UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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MA SOCIAL WORK

MASW 101 : Introduction to Social Work

w.e.f Academic Session: 2023-24

CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MEGHALAYA

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INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK

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Self Learning Material
Center for Distance and Online Education
University of Science and Technology Meghalaya

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UNIT 1: STRUCTURE

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

| describe the basic concepts of social work

| identify the basic values and principles of social work profession

| explain the functions of social work profession

| describe the three primary and three secondary methods of social work

1.2 INTRODUCTION- MEANING OF SOCIAL WORK

Social Work is a discipline as well as a profession that involves the application of social theories to have a better understanding of the society and people; and to apply therapeutic processes and methods to deal with social problems. It is concerned with the causes of social problems, its impact on individuals, groups, communities and society at large and to deploy social work methods for its solution. It comprises of a multidisciplinary approach to understanding society and its problems. Thus, it draws heavily from the disciplines of sociology, psychology, philosophy, economics, political science, law and others to have an all-round understanding of the society. Social work differs from the various social sciences as it is a profession. Social Work is grounded on the ideas of the social sciences from which it goes to the next level of application of therapeutic models to deal with the social issues. The word 'profession' connotes skill or artistry. Social Work uses knowledge to meet human needs, thus, it is an applied science as well. It applies skills, methods and techniques to tune human behaviour and resolve social issues.

1.3 DEFINITIONS

The Indian Conference on Social Work (1957) defined social work as "a welfare activity based on humanitarian philosophy, scientific knowledge and technical skills for helping individuals or groups or community, to live a rich and full life". This definition indicates that social work involves a humanitarian approach to help people with the use of scientific understanding and skills.

Marshall and Scott define social work as the generic term applied to the various organized methods for promoting human welfare through the prevention and relief of suffering.

"Social work is that process which deals directly and differentially with persons who have problems relating primarily to their social situation and which endeavours, individual to individual to understand what help is needed and to assist the individual to find and utilize the help indicated". (Friedlander, 1951)

This definition says social work is a process that links resources that an individual can utilize to solve the issues relating to the social situation that surrounds us.

"Social work is an entity representing three clearly distinguished but inter-related parts: a network of social services, carefully developed methods and processes and social policy

expressed through social institutions and individuals. All three are based on a view of human being, their interrelationships and the ethical demands made on them" (Konopka, 1958).

Social work consists of definite services, methods and social policies that helps to solve issues faced by individuals as the person lives abiding social relationships and norms.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL WORK:

The profession of social work has certain objectives. Objectives are statements or formulations of what we are trying to do in social work. Some of the most important ones are:

l To solve psycho-social problems l To fight against social

evils l To fulfil humanitarian needs l To solve adjustmental

problems l To create self- sufficiency

l To integrate and coordinate the means and resources of social development

l To develop democratic values, make provision for corrective and recreation services

l To change the environment in favour of individual's growth and development

l To bring change in social system l To provide socio-legal

help

The main motto of social work is: Helping people to help themselves!

It implies that social work profession functions in the underlying belief that through the use of methods, techniques and skills, the clients have to be empowered to help themselves. Rather than making the client dependent on the social worker for solving his/her problems, the client should be empowered to take his/her own decisions. The social worker assists the client in showing the path and in decision-making by building self-confidence of the client and helping in procuring resources.

1.5   BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF SOCIAL WORK

Clarke has given six major assumptions of social work. They are:

i. Social Work is a novice profession which necessitates intellectual activities accompanied by great individual responsibilities. It is not just academic but also practical in its aims. ii. Understanding of human personality is one of the bases of functioning of a professional social worker.

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iii.   Social work and social welfare are not the same thing. Social welfare comprises of social institutions and the field of practice, while social work comprises of a body of practices which can be employed at many places in the large social welfare field.

iv.   Social work has its own processes, techniques and skills. It has a point of view and a philosophy.

v.   The social worker by nature his/ her activities must use many types of services. Therefore, the social worker must have extensive knowledge about the resources of the community in which he/ she is working.

vi.   The social worker is concerned with the needs of individuals and with the environment that cause personal problems. The interaction of person and situation is the focus of the social worker.

1.6 FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL WORK

Social work is a profession that assists individuals in adjusting to the social environment and also to modify the environment in favour of the client in appropriate areas. Social work operates to assist individuals in adjusting to the institutional framework of society, and attempts to modify the institutional framework itself in appropriate areas. Social work has four broad functions: curative/ remedial, correctional, preventive and developmental.

