

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN INDIA

Suresh Naik R.

*Research Scholar,
Department of Social Work,
V.S.K. University, Ballari
E-mail: rathodsureshnaik@gmail.com*

Dr. Gouri Manik Manasa

*Research Guide and Chairman,
Department of Social Work,
V.S.K. University, Ballari*

Abstract

This study is situated within the realm of social work education with a specific focus on Social work education in India is eighty-three years old. It emerged in order to reach a need for trained personnel to work on social problems that gripped society at that point in time. It was an attempt to organize work within the space then-emerging philanthropy and charity work. Since social work education had its beginnings with the emergence of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) as the first formal Centre for training in social work, the history of social work education in India is very closely linked to the history of the Institute. TISS had certain specializations as a focus area, they were: medical and psychiatric social work, family and child welfare, urban and rural development, social welfare administration, and criminology and correctional administration.

Keyword

Social Work, Education, Problems, Specialization

Reference to this paper
should be made as follows:

Received: 16.07.2021

Approved: 28.08.2021

**Suresh Naik R.
Dr. Gouri Manik Manasa**

*ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL
WORK EDUCATION IN INDIA*

Article No.28

RJPSS Apr.-Sept. 2021,

Vol. XLVI No. 2,

pp. 234-241

Online available at:

<https://anubooks.com/rjpss-2021-vol-xlvi-no-2/>

<https://doi.org/10.31995/rjpss.2021.v46i02.028>

Introduction

Social work took up in the 20th century with roots in voluntary philanthropy and grass-root organizing. Roles played by the social workers sometimes may lead to confusion among the common man about the exact role of social work professionals. Social workers answer to social needs existed long before then, as evidenced primarily by a long history of private charities and religious organizations. Social work education focuses on working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to assist them in functioning better in their social environments.

Social work education is the most comprehensive of human service occupations and through time, has become recognized as the profession that centers its attention on helping people improves the social functioning as fulfilling this mission, social workers must possess a broad range of knowledge about the functioning of people and social institutions, as well as have a variety of skills for facilitating change in how individuals, organizations, and other social structures operate new century, it is clear that the nature of employment and careers will be dramatically affected by such factors as globalization of the labor market.

Objectives of the Study:

- To assess the social work education system in India.
- To study specific issues and challenges of social work education.
- To suggest measures to overcome the issues related to social work education.

Methodology and Materials: The research methodology is an essential aspect of the study in selected area. The present paper is based on the secondary sources of existing literature. The researcher has adopted a descriptive research design to examine and understand the “Issues and Challenges of Social Work Education in India.”

The rationale of Social Work Education: Social work profession began without any expectation that its practitioners needed a specialized education system, let alone such as universities could provide. Nonetheless, by the end of the nineteenth century, short training programs initiate to be introduced under the sponsorship of casework agencies. Shortly thereafter a trend toward annexing with institutions of higher education developed, with degree programs appearing on the graduate as well as the undergraduate level. Concomitantly, organized groups of social work practitioners and educators initiate to appear as instruments for better defining professional standards. In 1952, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), a single accrediting agency for all social work education programs and Plans, replaced

two earlier, competing organizations. Three years later, seven social work and research organizations merged to form the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). NASW is working on advance and unify the profession as a whole, promoting what it evaluates as sound policies and map out ethical standards.

1. An Overview on Social Work Education in India:

The Moment of the study of social work ages from ancient India. There were many ancient rulers like King Asoka, Harshavardana, where are involved in setting up social reformer activates like helping pour and need by giving shelters and involving their traits to carries out the livelihood. Freethinkers like Raja ram Mohan Roy (1722-1833) at all carried the legacy to serve the mankind all the above strategies were practiced and no written evidence can be obtained. After Indian independence academicians and politicians made an attempt to educate the society to be more involved in social activities. The UGC in its report Social Work Education in Indian Universities, 1965, claims that the first short-term course of social work was organized by the Social Service League in Bombay in 1920. It was a short-term course designed for voluntary workers engaged in public welfare activity.

In the year 1936, a visionary Dr. Clifford Manshard (an American) was brought into existence. the role of social work by introducing a curriculum which led to Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work, now popularly known as the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS, Mumbai). Dr. Clifford started it with a view to preparing a trained manpower. He expected this trained manpower should competently be equipped with the required knowledge and skills so that it can shoulder varied kinds of responsibilities in the field of social welfare.

The Mahatma Gandhi Kashi University, Varanasi earlier known as Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi and the College of Social Service, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, started imparting social work education. In 1948, the North Young Women's Christian Association of India (NYWCAI) started the Delhi School of Social Work with financial assistance from the Foreign Division of the American Young Women's Christian Association, and the School of Social Work was given affiliation by the University of Delhi in 1961. The M.S. University of Baroda, started the teaching of social work as part of the university syllabus system in 1949 (Singh et al., 2003).

