government

programme of community development in rural India was launched. With the introduction of community development programmes in India, the opportunities for community work were there. Community work in India is largely seen as a process of developing local initiatives, particularly in the areas of education, health and agriculture development, by matching community needs with available resources. The major emphasis is to motivate people to express their needs, and to avail themselves of existing resources.

Community development was defined as a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community, with the active participation and if possible at the initiative of the community. Mukherji (1961) described community development as a process by which the efforts of people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the social, economic, and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities with the life of the nation and to contribute fully to the national progress. The community organization was designed to function effectively as the agency of progress and development with the following objectives:

- 1) to look after all the sections of society
- 2) to mobilize them for purposeful action
- 3) to take particular care of the underprivileged class and,
- 4) to look after the entire process of development.

The central idea was to seek goods in their own villages and to look for solutions to social problems in their own neighbourhood. In India a variety of people were involved along with the social workers in the process of community work in rural areas. The health workers,

education experts, agriculturists, scientists, administrators, field workers etc were all part of the team. Expected to work in a block, which was the unit conceived as community. The thrust of the community work in India remained largely rural. The nature of community work did not become radical, or more conflict oriented. Social workers started working in urban slums, with a view to develop programmes, which could provide some relief to the poor. The conditions of mass literacy, lack of basic amenities, the problems of women and child exploitation etc have recently attracted large number of NGOs to work in these areas. Some agencies that traditionally used casework and group work a major methods for social work intervention, such as in case of schools, began to incorporate the elements of community work in their practice. Schools started to work in communities to have a community-oriented approach that could help the children with problems in a better manner. A large number of social workers are now working in various agencies where an opportunity to work with a community means a target population in a defined geographic area. By and large the nature of community work in India has remained welfare-oriented.

Definition

To be able to engage in community organization practice a clear definition is necessary. Several definitions have been put forth at different times, but some commonalities have been seen in them. In general, four different major ideas are reflected in these definitions. These are:

- 1) The idea of cooperation, collaboration and integration.

- 2) The idea of meeting needs and of bringing a balance between needs and resources.
- 3) The idea that community organization deals with program relationships as contrasted with the direct services of casework and group work
- 4) The broad philosophical concept of community organization as furnishing a working relationship between the democratic process and specialism.

Kramer and Specht defined community organization as a method of intervention whereby a professional change agent helps a community action system composed of individuals, groups or organizations to engage in planned collective action in order to deal with special problems within the democratic system of values. This involves two major interrelated concerns: (a) the interactional process of working with an action system, which includes identifying, recruiting and working with members and developing organizational and interpersonal relationships among them which facilitates their efforts; and (b) the technical tasks involved in identifying problem areas, analyzing causes, formulating plans, developing strategies and mobilizing the resources necessary to effect action.

According to M.G.Ross, community organization is a process by which a community identifies its needs or objectives, orders or ranks these needs or objectives, develops the confidence and the will to work at these needs or objectives, finds the resources (internal or external) to deal with these needs or objectives, takes action in respect to them, and in so doing extends and develops cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community.

Broadening the Definition and Concept of Community Organization

Before reconstructing Ross's definition we have finally to discuss the usefulness of his argument that community organization is a social process, which is going on regardless of whether or not, a single individual under the name of community organizer is working to influence it. This places the definition in a sociological-analytical category since it is attempting to clarify a social process. Unfortunately his restrictions (that a need has to be identified before it can be solved or met, and that only attitudes which recognize their cooperative and collaborative results in society are important) change the level of analysis from the societal to the individual. The point is that, in switching from a societal to an individual level of analysis in mid-stream, the definition makes a fallacy – that societies are things, which think.

Keeping this in view, Gangrade (2001) defined community organization as the process by which the social system of the community provides for integration and adaptation within the community. This is a process that continues regardless of the work of the community organizer whose function it is to initiate, nourish and develop the process. In participating in this process the community organizer will have regard for certain values relating to the forms of social change and the means by which they may be brought about.

This definition prepares the way for a description of the function of the community organizer, which pays some attention to the quality of the social relationships and forms of action desired. This definition emphasizes the third dimension of the community organizer's job, which might assist in finding the correct balance between societal and aesthetic preoccupation.

Community organization may be accomplished democratically or autocratically. In either case the adjustment of social welfare needs to resources has to be made in accordance with the nature of phenomenon and objectives involved.

Place of Community Work in Social Work Profession

Community work has a long history as an approach to social work. In the western context, there has been particular interest in community work in relation to community care, promoting care in the community, as well as enabling service users and carers to participate in planning, monitoring and evaluating community care services. Community social work has not, however, been confined to community care. Community-based social work has been and continues to be relevant across a wide range of social work practices, including preventative work with children and their families, youth, elderly, etc.