Curative/ Remedial Function: The objective of this approach is to cure or find solutions (remedy) to physiological, psycho-social issues faced by clients or communities. Thus, it implies- after a problem has occurred, the next step is to solve/ cure it by providing various assistance. Under the curative function, the following services are provided: Medical services, health services, services relating to psycho- social and mental health, psychiatric service, child guidance, child welfare services, services for the handicapped and disabled and rehabilitative services.

Correctional Function: The main objective of correctional functions is to rectify or reform (mould) individuals/social practices in the right direction.

Correctional social work has 3 broad areas. They are-

i) individual reform services which include prison reform, probation, parole, other related services ii) services for strengthening and improving relationship- family welfare services, school social work, industrial social work, iii) services for social reform -employment services, prevention of prostitution, beggary, prohibition services and removal of untouchability.

Preventive Function: It includes prevention of social evils and diseases by creating awareness and influencing policy formulation and implementation. Prevention services include

life insurance, public assistance, social legislation, labour welfare, adult education and prevention of diseases and creating awareness against child labour, against gender discrimination and violence.

Developmental Function: Developmental tasks are socio-economic developmental activities, education and recreational services, urban and rural development programmes and the programme for integration. It focuses on both social and infrastructural development of groups, communities, regions.

1.7   METHODS OF SOCIAL WORK

A method can be defined as an orderly way of procedure which is always carried out towards the attainment of a particular aim. Social work profession has certain methods which are employed for the benefit of the clients or the specific target groups. They are six in total, each of which uses different techniques. They are:

    1.   Social Case Work

    2.   Social Group Work

    3.   Community Organization

    4.   Social Action

    5.   Social Welfare Administration

    6.   Social Work Research

The first three are the primary methods of social work. They are- social work practice with individuals i.e. Social Case Work, Social Group Work and Community Organization. The remaining three, i.e. Social Action, Social Welfare Administration and Social Work Research are the secondary methods of social work. Now, let us discuss the methods of social work in detail.

1.7.1 SOCIAL CASE WORK

Social case work i.e. social work practice with individuals is one of the primary methods of social work which is being practiced by social workers universally. This method enables the social functioning of individuals which focuses on one-to-one relationship. Mary Richmond is the most important profounder of social case work. Her book titled 'Social Diagnosis' elaborately discussed the method of case work and its significance. Richmond defined case work as: 'Social case work consists of those processes which develop personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social

environment with their problems'. It can 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'. Case work is identifiable, according to Richmond, by its aim of social betterment and its method of differential treatment. Case work is concerned with the utilization of available resources in the immediate environment and capacities in the individual, which may give him/her a fuller and more satisfying life, both economic and personal. The case worker deals with people and situations one by one. The four 'P' components s of Social Case Work are: Person, Problem, Place and Process.

Individuals are part of society and every person performs different social roles and duties. During this process, individual usually struggles with several problems in one or other form, which deter his performance as a social being. Every individual is distinctive with different nature, personality, several circumstances, needs and has a distinct approach of handling his / her life situations. To understand the distinctiveness of human behavior and the individual differences, one needs to understand human being in diverse social environment and life experiences. As said- man is a social animal, each individual experiences interaction between biological, psychological and environmental factors. Unresolved problems that an individual faces would affect his/her social functioning in turn causing stress to the person. This might affect the family, community life and all the social roles that one performs in the society. Social case work method tries to resolve individual issues mainly by restoring, maintaining or improving the person's social functioning by using the knowledge of human behaviour, communication, skills, relationship tool and the available resources. Case work method is used by social workers help people across age, gender and various sections of society to develop their functioning socially.

1.7.2 SOCIAL GROUP WORK

Group work is another significant primary method of social work profession. The purpose of group work is to enhance social functioning of an individual. It is accomplished through groups which have the 'power to enhance problem-solving capacity, prevent the development of serious social problems, and restore and maintain the social functioning of members'. Group work is applicable in all settings of social work practice. It is a method that uses groups as a medium of therapy to modify and enhance social behaviour. Group work is applied to assist individuals to enhance their social functioning in a group setting and to cope more effectively with social environment. Social workers also work in clinical as well as non-clinical settings in which they work for social cohesiveness and integration. For example- group work with groups

of children, patients with similar health issues or life-threatening diseases, vulnerable groups, the aged, youth in a community and many more.

Group workers continuously facilitate members evaluate their own behaviour and respect the individuality of other members. Whenever required, the group worker has to clarify their ideals, behaviour and resolve conflicts. Conflict among group members is a common phenomenon because of the variance of personalities of each of the members. Individuals with similar problems are constituted into a group for group therapy. One reason why forming groups can work effectively is because a positive group climate can be created based on the personal relations. Group members develop a feeling of mutuality and belongingness. They can relate to each other's problems, form a support system, help is resolving adjustment problems and enhance the social functioning.