Soon various Universities in India were fascinated by the idea and ventured into offering MSW Courses. Presently the basic MSW Courses offer Specialization in Community Development, Human Resource Medical, and Psychiatry. The impact of this specialization really helps Rural Mass to be Really Educated. The present scenario does not give an insight into the problems. Hence the Student and Staff

should undergo a thorough investigation and solve the problems. This can be achieved by taking the student to address such problems practically.

Review of Literature

An attempt will be made to bring forth relevant literature pertaining to the topic under study. Journals, books, documents, and other materials will be reviewed. This review will be undertaken to understand the area of Social Work education in depth. For the purpose of preparation of the synopsis the following review was made;

Thomas (1967) has discussed the problems of Social Work education in India in one of his writings. He put forth questions on designing of the curriculum, eligibility criteria of students for social work courses, staff and student's ratio, issues regarding specialization and quality of students taking admission for the social work courses, etc. These problems are elaborated in the writing, whereas the problem of language is a common problem. It has created obstacles in the teaching and learning process. Most of the time, faculties are unable to understand the Social Work concepts in the regional language. If faculties are facing problems in understanding the content, students could not understand it.

Nanavati (1985) has tried to explain the new innovations emerging models of Social Work education in third world countries, including India. It has a critic of the present system of Social Work education. The theoretical premise of evaluation in the present system of Social Work education in the western philosophy. Based on the constructive suggestions, the author suggested for new models of alternative Social Work education. Curriculum development is a process of interrelating and integrating 5 basic constituents of professional education as Context, Purpose, Structure, Content, and Process.

Siddique (1994) says that Fieldwork is the core component of Social Work education. Social development can be achieved by restructuring and improving the contents and quality standards of fieldwork. The projects for social development should be taken up by the Social Work institutions. The UGC is ready to finance such innovative programs. It leads to introduce new models of "Neighbourhood Development", "System Approach" and "Social Change Approach". It gave practical insights to students regarding different models of community organization.

Edwards and others (2002) in their article 'Social Work Education and Global Issues: Implications for Social Work Practice' stressed upon the international dimension of Social Work education. They have suggested that Social Work education must include some of the international content focusing on cross-national policy and program comparisons.

Noble (2004) argues that guidelines cannot be comprehensively global because social work in the Asia–Pacific region is a complex and varied activity invariably influenced by the socio-economic and political contexts of each country and is always mediated through differing cultural imperatives and theoretical perspectives.

Challenges and Issues in Social Work Education in India by S. Sangeeta-2017

1. Numerous Social Work Conceptions Social work as a profession is still in a low position in India. The every term of social work lacks its definition. As a fact that, still it is considered as social service and not a professional work. In India even today, it is normally used to include almost any activity which is intended to help. The official reports published by the Government of India have attempted to clarify the terms social service and social work as used in the context of Indian Society. All those misconceptions had resulted in non-consideration of social work as a profession which in turn resulted in hindrance in the path of social work education.

2. Dilemma of Specialization We have always assumed that a student should be familiar with all the techniques of social work. But social work education offers specialization, which restricts the students in a nutshell.

3. Organizing effectual Field Work Experience and Development of Field Work Agencies to find good and sufficient fieldwork placements for students with experienced trained supervisors remains a continuing problem for education through fieldwork. Agency practice normally lags behind the classroom and within to make the necessary adjustment in reality and also agency supervisors have not had professional Social work training. Yet they supervise student–trainees in their work at least to the terminus of allocating work within the agency and keeping track of work done by them. The gap that spilled classroom standards and agency practices is often great and frustrating for the students.

4. Public Recognition of Professional Social Worker Lack of public spotting social work as a profession is another article’s coming that has to lot with future prospects. A paid social worker however good, efficient, and capable is more likely to be looked down upon by the person who serves as a professional. This angle also affects the image of social work education.

5. Lack of vernacular Materials or Literature The major challenge of social work education in India is its inability to sufficiently indigenously knowledge – base. The foreign base of social work education is so much all-inclusive and pervasive as reflected in its basic organization, curricula, and the teaching material that most social work graduates fail to seek careers in professional social work.

6. *life-giving of Professional Associations* the absence of effective functioning of professional associations of social work practitioners and educators is the most pronounced handicap in professional development in the country. Unless these are energized and made effective, the future of the profession of social work is likely to remain bleak. The past of two national levels of Association viz. Indian Association of Trained Social Work (IATSW) and ASWI is an up and down. In addition to these associations, Regional Associations of trained professional social workers are located in different states. However, only a few of these Regional Associations are in action (Gowda: 2010).