Whilst community work has a continuing role, as an approach to social work, however, community work has not been confined to social work. Community work has featured and continues to feature within other professional settings, including housing and planning. In addition, community work has also been carried out, and continues to be carried out, by volunteers and unpaid activists within communities.

There have been long-running debates on whether or not community work should be defined as a professional activity at all, professionalisation having been posed as potentially undermining to community activism and autonomous community movements (Banks, 1996). In summary, then, community work is not confined to the social work profession.

Alternative Perspectives and Implications for Community Work Practice

By this time, it should have become apparent that community work can be and has been based upon competing perspectives, associated with both right and left positions on the political spectrum. Community work has been promoted to encourage self-help groups and informal caring, to compensate for reductions in public services provision within the context of the increasing marketisation of welfare, to support strategies to combat poverty and oppression, and to facilitate community participation and empowerment.

The 'professional' approach, seeks to promote self-help and to improve service delivery within the wider framework of existing social relations, with the 'radical' approach. This latter 'radical' approach seeks to go further, contributing to shifting the balance of existing relations through empowering the relative powerless to question the causes of their deprivation and challenge the sources their operation, drawing upon insights from neo-Marxist structure analyses, together with insights from feminism and from anti-racist analyses (Twelvetrees, 1991). This is the type of approach which support minority ethnic communities, for example, in drawing attention to inequalities in service provision and in power which lie behind severe deprivation' (Payne, 1995, p.166).

Whilst these distinctions have relevance, the terms 'professional' and 'radical' have inherent problems, in the current context, as twelvetrees himself has also recognized. In particular, in recent years, the term 'radical' has become even more confusing, since its adoption by 'radical' right. The use of the term 'professional' to describe one perspective could also be

taken to imply that the alternative perspective was in some way 'non-professional' or even 'unprofessional' to (although this was not actually suggested by twelvetrees himself). Given that professional values, knowledge and skills are essential to community work, whatever the perspective in question, it has been suggested that it would be less confusing to categories community work perspectives in terms of 'technicist' approach on one hand, and a 'transformational' perspective, emphasizing community empowerment and social transformation, on the other hand'(Mayo, 1994b).

These two broad types of community work perspective have also been broken down into further subdivisions and related to the different types and levels of community work practice. Dominelli, for example has characterized the traditional, 'neutral' views of community work in ways which are comparable to the 'technicist' approach. She defines the views in terms of their assumptions that 'the system is basically sound, although individual and community pathologies need to be ironed out through the community work process; she quotes Biddle and Biddle's comment that 'the poor and the aliened must overcome their inner handicap particularly through the cultivation of their own initiatives' as a classic text to illustrate this approach (Dominelli, 1990,p.8).

Table : Two Perspectives on Community Work

Perspective	Goals/assumptions
'Professional'	To promote community initiatives, including self-help
'Traditional' 'Neutral' 'Technicist'	To improve services delivery (<i>within the frame work of existing social relations</i>)

'Radical' 'Transformational'	To promote community initiatives, to improve service delivery and to do so in ways which empower communities to challenge the root causes of deprivation and discrimination, and to develop strategies and build alliances for social change <i>(as part of wider strategies to transform oppressive, discriminatory, exploitative social relations)</i>
---------------------------------	--

Community Development and Community Organization

Objectives

There is a common philosophical base between community organization and community development. Both aim to enable people to live a happy and fully developed life. Both have basic faith in the common man and his right to self-determination in the framework of society. Both give equal emphasis to self-help, and help the people to help themselves to solve their own problems. The community organizer and the community development worker both work as agents to achieve these goals.

In spite of these similarities, community development and community organization should not be considered as synonymous. They do overlap. Community development is considered with promotion of all aspects of life including social, economical and cultural, in rural as well as urban areas; while community organization is concerned with adjustment of social

welfare needs and resources in cities, states, and nation as well as in villages.

Differences

Community organization as practiced in the United States is mostly done on a voluntary basis. While community development in most of the under-developed countries is a government-sponsored programme.

Community organization is essentially a product of urbanization and industrialization. In a highly industrialized society Community organization is largely concerned with the problems of population mobility, problems of the family, problems of the aged, problems of juvenile delinquency, of unemployment and provision of social security. In contrast to these, Community development in the under-developed countries is largely concerned with how to induce people to meet basic human needs, like food, shelter and clothing and bring about change in their outlook.

Community organization is mostly concerned with starting or developing new social welfare agencies or institutions to meet the problems of an urban society. Community development on the other hand is more concerned with inducing social changes; and as such becomes a powerful tool to bring about social change in traditional societies.

Community organization tends to be process-oriented while community development as practiced in India tends to be target oriented and often neglects the process of involving the people in the project and determining their felt needs in the anxiety of the administrators to achieve the targets in a given time.

