

CHAPTER - I

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CHAPTER - I
SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

The present chapter deals with the theoretical part of social work education in India.

The development of the profession of social work has resulted from the influence of rapid growth of industrialisation and urbanisation. In an agricultural society the life of human being was simple and of the nature of primary relationship did not call for specialised services. With the introduction of industrialisation and the resulting urbanisation, life of human being became very complicated and the relationship became secondary. In an industrial society it is increasingly realised that many of the social problems of dependency and delinquency that are experienced by individuals, groups and communities are symptomatic of the deeper causes of disorganisation of social life and institutions. The studies and research in these causes indicate the need of providing curative and preventive services along with ameliorative. Mere scientific understanding of the situation does not serve the purpose. Besides this the techniques and organisation of those services is also realised. Education for social work thus becomes a primary requirement of social workers. With the development of the body of scientific knowledge, skills and technique and with the introduction of a system of social work education, the profession of social work is born.

The rapid growth of industrialisation and urbanisation gave birth to many serious and dreadful social problems like family disorganisation, social disorganisation, destitution, exploitation of child labour, slums in industrialised urban communities problems of unmarried mothers, alcoholism, crime and juvenile delinquency etc. These social problems required the organised social services because of its difficulty to meet and eradicate these through the existing social institutions like joint-families etc.

Social work education in India started in the year, 1936 as an adaptation of the educational programme in the United States of America, where social welfare services were meant "to assist the people in their adjustment to an industrial, urban and metropolis dominated social milieu". (U.G.C., 1978, para 1:16)

Social work education in India started by Sri. Tata of Bombay, under the name and style of Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of social work in the year 1936. This happened to be the first institute started imparting specialised training in social work which marked the beginning of the procession of social work in India. Now this School of social work is known as Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Bombay. In the beginning Tata Graduate School of social work used to award a postgraduate Diploma in Social Service Administration. The School got recognition by the University Grants Commission in the year 1964. Consequently the diploma course has converted

into the Master Degree Course in Social work in the year 1964-65. The institute aimed at providing sound professional education for social work and opportunities for advanced study to enable the trainees to be an efficient administrators in the social welfare organisations and social work researchers to carry out independent social investigation and to evaluate and interpret the findings.

1) GOALS OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION:

Education for professional social work in a developing and changing society ought to have some specific goals and objectives of its own. The prevailing trend of social work and social work education in India calls for basic change in the objectives and new approach for development. The education for social work ought to direct itself towards the following goals¹:

- 1) Organisation of teaching and practical experience in order to provide professionally trained manpower in social welfare and allied fields to ensure effective service delivery, and to create support system specially for the underprivileged population groups or area.
- 2) Development and dissemination of Scientific knowledge in regard to welfare and developmental needs, tasks and services.

- 3) Deepening of understanding, acquisition of skills, and inculcation of a perspective for bringing about improvement in the human environmental situation and services through institutional change and organisations of people.
- 4) Promotion of close collaboration among different disciplines for a better understanding of human problems, services, issues of social development, and also for initiating corresponding action in these areas.
- 5) Ensure better intergration between Scientific Social theory and practice in the field of Social Welfare, Social policy and social justice.
- 6) Development of positive attitudes, values, critical stance, professional leadership, social commitment and holistic approach to deal with socio-ecological issues.

Following are the broad objectives of social work education²:

- A) At under-graduate level-
 - a) To train direct service workers in working with communities, groups and individuals;
 - b) To offer generic training in social work.

B) At Graduate and Post-Graduate Level:

- a) Training for leadership roles in either administration, social research or advanced practice in social work;
- b) Training for the promotion of social change and development;
- c) Training to work for Social Transformation;
- working towards a just and human society.

thus the objectives of social work education aimed at providing sound professional education and creating opportunities for advanced studies and to enable the trainees to be an efficient and good administrators in the social welfare organisations and to carry out independent social work research and social investigation and to evaluate and interpret the findings.

2) DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION: IN THE U.S.A.:

The story of the development of social work education in the United States of America is a fascinating one. In the United States it is now slightly near about a century old. From modest beginnings in a single fifteen weeks course offered for part-time voluntary social workers under the auspices of a voluntary agency, it now offers training programs at the Bachelor's level, the Master's level, the Doctoral level and the Post-Doctoral level.

