

CONTEXTUALISING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN INDIA

Contextualizando la Educación en Trabajo Social en India

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Funding. The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement No. 295203.

Abstract

Professional Social Work Education is commemorating 75 years of its contribution in addressing social problems and social welfare in India. While engaging layers of social realities, social work tries to create academic rigour, tests out new models and demands a statutory professional regulatory system. This article provides an overview on the issues, challenges and concerns of social work education in India. The first part details the historical development, the second part brings out various debates, the third part discusses the future concerns and challenges for social work education in India and it ends with a discussion.

Keywords: Social Work Education, India, Field Work, Generic Social Work

Resumen

La educación para el Trabajo Social profesional en India, celebra 75 años de su contribución al abordaje de problemas sociales y bienestar social. Mientras se ocupa de estratos de la realidad social, el trabajo social procura crear rigor académico, pone a prueba nuevos modelos y demanda un sistema legal de regulación profesional. El presente artículo proporciona una visión de conjunto de los temas, desafíos y preocupaciones de la educación para el trabajo social en la India. En la primera parte se detalla su desarrollo histórico; en la segunda se sacan a relucir varios debates; en la tercera se discuten las futuras preocupaciones y desafíos para la educación para el trabajo social; y se termina con unas conclusiones.

Palabras clave: Educación en Trabajo Social, India, Prácticas Externas, Trabajo Social Generalista

Recibido: 21/11/2014

Aceptado: 25/11/2014

Publicado: 01/12/2014

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Historical development of Indian Social Work

Academic Birth

Social service practice in India was born out of the zeal of voluntarism to offer social services for the needy. To infuse a systematic approach, specialized ad-hoc or short term training was initiated by Gopal Krishna Gokhale through the Servants of Indian Society in 1905. It was established with an idea that a 'missionary' spirit alone was not sufficient for an effective social service for the Indian social condition (Ranade, 1987). Hence, training was initiated for those who had interest in social service as a life-time career. One of the primary motives to start training in India for social service workers was to transform voluntariness and impart knowledge on methods and techniques to carry out social welfare services (Srivastava, 1999: 120).

However, social service training offered by servants of India society was based on the philosophy of *dharma* where one is expected to help the needy to attain *motcha* rather than challenging the existing social system. Such training was not sufficient to address the complex social problems faced by the poor and marginalised. Hence it was felt that a professional approach would understand Indian society, their social problems and welfare administration. It had to focus on specialised training to address problems of industrial workers, migrant families and children. During the initial years it was felt that field based training and academic curriculum in social work had to blend 'Indianness' to address two major issues. Firstly, to focus on charity richness of socio-religious obligation, yet, blend with modern industrial development. Secondly, to address the impending 'social disorganisation and urban decay' in the city. Dr. Manshardt, who initiated social work education in India in his inaugural address at the opening session of the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work (Bombay), emphasized that the *Indianness* (italics added) in social work *must* fall into three general fields: the Academic Curriculum, Practical Work or Field Work, and Social Work Research' (Manshardt, 1936:2). On this basis many schools of social work and departments in the university were started. Some of them are: Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate Schools of Social Work later known as Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Mumbai in 1936; in Lucknow by 1948 as J.K, Institute of Sociology, Ecology and Human Relations (University of Lucknow, 2014); Delhi School of Social Work in 1948 (University of Delhi, 2014); Baroda School of Social Work now The Faculty of Social Work, Baroda in 1949 (University of Baroda, 2014) and Madras School of Social Work, Chennai (then Madras) in 1952 (Madras Schools of Social Work, 2014). While detailing social work curriculum in India this paper restricts

itself to analysing issues concerning the academic curriculum within social work education since field work and social work research requires a separate detailed analysis.

Early Social Work Curriculum

The Indian Conference of Social Work (ICSW, 1947), and in partnership with the Council on Social Work Education, through the Technical Cooperation Mission Programme, United States of America, shaped the Indian social work curriculum in its initial phase. The social work academic curriculum, according to Dr. Manshardt, must be centered on three core areas such as: Social Case Work, Public Welfare Administration and Social Legislation. Firstly, he emphasized that the social case work is to address 'the problems connected with family welfare' and of fields such as 'Mental Hygiene and Psychiatry, Medical Social Work, Child Guidance, Vocational Guidance, Probation and Parole'. He underscored the importance of positioning family in a social environment, otherwise termed as Family Centered Intervention, rather than individual based as practiced in the USA. Secondly, Public Welfare Administration was an important method since in his view 'great amount of work in every country is carried on by the State' (Manshardt, 1936:3). Social work training, according to him, is to study 'Government efforts to deal with Public Health, Maternity and Child Welfare, the Care of the Blind, Deaf and Mentally Deficient, Housing, City Planning, Industrial Welfare and the Administration of Justice'. He also felt that these Government departments require 'competent administrators as well as able men and women... *who would be humanist in their approach*'. Thirdly, 'Social legislation: the drafting and administration of laws relating to Social Welfare'. Social workers, according to Manshardt, 'should not only know the laws as they stand, but should also be ready with constructive suggestions for their improvement' (Manshardt, 1936:3).