Importance of Community Work

Social work has developed special knowledge and skills to deal with individuals, groups and the community, which could with advantage be applied, to community development. Charles I. Scotland in his paper, 'Community Development : A Challenge to the social Worker', has emphasized that social worker has a unique contribution make to the process of community development. He emphasizes the fact that the concern of social workers for people is quite different from that of all other professions.

The concern of social worker is based on an understanding of the dynamics of human behaviour. The social worker takes pain to identify causes, The social worker possess special skills in motivating people to use their capacities in working towards desirable goals which they themselves have identified. His knowledge and skill specially in the community organization process form an integral part of his skill in working with individuals and groups .He has developed a technique of solving multitudinous human needs and problems affecting the individual by means of specific skills enabling the individual to utilize both his own and community resources to the maximum advantage.

Further, social work skills essential in group work and recreation can also make a notable contribution to Community development. These skills would help to enlist the co-operation of women and youth to assist them find satisfaction in group activity as a step in undertaking some community responsibility.

Another area where community organization can make a contribution is administration. Community development involves sound organizational structure

through which programmes can be administered and through which the goal of community development can be achieved. Community organizers trained in social welfare administration will be able to apply democratic principles to the development of community development programmes. Thus the process of Community organization in social work seems to be closely related to community development. The development of social programmes, fact finding, community surveys, analysis, planning conference technique, community operation, consultation, and negotiation, organization, interpretation, project administration and recording are all elements that are generic to community organization and community development.

Areas of Application

Public welfare agencies use the community organization method both at the national and the state levels. Their planning seldom starts from the grass roots. Building, allocating funds, and giving publicity to programmes and plans, encouraging formulation of plans, and supervising and evaluating them are some of the functions performed by the community practitioners (that is professional social workers). Collecting statistical data of particular problems or areas of concern publishing books and magazines and circulating them, and compiling reference material are some areas where community practitioners are very active. They also initiate new legislation to change the environment or bring relief to disadvantaged or handicapped people. In preparation for these, national or state conferences are held which serve as public forums for debate on issues.

Voluntary social welfare agencies as they grow and multiply require the nurturing hand of the community organizers. Many such bodies exist in India at local ,

regional or state level. The central Social Welfare Board, through State Advisory Boards and field staff, help local leaders handle some of their own welfare needs. Organizations like Indian Council of Social Welfare, Association for Social Health in India, All India Women's Conference, etc are promoting and coordinating bodies. They often run their own programmes, since funds are available only for implementation of programmes while the need for planning, supervision and coordination are often not considered when funding.

In many impoverished urban areas of Madras, Bombay, Calcutta or Delhi work among slum dwellers is progressing with the help of young activists rather than through professional social workers. Professional workers in such situations are more often development-oriented, while activists use socio-political analysis to raise issues and mobilize the people, sometimes resulting in confrontation with authorities. People's organizations are often encouraged in these areas by means of which adult education of a functional type takes place and the community negotiates for improvement of municipal services.

Under the Development of Urban Development several cities organized citizen's councils to stimulate neighbourhood communities. In Delhi, Baroda and Ahmedabad, too, such efforts have been made. Community centers akin to the settlement houses are found serving neighbourhood in some parts of Bombay, Bangalore and Calcutta.

In rural communities too-among peasants, landless laborers, schedule castes and tribals-there is an awakening. Dedicated missionaries and social workers made early attempts at village uplift. Later, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi many Indians were stimulated to

undertake village reconstruction work at micro and macro levels, sometimes dedicating their whole lives to it.

Currently, under the auspices of local, regional or national bodies many organizations of tenants, schedule casts, tribes, landless laborer, peasants and fisher folk have banded themselves together to work for their own development as well as to receive a share of the government resources. Young animators guided by an ideology engage in socio-political analysis of the situation in which people find themselves; through awareness building 'conscientisation' these activists enable people slowly but steadily to attain their own development. These activists use the community welfare as development oriented.

Different movements in India (such as those for abolition of Sati), the struggle for independence and, more recently, movements to mobilize women, such as SEWA have not only organized women using trade union methods and community organization techniques but have enabled them to raise their economic status. They have also utilized the survey, study and the printed word to make women from rural and urban areas visible to the nation and to the world. Micro attempts are made by community workers who have a business orientation to plan and implement income generating programmes to provide employment to women and girls.

The fisher folk of the coastal areas of India are fighting a battle for survival against trawler fishermen and big business. Fisher women have organized themselves to protest against building factories that will render them unemployed. But the dilemma is that great hopes are built up and goals are not always achieved. Small gains are made. But the dilemma is that frustrations

are often the outcome. Yet by this process the people get a taste of their own power, and therefore do not accept defeat easily.