In fact, the education for social work in the United States of America began in the form of apprenticeship training. It was the Charity Organisation Society where the newly recruited employees used to sit at the corner of the desks of the experienced employees just to watch how they conduct interviews, read their case summaries and the likewise. The neophytes even encouraged by the Senior most and professionally experienced employees for their early attempts. Thus the field work training was the first social work education system established and remained as an essential part of education for the professional social workers.

Mary E. Richmond (1861-1928) could be considered as a pioneer lady in the field of professional social work and social work education. She was just a book keeper in Baltimore Charity Organisation and had education only upto high-School level. And she was also appointed as an assistant treasurer in Baltimore Chairty Organisation which lead her to a brilliant career as a practitioner, teacher and theoretician of the chairty organisation movement. The Charity Organisation Society of New York called Mary Richmond for the establishment of a training school for professional social workers in 1898. As a result, the Charity Organisation Society of New York started a summer training course for prospective workers alongwith Miss. Mary Richmond as one of the trainers. Thus the first school of social work, known as the New York School of

Philanthropy, established in the United States of America in the year 1898 to train the personnel for professional social work.

The struggle for recognition of social work as a profession began with the organisations of professional associations as below:

- i) American Association of Medical Social Workers;
- ii) National Association of School Social Workers;
- iii) American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers;
- iv) American Association of Social Workers.

These professional organisations stimulated the Schools of Social work to set educational requirements for membership.

The American Association of Schools of Social Work was founded in 1919 to facilitate communication among the Schools. The establishment of the Council on Social Work Education in the year 1946 is a landmark, in the history of Social Work Education in the United States of America. The main objectives of the Council are:

- 1) to undertake studies on man power needs of the profession;
- 2) to develop and set the standards for Social work education;
- 3) to recruit new trainees; and
- 4) to accredit schools of social work.

The council on social work education was composed of representatives of all the professional social work organisations like the American Association of Schools of Social Work, the National Association of Schools of Social Administration, and the major employing agencies. The formation and development of all these associations and such other professional bodies helped to recognise and accept social work as a profession.

3) SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AT THE UNDER GRADUATE LEVEL:

Undergraduate education in social work started in the year 1956. The Lucknow University initiated to introduce the social work as one of the subjects for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in the department of Sociology and Social work. Afterwards it has made the provisions for the degrees of Ph.D. and D.Lit. in social work. It took two decades (i.e. from 1936 to 1956) for social work education to come of age in India, in the sense of having complete sequence right from the Bachelor's degree to the Post-Doctoral degrees in Social work. Three universities namely, Andhra, Lucknow and Sangar could be well considered as the leading universities to start social work education at the undergraduate level.

Even in the United States of America also it took nearly 33 years to start the social work education at the undergraduate level. By 1931 social work education in the

United States of America had so developed as to be divided about half and half between schools with graduate and those with undergraduate curricula. By 1955 80 undergraduate schools of social work in the United States were members of the Council on social work education. E.F. Witte writes in his "New Developments in Education for Social Work" that the growth of undergraduate education in social work is one among the important developments in social work³.

F.F. Fauri proposed an increased use of undergraduate education for social work for the following reasons⁴:

- i) to meet the shortage of trained social workers;
- ii) to strengthen the recruitment for the graduate programme;
- iii) to improve the standard of graduate training programme.

In India there are two types of programmes of undergraduate education in social work. They are:

(i) Social work as one of the subjects offered for the Bachelor's degree of a university, (ii) Social work as a part of the Diploma in Rural Services awarded by the Rural Institutes, which has been recognised as equivalent to the Bachelor of Arts degree by the Union Ministry of Education.

The second review committee on social work education recommended that an adequate undergraduate programme in Social work should include the following courses:

- I) Social Sciences; Sociology,
Economics, and
Psychology.

- II) Historical Background of social work.
- III) Philosophy of social work.
- IV) Social Welfare Policies and programmes
- V) Methods of working with people.

The committee further made the following comments regarding the course content: "Generally undergraduate course is an amalgam of an introductory course in Sociology and Psychology with some information about social work principles, policies, programmes. There is no field work and the course is not recognised for the purpose of employment. It can't in any sense be regarded as an undergraduate programme of professional education in social work⁵.

The Lucknow University, where the social work education at the undergraduate level has started, does not have any field work training and is treating the social work subject as a liberal arts course. However, the Andhra and Vishva-Bharati Universities are providing field work training at the undergraduate level. Introduction of field work both at the undergraduate and post-graduate level results many problems in terms of staff, resources and availability of suitable agencies for field work. The second review committee on social work education remarked that undergraduate course in social work education without concurrent field work can not be regarded as a programme of professional social work education. The second review committee on social work education found field work as a necessary component of the undergraduate course in social work.

4) SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITY:

In most of the Asian countries, including India, the departments of social work/schools of social work are under the auspices of a university. For example, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Pakistan, Thailand and other Asian countries have one or more schools/departments of social work attached to a public or private university. But in India social work is still found as a part of the department of social sciences, especially attached either to the department of Sociology or Social Anthropology. Social work still has no firm place and separate entity/department in the university premises. It may be because of unawareness of the recent trends and changing concepts in social work education.

There are very few schools of social work interested to be detached with the universities. Because, the professional education for social work needs its own freedom in implementing and exercising its own peculiar policies. Being the part of the university it may affect the working system of the professional school. Thus, there are many schools/departments of social work still have their own system.

Indian Universities offer the post-graduate course in social work education in their own premises or through the private schools but affiliated to them. Generally these courses are of two years duration with concurrent field work training which leads to get a post-graduate degree of Master of Arts in social work education or Master of Social Work(M.S.W.).

Most of the schools of social work offers specialised training in social work. Usually the specializations in social work are as follows:

- 1) Labour Welfare and personnel Management
- 2) Family, Youth and Child Welfare.
- 3) Correctional Services/Administration.
- 4) Urban and rural development.
- 5) Medical and Psychatric Social Work, etc.

In Indian universities specialization is field based where as in the western countries, where the roots of social work education are deep rooted, is method oriented.

5) SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY:

The Shivaji University, Kolhapur has no independent department of Social Work attached to it. But the university has given affiliation to as many as four private institutions where the post-graduate education in social work is imparting. These departments of studies in social work aimed at giving specialized social work education in different areas.

The credit goes to the department of social work of Walchand College, Solapur for being the pioneer in starting the post-graduate education in social work. It is in the year 1970-71 the Walchand College, Solapur has proposed and started social work department in its premises. Afterwards another three schools of social work started functioning at Kolhapur,

Solapur and Satara (Closed down during the academic year 1988-89).

All these schools of social work are managed by the private institutions but affiliated to the Shivaji University of Kolhapur. These schools of social work have the common pattern and curriculum of social work education, including the field work training, of two years duration leading to Master of Social Work postgraduate degree with four specializations.

The university has been awarding the post graduate degrees in the following four specializations;

- i) Group 'A' - Labour Welfare and Personnel Management;
- ii) Group 'B' - Community Welfare and Development of Weaker Sections;
- iii) Group 'C' - Criminology and Correctional Administration;
- iv) Group 'D' - Family, Child and Youth Welfare.

The students may obtain a research project report, in their second year study, in lieu of a paper.

The number of outgoing students every year is near about 150, including all the specializations. However, the students are more inclined towards the specialization in Labour Welfare and Personnel Management.

There is no research department of social work except the private institutions where some faculties are recognised

as respective research guides in social work. In two institutions the admission to M.Phil. Course in Social Work is available. Usually 8 students are admitted every year for the M.Phil. Course in social work specialized only in personnel management. The surprising but rather pathetic situation is that since its establishment the university has not all produced a Ph.D.

6) PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN INDIA:

As far as higher education is concerned in India there are many problems. Various disciplines that are oriented and pledged to give the post-graduate education in their respective facilities are encountered with several problems peculiar to themselves. Especially, the disciplines that are dedicated to train the personnel for a particular profession have their own problems related to communication, acceptance, language, curriculum etc. Even so called well established professions and professional education system like Medicine, Law, etc. are not exception to these problems. Thus, the professional education for social work too has some problems peculiar to itself, and some that are common to higher education in India in all branches of academic pursuit or professional training. Both these special and common problems are inter-related and can never be separated. Hence, we shall make no attempts to consider them separately. But we may try and examine some of the major problems in the sequence in which they seem to lead on from one to another.

One of the major problem that is shared by all the branches of education in India is related to the communication of knowledge. English has been commonly accepted, to put more properly rather imposed, upon the Indians. This, undoubtedly, caused the deterioration of standard of education. It is more applicable to the professional education at the postgraduate level. Because, at the undergraduate level the students have option to choose the language of their own interest. As a result the students choose Hindi or regional language and do well in their studies. It is the general experience of teachers and educational administrators that the fall in standard of comprehension, clarity and expression is directly proportional to the extent to which English has been replaced by Hindi or one of the regional languages.