In order to orient young social work professionals, a generic diploma was awarded at the end of 2 years training termed as 'Social Service Administration' without offering any specialized training. Reasoning out the need for a generic nature of social work training, Dr. Manshardt stated,

The school's main aim is to give an understanding of all the branches of the profession, and of scientific methods of studying and investigating social problems. The fundamental courses in social case work, child welfare, social statistics, public welfare administration, medical social work, social psychiatry, social legislation, organization of welfare activities, and the history of philanthropy and public welfare are a necessary part of the equipment of all social workers (Manshardt, 1936:6).

The primary goal is to understand social problems in India and to mitigate them through some fundamental courses. He tried to adapt methods practiced in the USA into the Indian stream; still the focus was on field practice in India. To quote 'we would disclaim any attempt to follow slavishly western patterns, but at the same time worthwhile ideas, whatever the source' (Manshardt, 1936: 3).

Inseminated Curriculum

Academic inputs and curriculum design drew ideas from the west for the 'Indianness' of social work academic training. Existing curricula practiced in America was *inseminated* into the training module at Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate Schools of Social Work later named Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). The subject papers taught were from a borrowed curriculum and literature from the USA and little on community development, a much relevant course for the Indian condition. Faculty assistance was initiated by the U.S Education Foundation and the U.S Technical Cooperation Mission to orient the way in which courses must be taught in India (Ranade, 1987). TISS adopted 'basic eight' as proposed by the American Association of Schools of Social Work like: Public Welfare, Social Casework, Social Group work, Community Organisation, Medical Information, Social Research, Psychiatry and Social Welfare Administration. As planned by Dr. Manshardt, courses offered in the initial training years were: Social Casework, Administration and Research (2 methods) and Sociology, Economics, Psychology and Human Development (3 general). Focused Target Groups were: children, family and juvenile delinquents. Social Group Work and Community Organization were not taught in the initial years of social work training in India until 1948 (Desai, 1987).

Overall, the training for social work professionals at TISS was 'Agency Centric' rather than 'Functional Centric'. The dilemma remained whether to choose the USA method or to develop an indigenous approach, since the curriculum is heavily borrowed, or to train graduates to address the Indian reality. Except for graduating social work professionals as 'Labour Welfare Officers' as required by the Indian Factories Act, 1948, others are trained for social sector agencies. Only later, based on The Report on Health Survey and Development Committee by Sir Bhore in 1945, 'Function Centric' ideas emerged. For example, the Sir Bhore Committee recommended the establishment of a social service department in hospitals and there was a demand for personnel to work with young offenders. Hence, specialisations like Labour Welfare and Personnel Management, Medical and Psychiatric Social Work and Criminology and Correctional Administration were introduced (Nanavatty, 1968). This

indigenous, yet externally enforced, training mode was developed in the initial years for two reasons. Firstly, to orient and train Indian faculty since such a model was readily available in the USA with adequate literature sources. Secondly, to understand and address the issues faced by Indian society. Even though 'agency centric' training was abandoned in the USA for a 'functional based approach' on the recommendation of the Hollis-Taylor Report in 1951, social work academic institutions in India continued with both agency and functional centric patterns. Bodhi (2014), stated that Indian Social Work education was premised on twin notions namely: a) sectoral differentiation b) intervention areas, rather than understanding the Indian social system in its ideological plateau.

Urban centric curriculum and academic institutions in social work focused more on mitigating the problems of urban India than focusing on issues of agriculture and rural life. Issues like poverty and agrarian problems were not given prominence in the initial years of training young social work professionals. One of the foremost criticisms against social work is negligible indigenous theory in its curriculum as discussed by many authors (Andharia, 2007; Akhup, 2009; Desai, A., 1985; 2004; Kuruvilla, 2005; Saldanha, 2008; Siddique, 1987). The academic vacuums along with person centric approach have little influence among the planners and administrators. Hence demand to reorient the curriculum and field practice came from social work professionals, academicians and statutory bodies like the University Grants Commission.

