Methods of Social Work

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Abstract

Social work is a discipline within human services. Its main goal is to assist individuals and families with their needs and solve their problems using a multidiscipline approach. There are three recognized methods in social work: Case work, Group work and Community organization. The community organizer establishes relationship with the members of the community, conducts a survey to ascertain the needs, involves the people for formulation of plans and raising of funds and implementing them for the community's social welfare and other services.
KEYWORDS – Social work, case work, Community Organization, Evaluation.

As a teacher, you will sometimes need to play the role of a social worker in your school and the community. This module will introduce you to Social Work. Social work is a discipline within human services. Its main goal is to assist individuals and families with their needs and solve their problems using a multidiscipline approach. In order to be effective, social workers work closely with many agencies and professionals.\Social work is usually a part of the Human Services Department of a government. It serves as a link between the government's clients and other government resources, such as: manpower training leading to employment, welfare payments towards financial assistance, legal consultation in dealing with legal problems, food and water relief at times of drought, famine and war, etc. As a social worker, you will also work closely with medical professionals in order to provide medical care for clients; with school personnel to identify children who are in need of help, and with counsellors and psychologists in order to provide psychological counselling. Today the problems faced by individuals and families are often complicated, and assistance from many agencies is needed.

The methods and mechanism for social welfare of these inflicted, disadvantaged and distressed people differ from country to country depending upon the magnitude of clientele needing welfare services, the infrastructure and other paraphernalia available to render these services and, above all, the resources available in terms of finance and the trained manpower, the usual methods are the employment of government departments, Corporations, non-government agencies voluntary organisations for meeting the needs of people through institutional and non-institutional means, consisting of assistance through various social security approaches like social insurance and social assistance in the form of pensions, provident funds, exgratia grants, rehabilitation centres for the disabled, the drug addict,

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Millions of people all over the world are confronted with the serious and incapacitating problems caused by extreme poverty, frustration due to lack of educational and job opportunities, tensions and anxieties arising from inter generation and cross cultural conflicts, the breakdown of joint family system which provided social and emotional security, the problem of migrants from rural to urban areas and the recent phenomenon of terrorists and militant activities in addition to the havoc caused by natural calamities like earthquakes, floods, devastation caused by Tsunami around Indian Ocean,wherein lakhs of people had lost their lives or were missing and properties worth billions were destroyed.

There are three recognized methods in social work: Case work, Group work and Community organisation. In addition, there are two related services that are usually not classified as methods or processes although they require distinct skills, they are research and evaluation and administration; and are also known as enabling processes.

(i) Case Work:

Case work is when you are involved individually with a client who has a problem.It involves interaction between you and your client or a family unit. According to Mary Richmond, the pioneer of scientific social case work, social case work consists of those processes which develop personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between them and their social environment. Case work is characterised by the objective to administer practical services and offer counselling in such a way as to arouse and conserve the psychological energies of the client actively to involve him in the use of the service towards the solution of his dilemma. Thus Case work is a method of helping people based on knowledge, understanding and the use of techniques skillfully employed in helping people to solve problems.

Case work is based on the principles of acceptance, self-determination and confidentiality. The principle of acceptance refers to the attitude of the worker, his respect for the client as an individual which gives him a sense of security and encourages him to speak about his problem frankly; the principle of self-determination allows the client to decide for himself rather than deciding for him; and the principle of confidentiality implies that the relationship between the case worker and the client is one of the trust and whatever is revealed to the worker is to be kept confidential and is not to be shared with anyone except in the interest of the client with his permission.

Case work is used in a variety of settings such as child care and child guidance institutions, schools, colleges, medical and psychiatric settings, family welfare, marriage counselling centres, institutions for the old and infirm as well as handicapped and also with people who suffer from addiction character disorders, emotional disturbances.

(ii) Group Work:

The group work approach refers to a technique where you deal with groups of people

either in centres or institutions, as opposed to individual persons or individual families. The group work approach, therefore, involves interaction between a client and a group of people with the same needs. It, therefore, is a method of working with people in groups for the enhancement of social functioning and for the achievement of socially desirable goals. Group work is an approach consciously directed toward developing the individual's greatest capacity while relating him to the group and learning when he is to contribute and when he has to withdraw. The principle of group work lays strong emphasis on individualism, importance of each member in the group and participation in the group activity to reach the highest potential and feeling of self-worth. The techniques used by the group workers are his knowledge of the individual and his group association to effect change and to use programmes and various media such as crafts, games and other creative activity to produce change within the individual, to help individuals to use their experience with others, provide such task as would encourage participation thereby leading to smoothen the angularities and complexes in the individual, help the individuals to release their tension and anxieties through appropriate tasks leading thereby to achieving a positive self-image, right attitude and behaviour towards problems.