Social work education in India is being imparted in English at the postgraduate level. This creates a lot of difficulties. The reason behind is simple enough: We neither have adequate social work literature in regional languages nor the teachers trained to teach in the regional languages at the postgraduate level. Much of the time wasted in learning and understanding the language than in digesting the subject matter. And, moreover, when the foundation itself is weak how it could be expected the better performance in English at the postgraduate level ?

The lack of universality and oneness in social work education is the second problem of social work education. This has to do with the socio-cultural aspect of India. The well established professions of medicine or Engineering deals with the problems, process and things that are of universal application and mostly governed by common laws. But the profession of social work has relatively small base of universality and a large superstructure of what may be called the local ethos. Cultural variations, differences in social norms, heterogeneity in social legislation, multifariousness of social institutions, beliefs and attitudes, etc. caused few problems of peculiar perplexity to social work education. Even many of the laws related to social welfare, education, public health etc. are state based and hardly few of them are central Acts. This makes difference to the oneness of social work education in India.

The third problem of social work education is the problem of international communication in social work. The Indian social problems with which the education for social work deals are peculiar to themselves. For example, the problem of care of the aged in the western countries is entirely different from what it is in India. The same could also be said of the child care, crime, juvenile delinquency, prostitution, etc.

In case of methods of social work it has been found that some kind of similarities. But there are some problems too. The methods of social work also needs time and space to stand firmly in Indian professional education for social work. Thus, the problem of international communicability in social work does remain.

Another major problem of social work education in India is that the trained social workers in the Indian schools are suffering due to the lack of opportunities to employ themselves. It is because of the profession of social work has not yet accepted both by the public and the private sectors where the trained social workers are suppose to be appointed. This does not mean that the trained social workers are totally unemployed. But majority of the employed trained social workers are appointed on some other different jobs like assistants, clerks, teachers, superintendents etc. There are many reasons behind this pathetic condition.

The problem of acceptance is still an another serious problem of social work education. The professional social workers need and importance is still under consideration. The professional social workers not enjoy the status and position in a satisfied manner comparatively to that of the other professional. Thus this new profession of social work is not fully accepted by the Government, public and private sectors in particular and public/society at large in general. In fact many a time it has been asked "Is social work a profession?".

The early history of social work education indicates and emphasis on the study of Labour Welfare, Personnel Management and Industrial Relations. In the thirties and early forties, some of the larger industrial units voluntarily instituted welfare provisions such as recreational programmes, adult and workers education, co-operative societies, canteens, creches, etc., for the benefit of workers and the families of the workers; some other meant to do so. It must be recorded to the credit of social workers public relations in those days that several industries were persuaded to employ trained social workers as welfare officers to organise and to man these services. Subsequently, the Factories Act of 1948 made it obligatory on the part of employers to employ welfare officers stipulating that the welfare officer must be a person possessing an approved qualification in social work.

But the employment of trained social workers as personnel officers and personnel managers is more fortuitous than otherwise. Today Personnel Management is considered a specialised skill in its own right having greater affinity with management studies and management functions but less with social studies and social work education. The growth and development of management studies like Business Administration replace the social workers in the personnel departments. This has affected the Indian trained social workers who have the dreams of being personnel executives.

Yet another problem of social work education is that it has ceased to attract bright students. It is true that even in the best of its times, social work education did not attract the creame of our graduate colleges. The best have always gone to the administrative services, medicine or engineering. Law, teaching and social work used to attract the second best, more or less, but even this has changed now. Probably more than half of those who choose social work as their career, today, does because they prefer it to the alternatives of clerkship, School-mastering, minding the shop, or even unemployment. These generalisations, like other generalisations, are only partly true for there are some very bright students choosing social work every year and in all schools, but their numbers seem to be dwindling.

Besides these all problems mentioned earlier there are other problems like specialization, careerism, vocation vs professionalism of social work. There are yet other problems that arises many questions such as : what minimum personal and academic qualification must be looked for in students who come social work trainining? What should be the staff student ratio below which a school may not fall? Have school of social work a duty to serve society in extramural ways, and if so how best they be reconciled with academic independence, objectivity and detachment? such questions have remained yet unanswered.

The non-existence of the professionally trained and experienced teachers is one of the greatest problem. The non availability of sufficient literature on social work education is also the long existing problem. Getting suitable agencies for the placement of the trainees and the trained and interested supervisors in the various agencies is another major difficulty of the social work education. Thus, these are the experienced problems of social work education since its beginning.

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