Social Work Education: Planning, Regulation and Monitoring

University Grants Commission's Role in Higher Education

Union Government and State (provincial) Government, through a consultative process plan, oversee higher education in India since the subject is under the concurrent list (Ministry of Law, 2014). Yet, policy and finance are largely centralised at the union level. The University Grants Commission (henceforth as UGC), a body established at the union level regulates and monitors higher education in India. The UGC Act, 1956 clause 12 states that,

“it shall be the general duty of the Commission to take, in consultation with the Universities, or other bodies concerned, all such steps as it may think fit for the promotion and coordination of University education and for the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in Universities” (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2014).

Table 1. Milestones in Indian Social Work Education

Year	Milestone	Importance
1936	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai	First institution for Social Work Education
1947	Indian Conference of Social Work (ICSW)	Formulated Social Work curriculum
1948	J.K, Institute of Sociology, Ecology and Human Relations, Luckow Delhi School of Social Work in 1948.	First school of social work in Central & Northern India
1949	Baroda School of Social Work now as The Faculty of Social Work, Baroda	First school of social work in Western India
1952	Madras School of Social Work, Chennai in (then Madras).	First school of social work in South India
1959	Association of Schools of Social Work in India (ASSWI)	It was the only pan Indian body connecting social work institutions across India. Now non- functional
1965 (Published)	University Grants Commission (UGC), Government of India First Review Committee on Social Work Education.	Report titled as- Social Work Education in Indian Universities.
1968	1 st Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India	The Planning Commission, Government of India. In 3 volumes mapped the concepts of Social Work.
1975 (Commissioned) 1980 (submitted)	UGC's second review committee	Report Titled as- Review of Social work Education in India: Retrospect and Prospect. Social Action, Social Policy and Social welfare administration papers introduced.
1987	2 nd Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India	Ministry of Welfare, Government of India. Five Volumes on varies social work themes and agencies.
1986	Curriculum development centre at TISS, Mumbai.	Stand alone centre to plan, review and to promote social work education in India
1990	Report of the curriculum development centre in social work education, UGC, New Delhi.	Proposed model curriculum.
1997	Declaration of Ethics of Professional Social work	Indian Journal of Social work.

2000	National Curriculum Reframe Exercise and The Third National Review of Social Work Education, UGC, New Delhi.	Guidelines in offering subjects and credits.
2003	National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) -“Self study manual for social work institutions”.	Criteria of assessment and accreditation. Minimum and quality standards in social work education.
2012	National Network of Schools of Social Work.	Revival of ASSWI since it has become defunct and to bring standardisation in social work education across the country

Compiled by the author through various sources.

UGC has two major mechanisms to plan and monitor higher education in India. Firstly, subject wise panels, whose main agenda is to gather and analyze infrastructure requirements, human resource mapping and planning the philosophical foundation for each subject. The subject wise panel has a convener who should be an eminent person in the field. Secondly, Curriculum Development Centres (CDCs), which would update the subject syllabus. These two processes by UGC are undertaken on a periodic basis and reports are submitted before the full commission.

For social work, the UGC commissioned three subject wise panel reviews as listed in Table 2.1. The stand alone curriculum development centre for social work established by UGC at TISS through its report suggested 9 key areas to frame social work curriculum at post graduate level (Prabha, 2014). The core three and the basic eight papers introduced in early social work education have been dismantled into a single paper called Social Work Interventions: Methods and Strategies. The social welfare administration is broadened into social development, policy and planning. Interestingly the UGC model curriculum (2001) suggested new titles such as: Working with Individuals, Groups and Communities replacing the old title Social Case Work, Social Group Work and Community Organization (UGC, 2001). Yet, UGC retains the old nomenclature, as many other schools of social work in India, for its national eligibility test (NET) for assistant professors and selecting fellowships to do a Ph.D. These contradictions are the product of a lack of administrative foresightedness and diverse academic community in their engagement with region specific social realities. The main criticism against UGC is that it has mainly performed an administrative role, except for review panels and

allocated grants by considering social work as a special subject. Implementing the recommendations of review committee, ensuring quality social work education and disseminating the report widely among the academicians were not taken up strongly. There was no initiative to create a 'Social Work Council' as recommended by the second review commission on social work. In the 1990s, after being appointed chairperson of the UGC, Dr. Desai, did her best to establish a Council for Social Work. But it remained on paper due to bureaucratic procedures of different ministries at the union level (Ministry of Human Resources and Social Welfare), lack of political will and disagreements among the academicians on the rules, structure and on the Social Work Council memorandum.