1.7.3 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Community Organization is one of the primary methods of social work that involves mobilizing and empowering communities through their groups, leaders, advocates, volunteers institutions, and organizations. It is a longterm 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. Community organization is 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.

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. The community organizer has to be expertised in human relationships who can hold the members together under difficult conditions to attain the goal of development.

1.7.4 SOCIAL ACTION

Social action is an organized group process that aims to deal with general social problems and enhancing social welfare by legislative, social or economic progress. It is a secondary method of social work that refers to organized and legally permitted activities designed to mobilize public opinion, legislation and administration in favour of socially desired objectives. Arthur Dunham (1958) defines social action "as efforts to bring about change or prevent change in current social practices or situations, through education, propaganda, persuasion or pressure, on behalf of objectives believed by the social actionists to be socially desirable". In a revised edition he refers to situations of conflict and allows for goals of change and methods to deal with them. It implies potential conflict situations and promotion of a cause, measure or objective. In a developing country, social work ought to go beyond the role of social welfare services or a therapeutic process. Kulkarni asserted- "Social action creates the necessary conditions and climate in which social work could be done more effectively." According to Siddiqui, welfare approach is gradually losing its significance and the inconsistency in democratic system demands the rights-based approach. According to him, social action is the most controversial and most challenging method of social work as a profession which has its core values as social justice and equality. Social Action method advocated the achievement of this objective.

1.7.5 SOCIAL WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

Social welfare administration is another secondary method of social work that has twin concepts of social welfare and administration implanted in it. Thus it requires an understanding of welfare as well as administration as a tool for achieving welfare. Social welfare has its roots in charity and social service. People in a society have inherently tried to take care of destitute and underprivileged individuals either because of kindness, philanthropy or religious and customary obligations. As governance systems evolved, with the changing political and social systems, there was an effort to institutionalize welfare. The welfare discourse has seen changing dimensions from charity to needs, to rights based approaches. Social work dictionary defines social welfare administration as a 'method used by those who have administrative responsibility to determine organizational goals for a social agency or other unit; acquire resources and allocate them to carry out a program; coordinate activities towards achieving selected goals; and monitor, assess and make necessary changes in processes and structure to improve effectiveness and efficiency. Development planning is an integral part of social welfare and its administration. By social administration we mean that process which is used in the organisation and administration of public and private services. It includes those activities

which are undertaken for the benefit of individuals, groups and communities. Under social welfare and administration of such services, process of organisation and direction is necessary to decide on how the available resources are to be utilized. Social welfare administration may be carried out by the government, an individual, a group or any association. Welfare provisions are a fundamental part of governance system and administration. The ultimate goal is to achieve welfare for the people through proper utilization of resources- human, capital and natural. Thus, welfare administration requires planning, organising, staffing, directing, co-ordination, recording and budgeting. Fund-raising is also an integral part of social welfare administration.

1.7.6 SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH

Social work research is an indispensable method that enhances the scope of social work research. Social Research According to Fanshel (1980) every profession must systematically carry out high quality research if its performance in the service of clientele is to remain effective and up to date. Research provides an in-depth understanding of a particular problem identified and thus contributes to the knowledge system. Research consists of numerous tools to describe, define, measure and evaluate their work. In social work profession, research skills are important since it is both a science and an art. As social workers, there is a lot of dependence on data base that provides information about the client's situations, a group or community problem. Empirical data base is an important pre-requisite for social work intervention. When knowledge on various social situations cannot be found in prevailing literature or when there is a need to study the effectiveness of interventions social workers conduct their own research. Social work research is an important stream of research as it not only strives to penetrate into deep rooted social issues, but also strives to find solving techniques for such issues. Social workers continuously access data from multiple sources, file the progress of clients in individual or group interactions and write reports. These are documented and recorded. Social work research draws heavily from such primary data as well as secondary data.