7. *National Council for Social Work*, we need to have a national-level council to maintain the unchanging standards of education and give accreditation to institutions as well to practitioners. the impact has been made to form National Council in the lines of the Medical Council of India through discussions between eminent social work educators and practitioners at various forms (Thomas: 2010). Unless an unchanging system of accreditation on all Indian bases is developed and enforce, the development of social work education and programs on sound lines is likely to proceed very slowly for a long time. In 1965, one committee recommended the establishment of a national social work council, and then another committee in 1978 certified this recommendation. But no action looks to have been taken on this behalf so far. The second event related to the down of a national organization of professional social workers in 1961. past there existed an informal organization of social workers since 1951. This organization, however, had not been effective in fascinating a large number of social workers as members (Ranjana: 2009).

8. *Built-in Several Institutions Inbreeding* that is appointing their own students within the Departments due to political and other pressures. This is resulting in a lack of innovation and very stereotyped unmoved practices in teaching, fieldwork practicum as well as research. By compiling outside candidates only best practices can be adopted.

9. *Salaries to Social Work Teachers* Low salary and job stagnation, high turn-over, easy burnouts are some of the crucial issues that would be resolved if we are able to bring standardization in the social work teaching, and practice and at the same time describe a desirable and advantageous image of social work profession in the country (Ranjana: 2009). Paying Salaries to Social Work Teachers lead to poor quality of teaching, practicum and research and best practices cannot be adopted.

10. *Developing Field (Service) Action Projects* The University Grants Commission (UGC) clearly mentioned in its vital areas of concern for the development of social work education and training in India that is development of field and field service

projects to yield learning opportunities to the students, growth opportunity to the staff and service opportunity to the people. But the method of developing projects and executing is missing lots. 3. Suggestion to enhance the standard of social work education • Provision of positive learning experience through field action projects. • national and state-level professional bodies should be activated. • thought for value-based social work education. • Efforts to boost scholastic performance among staff and students

Suggestions

1. Fieldwork Assessment tools should be reviewed and updated regularly.
2. There is a requirement of review by the University Grants Commission (UGC) for the social work education in India and take necessary steps to enhance the quality of social work education.
3. UGC should be necessary actions taken to bring uniformity in the curriculum throughout the country.
4. Incorporation of the skill components into social work curriculum and training.
5. Incorporating innovative pedagogy and teaching methods.
6. Ensuring the uniform curriculum across the country for all the schools of social work with a certain degree of flexibility to meet the regional level differences.
7. Up-gradation of outdated contents and the concepts with relevant, context-specific lessons in the curriculum
8. Introducing the electives focusing on specializations in social work
9. Conviction and competency in teaching

Conclusion

The present study revealed the current scenario of Social Work education in India. The key challenges related India is facing various challenges in Social Work education but to tackle these challenges and to boost Social Work education is of utmost importance. India may be a country of giant human resource potential, to utilize this potential properly is that the issue that needed to debate. Opportunities are available but the way to get benefits from these opportunities and the way to form them accessible to others is that a matter of concern. In order to sustain that rate of growth, there is a need to increase the number of institutes and also the quality of social work education in India. To reach and achieve the longer-term requirements there's an urgent got to relook at the Financial Resources, Access and Equity, Quality Standards, Relevance, infrastructure, and at the top the Responsiveness.

Bibliography

1. Thomas, P.T. (1967). Problems of social work education in India, *Journal of Social Work Education, XXVIII(1)*, 41-53.
2. International Social Services. First International Conference of *Social Work [Proceedings]* (pp. Vol. I, pp 637-655). Paris: First Conference,
3. University Grants Commission (1980). Review of Social Work Education in India- Retrospect and Prospect, Second Review Committee Report, New Delhi.
4. Desai, A.S. (1994). *A study of social work education in India- students, educators, and the educational process*. New Delhi: The Ministry of welfare, Government of India.
5. Cox, D. & Pawar, M. (2006). *International Social Work: Issues, Strategies and Programs*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
6. International Social Services. *First International Conference of Social Work [Proceedings]* (pp. Vol-I, pp 637-655). Paris: First Conference,
7. Watkins, J & Pierce, D. (2005). Social Work Education: A future of strength or peril. *Advances in Social Work, 6(1)*, 24-32. Watts.
8. Ilango. (2009). Rethinking and redefining professional Social Work in India. In P. Ilango, *Quality enhancement of Social Work professional in India: Issues and Challenges* (pp. 3-40). New Delhi: Allied Publishers Pvt Ltd. Jebb, E. (July 8-13, 1928).
9. S.Sangeeta.(2017).Challenges in Imparting Social Work Education in India – An Overview, Research on Humanities and Social Sciences. www.iiste.org ISSN 2224-5766 (Paper) ISSN 2225-0484 (Online) Vol.7, No.17, 2017 – Special Issue – Organized by Department of Social Work, Bishop Heber College.