Non-Statutory Agencies Initiatives

Apart from the UGC there was an attempt made in 1962 to accredit and standardize social work education by the Association of Schools of Social Work in India (ASSWI) with technical inputs from the United States Technical Cooperation Mission in India. The effort did not result in any decisive action from the academia, the statutory body like UGC or from the Government. In following years, due to organizational apathy, ASSWI could not advise on matters pertaining to social work and had become *persona-non-existe*. The vacuum was reported by the second review Commission on Social Work which noted that "there is no authority in social work education for the enforcement of standards or for the recognition of equivalence" (UGC, 1980:21).

On the other hand, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) which accredits higher education institutions in India have evolved quality standards for social work education. The report, called a self study manual for social work institutions, sets a wide range of guidelines for education institutions offering social work degrees (NAAC, 2005). Similarly there was an attempt by the National Network of Schools of Social Work in 2012 to look at the quality of social work education by mapping institutions offering social work. Developments at the international level have played a limited role in redesigning and reshaping social work in India except for Dr. Vimla V. Nadkarni becoming president of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW). The joint document adopted by IASSW and IFSW on "Global standard on Social Work Education" and "Global Declaration on Ethics in Social Work" has not been widely discussed among professional social workers and incorporated in the Indian syllabus (IASSW, IFSW, 2005). Having discussed early social work education and institutions regulating social work let us focus on some challenges surrounding social work education.

Table 2. Summary: University Grants Commission (UGC) Review Committees and Statutory body Reports on Social Work

Period	Convener	UGC First Review Committee	UGC Second Review Committee	UGC's National Curriculum Reframe Exercise	Curriculum Development Centre (CDC)	National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)
		Constituted- 1960. Report submitted 1965.	Commissioned 1975. Report Submitted 1978. Published 1980	Constituted 1999. Commissioned in 2000.	UGC established CDC at TISS 1986. Report published 1990	2003
	Prof.A.R. Wadia, Director, TISS, Mumbai	Prof. Ranade, Delhi School of Social Work, Delhi University.	Prof. Ranade, Delhi School of Social Work, Delhi University.	Dr. (Mrs.) Niranjana Gokarn, TISS, Mumbai	Dr. (Mrs.) Niranjana Gokarn, TISS, Mumbai.	NAAC through national conference.
	Social Work Education in Indian Universities	Review of Social Work Education in India: Retrospect and Prospect	Review of Social Work Education in India: Retrospect and Prospect	The Curriculum Reframe and Reform Exercise' and 'The Third National Review of Social Work Education'.	Report of the curriculum development centre in social work education	A Manual for Self-Study of Social Work Institutions
	---	Develop Perspective for Social Work Education.	Develop Perspective for Social Work Education.	Guided practice learning for a complete Social Work Education.	Review existing curricula for Under Graduate and Post-Graduate program	Standards for Criteria of Assessment of Institutions for Social Work Education
	---	Review the existing social work educational programmes Suggest to develop holistic framework Mapping Manpower requirements in Social Work profession Study and suggest changes or modifications in administrative matters	Review the existing social work educational programmes Suggest to develop holistic framework Mapping Manpower requirements in Social Work profession Study and suggest changes or modifications in administrative matters	Part I : Social Work Profession's programmes for the undergraduate and the postgraduate levels. Part II : Suggestions for 'specialization' and/or 'concentration areas'	Assess quality of social work curriculum and work load Develop New curriculum Scheme of academic program and examination Broad area of field work practicum	Standards for Curricular Aspects; Teaching-Learning and Evaluation; Research, Consultancy and Extension; Infrastructure and Learning Resources; Student Support and Progression; Organisation and Management; Healthy Practices
Mandate/ Terms of Reference / Structure of the report						