1.8   PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL WORK

Principles are the guiding assertions of statements which are guiding force for social work practice. These basic rules enable a practitioner to be competent in his/her profession. The objectives of social work can be fulfilled only within the framework of principles. Therefore, let us discuss the basic principles which are guiding force for social work practice.

i. Principle of Individualization: The principle of individualization is fundamental for effective social work practice since the betterment of the individual is the primary purpose of social work. Individualization is the recognition and understanding of each client's unique qualities and the differential use of principles and methods in assisting each one towards better adjustment and participate in the changing process. A social worker must treat his/her client not merely as a human being but a human being with his/her personal differences. The social worker must individualize the client, because for every client the situation and problem may be unique. What works with one client may not work with another. No two persons are alike in all qualities and traits. Their problems may be the same but the cause of the problem, the perception towards the problem and ego strength differs in every individual. Therefore, each individual client should be treated as a separate entity and complete information is required to establish close relations in order to solve his/her problem from root.

ii. Principle of Meaningful Relationship: Professional relationship is essential for the success of social work practice. The quality of relationship is the corner stone of helping in social work. This relationship is developed in social work by demonstrating the interest in client, who is perceived as a real person with spontaneity and capacity for responsiveness within the democratic frame of reference the professional relationship involves a mutual process of shared responsibilities, recognition of other's rights, acceptance of difference, with the goal of socialized attitudes and behavior stimulating growth through interaction. The essence of relationship is seen as an interplay, a mutual emotional exchange, an attitude, a dynamic interaction, a connection between two persons and a mutual process.

iii. Principle of Self-determination: Social responsibility, emotional adjustment and personality development are possible when the person exercises his freedom of choice and decision. An ethical principle that recognizes the rights and needs of clients to be free to make their own choices and decisions. Inherent in this principle is the requirement for the member to help the client know what the resources and choices are and what potential consequences of selecting anyone of them may be.

iv. Principle of Acceptance: Social work accepts the individual as he is and with all his limitations. The social worker is expected to respect every client as human being without any judgmental attitude. A social worker must appreciate the variations within any group. He should avoid making assumptions about any person's cultural identity, beliefs or values on the basis of the person's external characteristics or membership in a particular population or demographic group. The principle of acceptance implies that social workers

must perceive, acknowledge, receive and establish a relationship with the individual client as he actually is, not as we wish him to be or think he should be. It means that no matter how much the client may differ from the social worker, client need to be accepted and acknowledged as he is if we are to help him.

v. Principle of Social Functioning: Social functioning refers to the functioning of people in their social roles and relationships, with emphasis on their relation to the environment. The common base of social work consists in a central focus on social functioning, an orientation towards people involved in the situation, use of social work values and the combined body of social work knowledge for working with individuals and groups.

vi.Principle of Tuning Behavior: Every individual has body, mind and intellect as three instruments of experiences through life constantly pulsates. These three instruments have their own distinct characteristics in each person. Hence each person has unique personality. There is a need of tuning these instruments regularly so that he may have the proper experience of the world fully. Social work therefore believes that through tuning of behavior of an individual his problems can be minimized if not wholly solved and he feels and realizes a new strength running in his body and mind.

vii.   Principle of Social Learning: Social learning is a pre-requisite to the changes that are inevitably involved in problem solving. Change in individual, group or community will depend on their capacity to learn new facts, attitudes and ways of behavior. Social learning is an essential part of social work practice whether the change is initiated by social action or individual therapy.

viii.   Principle of Confidentiality: Confidentiality is essential to professional relationship. It is the foundation for any therapeutic relationship with a client. Therefore, worker should keep confidential the information which is being shared by the client. Sharing such information unnecessarily with outsiders can easily break worker client relationship. Ensuring the client of confidentiality of his/ her sharing personal information and experiences shared, builds up trust in the professional relationship between the client and the social worker.

ix.Principle of Communication: Communication is the road through which the social worker identifies with the client. The function of social worker is principally to create an environment in which the client will feel comfortable in giving expression to his feelings. Client should feel that he can tell his story in his own way and he may think that he is given due importance. Two-way effective communication is the key to the success of solving client's issues and empowering him/her. Communication ensures expression and

analysis of feelings, experiences and information necessary to deal with for the wellbeing of the client.

Thus the principles of social work are necessary for the profession that act as guidelines for social workers in dealing with client's issues and strive for the betterment of individuals, groups and communities. In this context, let us try to understand the main target groups of social work who are more vulnerable to discrimination and injustice. They are identified as 'vulnerable groups'. However, apart from the vulnerable groups, anyone can seek professional social work help to deal with various issues faced in life- situations.