Future Prospects

Professional social work in India began at the post-graduate level in schools of social work. Currently, some universities offer such training at graduate level; yet in most cases the practical training is inadequate and the faculty often lacks field experience.

To engage in community work requires strength of body and mind and the ability to be objective while also entering into the lives of the people. The process is complicated and therefore very confusing at times. In India, young men or women with post-matric education can handle many of the tasks of a community worker involving direct services to the community. In such cases, the educational gaps being narrow it is easier for them to communicate with their client. Yet persons with this level of education are available for community work early and therefore flexible and easily adaptable to hard work in all conditions. They are young and therefore flexible and easily adaptable to hard work in all conditions. They identify with the community more easily. They are also less of a burden on agency budgets. Yet their youth makes the community skeptical of them. Therefore, working with adults is at times a difficult task for them. In case they are ambitious to do well in life they are often seeking upward mobility and are lost to the community which has served as a training ground for them.

But if India's poor in the villages and slum areas are to be helped effectively thousands of animators and motivators are required. Many of these have to come from among the people themselves so as to be

acceptable to them. The first concern in social work should therefore be to train indigenous workers who can handle many of these tasks and develop skill to handle them. A radical change in the outlook of social work education at different levels has to be made in order that post-graduate education can cater to experienced field workers who can then take on supervisory, training and administrative responsibilities, while person with lesser education can do direct services. Otherwise, professional social workers may not enter the main stream of service at the call of poor and the disadvantaged.

The mobile team approach at the local as well as the regional and national levels is becoming acceptable in India Teams of persons specialized in community health, agriculture, home science or intermediate technology move from place to place be accessible to people in remote areas to motivate, educate and mobilize them. The community organizer with his/ her expertise in human relationships can hold the team together under difficult conditions in India's far flung areas by providing leadership. Only such types of programmes which reach out are a real challenge to the professional and can touch and improve the lives of India's people.

The lives-in-village and slum approach is yet another new trend in social work. The mass of Indian people, though intelligent are ignorant and steeped in tradition, with a culture peculiar to their caste, religion or region. A tremendous effort is required to observe and study them closely. The 'live-in' approach is often adopted by anthropologist to study the way of life of the people. To adopt this approach is often adopted by anthropologist to study the way of life of the people. To adopt this approach social worker calls for people with sincere dedication and an ability to live with sincere dedication

and an ability to live with them, identify with them and improve them through their own initiative.

National and regional (both action, research and service oriented) and university department through their extension services, reach out to the far flung village to assist sponsors of projects and programmes, and to make feasibility studies for applications they make for funding to the government or donor agencies. Using community organization skills and methods they help sponsors or people's organization to initiate, plan, implement and evaluate projects and programmes. These institutes often take up pioneering ventures which serve as models for other agencies to follow. Much creativity and spirit of leadership is called for from professionals which work in such types of ventures.

Community organizers to achieve their community goals have not really nurtured the mass media. Low cost communication is wide open field where community organizers have to learn to make visual aids and develop skills to utilize them. Community organizers have to be constantly innovative to meet changing needs.

Conclusion

Community work is one of the core methods of social work. It is the inter-group process that attempts to help communities to understand the social problems that exist, and to utilize available community resources to bring about solutions that will strengthen the total community and enrich the lives of other members. Community work is one of the newer thrusts in social work, and one that has great potential for preventing and solving social problems. Over the years, the use of community work has become more professionalized and applicable in wide variety of settings.

References

- Gangrade, K.D. (2001): Working with Community at the Grassroot level: *Strategies and programmes*, New Delhi: Radha Publishers.
- Arthur Dunham (1958): Community welfare Organization: *Principles and Practice*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co.
- Tellis-Naya, J.B. (1987): Community Organisation. In *Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India*, New Delhi: Publication Division, GOI.
- Mayo, Marjorie (1998): *Community work. In Social Work: Themes, Issues and Critical Debate*(Ed) by Adams, R., Dominelli, L. and Payne, M. London: McMillan.
- Ross, Murray.G.and Lappin, B.W.(1967): *Community Organization: theory, Principles and Practice*. Jointly Published by New York: Harper and Row and Tokyo: John Weatherhill Inc.
- Siddiqui, H.Y. (1999): *Community Work*, New Delhi: Hira Publishers.
- Skidmore, R.A., Thackery, M.G. and Farley, O.M. (1994): *Introduction to Social Work*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Baldock, Peter (1974): *Community Work and Social Work*, Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Ife, Jim (1995): *Community Development: Creating Community Alternatives – Vision, Analysis and Practice*, Melbourne: Longman
- Craig, W. (1987): *A Community Work Perspective*, Massey University, Palmerstone, North NZ.