It is evident from the above discussion that while case work is an effective method of dealing with individual case on one to one basis, group work is designed to treat the client in a group. In the west, case workers are turning towards treating in groups. The ideological roots of social group work can be traced to self-help and informal recreational organisations such as YMCA, YWCA, settlement settings, Jewish centres in USA and democratic ideals that all should share in the benefits of society, following the Industrial Revolution. Subsequently, the method was introduced in most schools of social work throughout USA, Great Britain, Canada and other parts of the world, and practiced in problem solving. In India, the method has remained combined to the classrooms of schools of social work and has not been applied to any real situations even in hospital settings or institutional settings except in some school settings. Group work method can, however, be most advantageously used to achieve India's development objectives through programmes of health, family welfare education and housing.

(iii) Community Organisations:

Community development is an integrated development process aimed atimproving the overall economic, social, and cultural conditions of a community. It is anattempt to equip people who are unemployed or underemployed, with skills which will bring them a better life .Communities of various kinds and sizes suffer from varying kinds of social ills. While case work has to do particularly with the individual to individual relationship and group work utilizes the group as a tool for bringing changes in personal and group living, community organization is the method for working with the community as a totality. Ross defines community organisation as a process by which a community identifies its needs or objectives, develops the confidence and the will to work at these needs or objectives, takes action in respect of them and in doing so, extends and develops cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community. In brief, the community is the primary client in community organisation for social welfare. The community may be a neighborhood, city, state or national or even the international community.

The community organiser establishes relationship with the members of the community, conducts a survey to ascertain the needs, involves the people for formulation of plans and raising of funds and implementing them for the community's social welfare and other services. The developing countries, including India, have been making use of it for the development and welfare of their people. Its special significance in the Indian context is obvious as the Indian village communities need a great deal of help to improve their lot and participate in self-help

programmes. Its utility is equally important in solving the problems of the impoverished areas of metropolitan cities, slum dwellers, scheduled castes, tribes, landless labourers, peasants etc.

Our attempts at rural development including the community development programmes and National Extension Services launched to bring about socio-economic transformation in our villages in 1950s could not achieve the desired result due to lack of effective community organiation approach. If we want our programmes of adult education, Community health, integrated rural development, promotion of village industries, employment opportunities for the poor and anti-poverty programmes to bear fruit, it is imperative that community organisation approach participatory planning and development should be untilised to the maximum extent.

(iv) Social work Research and Evaluation:

Research is defined in Webster's New International Dictionary as careful or critical enquiry or examination in seeking facts or principles, diligent investigation in order to ascertain something and it is defined in the Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences as the "manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalising to extend, correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in the construction of a theory or in the practice of an art. In brief, social research is systematic enquiry regarding social situations and problems, the process of obtaining social facts or methodical enquiry into social phenomenon. Various methods and techniques, such as the statistical, the historical, the social survey, the ecological and the case method are employed to gain additional understanding about social functioning and the control and reduction of social problems.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the erstwhile Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Central Social Welfare Board, the State Welfare Advisory Boards, accordingly provide financial assistance to universities, voluntary organisations, Social Sciences Research Institutes for conducting research and evaluation relating to development of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, various fields of social welfare, social defence, social policy and social development.

(v) Social Work Administration:

Administration is of crucial importance as a method of social welfare since all the policies and programmes formulated for the welfare of people and the financial allocations made for their implementation would be of little avail unless adequate administrative mechanisms and processes manned by properly trained and motivated staff are also given due importance and recognition Social welfare administration can be defined as the process of transforming social policy into social services; it is the process of implementation, of translating policies into action programmes. According to Kruse, the administrative process seeks to mobilise the total resources of the agency to the end that its purposes are translated into efficient and effective services.

Briefly stated, social welfare administration refers to the process of applying professional standards, competence and resources to secure successful implementation of the targeted programmes of social welfare through various social agencies, official and voluntary, for the fulfilment of the ideals, goals and aspirations. In order to make an agency more effective to render social welfare services to community, it has to adopt certain administrative, financial and procedure modifications which every official and worker in the agency has to understand. Realising the importance of social welfare-administration, Government of India has set up a Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment which provides administrative structures and apparatus for the implementation of various welfare programmes. State governments and Union territory administrations have established their departments and corporations for social welfare administration and Central Social Welfare Boards provide grants-in-aid to voluntary agencies, among other things, to strengthen their organisation and administration. In order to meet the requirements of education and training in social welfare administration, Sir Dorabji

Tata Graduate of Social Work, Mumbai, was the first to be founded in 1936, to be followed by Delhi School of Social Work in 1947-48, School of Social work at the University of Baroda and thereafter a large number of Departments of Social Work in various universities and post-graduate colleges which include social welfare administration as a major component in their curriculum and some universities and institutes like the institutes of Social Sciences, Mumbai have also started independent courses in Social Welfare Administration..

CONCLUSION:

Social work provides an important service to society. Individuals and families in need of help are the focus of it, and are referred to as clients. Social workers, goal is to help clients live a productive life in their own community. The goal is to help clients return to normal life in a natural setting.The government agencies and voluntary organosations engaged in the delivery of welfare services determine the methods and techniques to be employed according to the needs of their clients and the situations and settings of their problems. Generally, they use the recognized social work methods of case work, group work and community organization for social welfare and research and evaluation and administration to acquaint themselves about the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of their progrmmes and bring about necessary modifications in their policies for redndeing better services for the development and welfare of the concerned section society.

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