1.8   LET US SUM UP

l Social work is a discipline and a profession which is concerned with the causes of social problems, its impact on individuals, groups, communities and society at large and to deploy social work methods for its solution. l It comprises of a multi-disciplinary approach to understanding society and its problems. Thus, it draws heavily from the disciplines of sociology, psychology, philosophy, economics, political science, law and others to have an all-round understanding of the society. The main motto of social work is: Helping people to help themselves! l It implies that social work profession functions in the underlying belief that through the use of methods, techniques and skills, the clients have to be empowered to help themselves. l Social work has four broad functions: curative/ remedial, correctional, preventive and developmental. l There are six methods of social work. The first three are the primary methods of social work. They are- social work practice with individuals i.e. Social Case Work, Social Group Work and Community Organization. The remaining three, i.e. Social Action, Social Welfare Administration and Social Work Research are the secondary methods of social work.

1.9   FURTHER READING

1.Patel, A.K. and Dubey M.V. (2010) Philosophy of Social Work. Cresent Publishing: New Delhi

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UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1   LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

| Describe the philosophy and values of social work profession

| Explain the principles of social work

| Analyze the issues of marginalized groups and significance of social work in this regard

2.2   INTRODUCTION

Social work is a novice profession and is guided by principles and values. In the previous unit we have discussed the objectives, functions and the six methods of social work. In the present unit let us discuss the philosophy, values and principles of this profession. Let us also understand the vulnerability of the marginalized groups and why social work is necessary to deal with issues of discrimination. This is aligned with the philosophy and objectives of social work practice.

2.3   PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL WORK

Philosophy is the beliefs and principles underlying any department of knowledge. It is the study of truths and principles of being, knowledge, or conduct. A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school .Thus it is clear that the concept of philosophy is grounded in the understanding that there are truths and principles of our existence and that these truths are accepted by us as well as others. We can have a set of truths and principles that guide us in how we conduct ourselves and define what we expect from others.

The philosophy of social work is based on humanitarism, liberalism and democracy. Except from devotion to welfare of human beings, social worker has to find a method of enabling those who are assisted to regain their confidence in themselves for the proper adjustment to normal life. The introduction of the concept and philosophy of democracy further strengthened the need to recognize every human being as an individual, worthy of respect and recognition, the individual being given the rights as well as responsibilities of an equal citizen in a democratic society. The consent of the governed, rule of the majority, respect for the creative minority, freedom of assembly, speech and religion supported the development of the individual in his own right. Underlying these factors lay the philosophy of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. It is in the background of this philosophy of life that the methods of social work have been developed by the practitioners.

2.4   BASIC VALUES OF SOCIAL WORK

Values are beliefs about what is good and desirable. It is defined as a conception of a standard , cultural or merely personal , by which things are compared and approved or

disapproved in relation to one another, held to be relatively desirable or undesirable, more meritorious or less, more or less correct. The profession of social work is grounded in a value system that focuses on social justice and fairness. Following are the core values of social work:

1. Respect individuals' worth and dignity, encourage mutual participation, demonstrate acceptance, uphold confidentiality, express honesty and handle conflict responsibly.

2. Encourage individuals' active participation in the helping relationship and uphold their right to make their own decisions.

3. Assist clients in securing resources needed to enhance their social functioning

4. Ensure that social institutions are humane and responsive to human needs.

5. Accept and appreciate diverse populations

6. Hold themselves accountable for ethical conduct, quality of their work and continuous professional development

2.6   MARGINALIZATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

Marginalization is a complex as well as shifting phenomenon linked to social status. It is an experience that affects millions of people throughout the world. People who are marginalized have relatively little control over their lives, and the resources available to them. This results in making them handicapped in delving contribution to society. A vicious circle is set up whereby their lack of positive and supportive relationships means that they are prevented from participating in local life, which in turn leads to further isolation. This has a tremendous impact on development of human beings, as well as on society at large. If we analyse the situation of marginality of the vulnerable groups, we would find that it is a complex phenomenon and needs to be examined along several dimensions. The areas of marginality include personal, collective, education, economic, health, cultural and ecological.

Personal dimensions include inadequate food consumption, lack of employment, poor housing and other facilities, oppression etc. The collective dimensions are leadership imposed from outside, conflict among themselves, lack of resistance to discrimination etc. Economic marginalization include lack of equitable access to land and other natural resources, poor wages for labour and not getting access to subsidized public input. Political dimension of marginalization are lack of representation and a political system which does not favour the interests of the marginalized section of society. Educational dimensions include lack of equal opportunity for education, inadequate reservations and lack of financial support for continuing higher education. Health dimensions of marginalization are lack of health facilities and

inaccessibility of the people to decision making related to health. Other areas of marginalization are lack of community facilities and ecological imbalances due to deterioration of land, water, air and other natural resources.

Vulnerable groups: Certain groups in the society often encounter discriminatory treatment and need special attention to avoid potential exploitation. This population constitutes what is referred to as vulnerable groups. But the task of identifying the vulnerable groups is not an easy one. There are multiple and complex factors of vulnerability with different layers and more often than once it cannot be analysed in isolation. Most vulnerable marginalized groups in almost every society can be summarized as below:

1. **Women:** Under different economic conditions, and under the influence of specific historical, cultural, legal and religious factors, marginalization is one of the manifestations of gender inequality. Women face double discrimination being members of specific caste, class or ethnic group apart from being experiencing gendered vulnerabilities. They have always been viewed as passive recipients, rather than active participants capable of changing their life situation. In the process, women's participation and important contribution in the productive sphere is at best bypassed and at worst ignored.

2. **Children:** Children form a very vulnerable part of the human society. They need special protection because of their fragile status of development. They face discrimination on the basis of caste, religion and ethnicity. Children's vulnerabilities and exposure to violation of their rights remain spread and multiple in nature. The manifestations of these violations are various ranging from child labour, child trafficking to commercial sexual exploitation and many other forms of violation.

3. **Scheduled caste:** The absence of equal opportunities in any walk of social life is a denial of equal status and equal participation in the affairs of the society. Caste in Indian society is a particular form of social inequality that involves a hierarchy of groups ranked in terms of ritual purity. In earlier period they were deprived of the right to education and thus were left suffering behind, socially and economically. They are a group who are in a state of oppression, social disability and who are helpless and poor. Structural discrimination against these groups takes place in the form of physical, psychological, emotional and cultural abuse which receives legitimacy from the social structure and the social system.

4. **Scheduled tribes:** The scheduled tribes are a product of marginalization based on ethnicity. They are considered to be socially and economically disadvantaged. From the historical point of view, they have been subjected to the

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worst type of societal exploitation. They are mainly landless with little control over resources such as land, forest and water.

5. **Old aged:** Ageing is a natural process. The vulnerability among the elderly is not only due to an increased incidence of illness and disability, but also due to their economic dependency upon their family members.

6. **Minority:** Minority is most commonly used to refer to communities that are numerically small in relation to the rest of the population. In such cases size can be a disadvantage and lead to the marginalization of the relatively smaller communities. Minorities includes issues of power, access to resource and has cultural and social dimension.

7. **People with disabilities:** People with disabilities have had to battle against centuries of biased assumptions, harmful stereotypes, and irrational fears. The stigmatization of disability resulted in the social and economic marginalization of generations with disabilities, and, like many other oppressed minorities, this has left people with disabilities in a severe state of impoverishment for centuries.

To summarize marginalization of vulnerable groups is a complex and serious problem which needs to be addressed at the policy level. A close understanding is required of the problems associated with the groups suffering from marginalization and the ways to reduce them. Social Work profession which is guided by humanitarian philosophy and values, promoting justice for the marginalized groups is one of the core objectives.

2.6 CONCEPTS RELATED TO SOCIAL WORK

Social work profession draws its values from different concepts. Social work as a profession is of recent origin and it has its base of various concepts related to certain social processes. These processes have in some way or the other contributed to the evolving of social work profession. As discussed in the previous unit, the values and objectives of social work, a lot is drawn from these social processes that influence its methods and techniques. Now, let us discuss some of these:

2.6.1 SOCIAL SERVICE

Social Services are those organized activities that are primarily and directly concerned with the conservation, protection and improvement of human beings. They are the efforts to restore, enhance and maintain the social functioning of those in need of it through- enabling social resources like day care centres, funding organizations, hospices and others. Social

work consists of the following entities- a network of social services, carefully developed methods and processes and social policies expressed through social institutions.

Social Service stems from the desire to help the needy fellow men in a human society. It was a religious duty of a man to provide care and protection to the people suffering from various kinds of distresses. In India alms- giving was considered as a path of moksha. At present times as well alms- giving to the poor is considered a social welfare activity and synonymously the term 'social work' is used for such acts of charity. However, alms-giving is not social work because the aim of help in social work is to solve client's problem scientifically. In social work profession causative factors are investigated and therapeutic models are utilized.

Shramadan as Social Work concept- *Sharamadan* is to voluntarily provide physical help to any individual, group or community. Some examples are construction of public roads, public sanitation, help to flood victims or other natural and man-made disasters. In such activities labour is provided without any remuneration. Therefore, it cannot be said to be a major part of social work profession as it lacks proper techniques to help clients to deal with adjustment problems.

Social work is that process which deals directly with persons who have problems relating to the social environment. Thus, as the motto of social service is- helping the helpless, in social work it is- helping the helpless to help themselves. Social work fulfils the objectives of social services. The main aim is to equip individuals with the competence and resources essential for effective social participation.

2.6.2 SOCIAL WELFARE AND ADMINISTRATION

Social Welfare consists of a wide range of specialized services for the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of the society. Charity, philanthropy and relief to the vulnerable groups have been the traditional way of welfare. However, gradually this concept has been changing and welfare services became the citizen's rights. Thus, right to these basic facilities are implicit in the concept of social welfare. Social welfare and social work are historically related. These two words are still used synonymously by the common man. The distinction between the two is of recent origin. It has specific aims of welfare and development of the people and to cater to their needs. Development planning is an integral part of social welfare and its administration. By social administration we mean that process which is used in the organisation and administration of public and private services. It includes those activities which are undertaken for the benefit of individuals, groups and communities. Under social welfare and administration of such services, process of organisation and direction is necessary to decide on how the available resources are to be utilized. Social welfare administration may be carried out by the

government, an individual, a group or any association. The ultimate goal is to achieve welfare for the people through proper utilization of resources- human, capital and natural. Thus, welfare administration requires planning, organising, staffing, directing, co-ordination, recording and budgeting. Fund-raising is also an integral part of social welfare administration.

2.6.3 SOCIAL REFORM

Social reform can be defined as change or replacement in the institutions which have become functionally irrelevant, totally or partially to the modern social order causing loss of quality of life, deprivations to sizeable sections of the society. Such reforms or changes can be initiated by a group of people who believe that certain social institutional changes are required either for social development or for eliminating certain social evils that victimize a particular section of the society. Institutional structure and its accompanying norms are modified, altered or eliminated as per the changing times and situations for general good of the society. It can be a slow process as change cannot be hurriedly absorbed by a society. Social reform brings change in social institutions and creates favourable conditions for the social progress for those who are continuously suffering from the discrimination and social neglect. Some examples of social reform are- women's rights, social upliftment of the *Harijans*, community service centres in slums, abolition of Sati and many more.

Social Reform also refers to the collective effort of a group of people with a common ideology who try together to reach to certain goals. Such goals can be summarized as: to bring down crime rate in society, to make efforts to elevate employment opportunities and fight poverty and to uplift overall economic and financial standard of the region. In the context of social reform, a reform movement is a kind of social movement that aims to make gradual change, or change in certain aspects of society, rather than rapid or fundamental changes.

Social work has a historic identification with social reform. The fact that social problems result from system defects as well as individual maladjustments, more focus has been given to professional schools to prepare people who can be agents of social change. Social reform does not require any specific skills; however, social work is practised on the basis of professional skills to help the clients. Social reform involves radical change in social system but social work goes a step ahead by assisting the individual in freeing himself/ herself from his maladjustments in social life. Social reform played a great role in all religions. The history of the social reform movement is closely related to the Indian social structure. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the father of modern India is the leader of the Social Reform Movement which manifested itself in different parts of India.

2.6.4 SOCIAL JUSTICE

The term 'social justice' was coined by Jesuit Luigui Taparelli during the 1840's. It is a concept which describes a movement towards a socially just world based on concepts of human rights and equality. Without social justice, rights and equality a society cannot exist. It is based on laws and regulations which includes the process of making rules and punishment in cases of violation of laws. Justice is a central moral standard in social life. It identifies particular rules which can be used to assess the rightness of an act or institution, in order to encourage specific arrangements that will promote procedural fairness, just distribution or equality. It refers to the concept in which justice or fairness is achieved. Social justice determines whether a society has a high degree of economic egalitarianism that can be achieved through progressive taxation, income or property redistribution. Social work profession has its base in the values of social justice and human rights. Social work believes in achievement of social justice for all. Without justice a society cannot grow or even exist for that matter. The methods and techniques used in social work aims to achieve social justice and welfare for all. These are some of the basic foundations of social work.

2.6.5 HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are natural rights of human beings that begin with restoration and protection of human dignity. Human Rights are referred to as universal, indivisible, inalienable and intergenerational. Since time immemorial, the 'inferior races' have been tortured by the superior and dominating races in some or the other way. Such incidents and events resulted in violence and bloodshed as the dominated races resisted exploitation around the globe. Gradually, each country realized the urged for independence and the need for a civilized and peaceful society. Thus, every country united to fight for the common cause of national independence. After new governments were formed, all joined hands to achieve liberty, equality and fraternity among the people which resulted in international awakening on Human Rights. The various categories of human rights have been adopted in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights on **10th December which is also celebrated as Human Rights Day.** The declaration proclaims the personal, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of humans. Among the rights are the right to life, liberty and security of a person.

The Universal Declaration contains three distinct sets of human rights:

(i)   Political or individual freedoms, right to a fair trial, freedom of speech and religion, freedom of movement and assembly, guarantees against discrimination, slavery and torture which fall under political and civil human rights.

(ii) Economic, social and cultural rights

(iii) A set of collective rights among nations- a social and international order. It requires inter-governmental co-operation on world issues like freedom, economic development and environmental protection. There should not be any domination or exploitation operated by a country on another.

The social work profession emphasizes greatly on the concept of human rights. The International Federation of Social Workers state that "social workers respect the basic human rights of individuals and groups as expressed in the UDHR and other international conventions derived from that Declaration. For the profession of social work, achievement of human rights for all people is a fundamental requirement. To achieve this objective, social workers believe that individuals, groups and communities should be involved in positive action and make sure that we ourselves do not violate the rights of others.

2.6.6 SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security is the security that the society aspires to achieve through appropriate organisations and institutions against certain risks to which people are vulnerable. It can be said to be a programme of protection against possibility of modern life like sickness, unemployment, old age dependency, accidents and others. Social security can be provided through public assistance, social insurance, health, education and social welfare services. Social work profession draws a lot from the concept of social security as well since social work consists of social security in its programme activities so that individuals can lead a secured life. Social workers need to be aware of the social security measures and provisions available in their area of practice. Thus, the social worker can play the role of resource mobilizer while being the connecting link between the client and the social security programmes.

2.6.7 SOCIAL POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Social policy and legislation are sets of rules guaranteed by the government of a particular state to ensure the welfare and protection to all sections of its people. It provides compulsory provisions for social welfare and are non-discriminatory in nature. Social welfare is not possible without legal provisions for solution of social welfare. It constitutes a body of rules recognised by a community as binding upon itself. The main objectives of social policy and legislation are to enhance the wellbeing of the society by providing people with protection from injustice and by punishing those who violate such rules.

Social policies and legislation also deal with various social problems that hinder social and economic development. They bring about social reforms, social changes deal with social problems and propound social rules and principles. The main objective of social policies and

legislation is to ensure the security of the society to improve its social and economic condition. Therefore, it is closely related to social work profession. Social workers, with the use of methods like community organization, social action and social work research strive to formulate and alter social policies and legislations for the benefit of all sections of the society.

2.6.8 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social development is one of the basic objectives of social work profession. It is about improving the well-being of every individual in society so they can reach their full potential. The success of society is linked to the well-being of each and every citizen. Social development means investing in people. It requires the removal of barriers so that all citizens can journey toward their dreams with confidence and dignity. It is about refusing to accept that people who live in poverty will always be poor. It is about helping people so they can move forward on their path to self-sufficiency.

To reduce poverty, we need to take a social development approach and invest in our people. By investing in people, we can reduce poverty. We need to go beyond looking at government to find ways to develop our most valuable resources, our people. We need to share responsibility with community organizations, businesses, universities and municipalities in the task of improving the well-being of all and preventing and reducing poverty. Social workers work closely with individuals, groups and communities to bring about development and social development is one major broad objective of social work practice. Thus, to achieve social development, social welfare and administration, reform, providing social security measures becomes very crucial.

2.7   LET US SUM UP

l Values are beliefs about what is good and desirable. Social work as a discipline of study and as a profession has certain values. l the philosophy of social work is based on humanitarism, liberalism and democracy. l Principles are the guiding assertions of statements which are guiding force for social work practice. These basic rules enable a practitioner to be competent in his/her profession. l The principle of meaningful relationship between social worker and the client highlights the essence of relationship is seen as an interplay, a mutual emotional exchange , an attitude, a dynamic interaction, a connection between two persons and a mutual process. l Communication is the road through which the social worker identifies with the client. The function of social worker is principally to create an environment in which the client will feel

comfortable in giving expression to his feelings. Thus communication is an inevitable guiding principle of social work profession.

l The principle of individualization is fundamental for effective social work practice since the betterment of the individual is the primary purpose of social work. Individualization is the recognition and understanding of each client's unique qualities and the differential use of principles and methods in assisting each one towards better adjustment and participate in the changing process. l If we analyse the situation of marginality of the vulnerable groups, we would find that it is a complex phenomenon and needs to be examined along several dimensions. The areas of marginality include personal, collective, education, economic, health, cultural and ecological.

2.8   FURTHER READING

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