Recommendation On Curriculum	<p style="text-align: center;">---</p>	<p>Develop an overall aim, objectives & conceptual framework of subjects.</p> <p>Introduce Ideologies and Ethics for Social Work Education.</p> <p>Address the problems of affiliation to the university and special needs of professional education for social work.</p>	<p>Humanistic & Social re-constructionist Curriculum.</p> <p>Model Curriculum</p> <p>Core Domain- philosophy, ideology, practice, values, ethics, theory and concept</p> <p>Supportive Domain- knowledge and skills to assist the Core Domain</p> <p>Interdisciplinary Domain- relevant theories, concepts & perspectives from other sciences</p>	<p>Social work education goal is to understand social realities for a change.</p> <p>Basic frame work for curriculum</p> <p>a) Values of the profession</p> <p>b) Skills and methods to perform professional task</p> <p>c) Major theories and concepts</p> <p>Open frame with 8 broad areas, 7 core & basic courses. 1 social work practicum. (Ratio 10:6:4. i.e 20, 14 & 8 hrs per week).</p> <p>Broad areas for curriculum: social work intervention, concepts and strategies, social work practicum, social work profession, philosophy and concepts and research.</p> <p>Each broad area to have 4 or more courses. Each course 6-8 units.</p> <p>2 hrs weekly x 15 weeks= 30 hours.</p> <p>Post-graduate program (2 year)</p> <p>Basic & core -80 points</p> <p>Social work practicum -65 points (30 1st yr & 35 2nd year)</p> <p>Research -15 points</p> <p>Optional courses -40 points</p> <p>Total = 200 points</p> <p>Under-graduate (3 years)</p> <p>Basic & core -150 points</p> <p>Social work practicum -90 points</p> <p>Optional courses -60 points</p> <p>Total = 300 points</p>	<p>Grouped under 3 categories.</p> <p>1. Core Subjects- Ideologies, Values and Social Work; Approaches and Methods of Social Work & Governance, Welfare and Development and field work practicum.</p> <p>2. Allied Subjects- Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) draw from Humanities and Social Sciences.</p> <p>Masters of Social work (MSW) Inter-Disciplinary and Applied Social Sciences and other allied sciences.</p> <p>3. Optional Subjects- subjects identified for their relevance in the local context.</p> <p>Specialisations/ Concentrations: BSW- No specialisations/ concentrations</p> <p>MSW-Classification by Approach of Social Work Intervention; Levels of Social Work Intervention; Sector wise issues and Social Work Intervention & Human Rights of Specific Groups</p> <p>Curriculum Structure</p> <p>15 weeks or 90 days per term/ semester and an annual calendar of at least 30 weeks or 180 days. 40 hours per week (7 hours per day for six days a week or 8 hours per day for five days a week).</p>
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Key Recommendation	Para-professional training Recognition of professional social work qualification for jobs Focus should be on Graduate and undergraduate training	Change in syllabi to emphasize on social change and development Lopsided development of programmes at the higher levels of training Council for Social Work Education Setting up Independent Review Committees for every 5 years.	Model Curriculum for social work	Development of common curriculum and evaluation framework both in theory and field work.	Continuing education in social work for qualified social work practitioners and educators, employed or unemployed Field action projects (FAPs) to demonstrate innovative intervention, best practices, participatory training methods and networking with allied government
No. of Institution	09	34	120	46	-----
Key issues highlighted	Benchmarks related to curricula, fieldwork, research, library requirements, recognition of professional social workers qualification for jobs teacher – students ratio	Criteria for social work education		Unit wise syllabus for each course designed Detailed field work practicum for undergraduate and post graduate including learner component, objectives of field work, evaluation criteria. Teacher development programs.	1. Admission Criteria and Procedures 2. Services and Activities for Students 3. Rules for Discipline and Grievance 4. Social Work Career Counselling and Alumni Network

Source: Author's compilation based on UGC review committee reports, CDC report, NAAC self study manual and other sources.

Complex Challenges and Multiple Concerns

Social Work Institutions: Its Growth and Concerns

Oommen, T.K (1987:15) pointed out that social work in countries like the United States of America and the United Kingdom developed to fill the institutional vacuum to address social problems, whereas, in India such a contextualization rooted in social milieu did not happen. Gore (1985) discussed how social work education in India used a western prism to address the issues of individuals, groups and communities without engaging the social and economic system. In other words, socially oppressed and economically deprived sections were not focussed on in social work training (Srivastava, 1999; Ramaiah, 1998). Further, urban centric economic planning has influenced higher education in India and social work education in particular with the establishment of institutions mostly in urban areas (Desai, Narayan, 1998). In 1990s, the structural adjustment programmes helped the exponential growth of private funded social work institutions in the industrial belt cities like Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai. UGC expert committee on social work in the year 2000 noted that 90 per cent of social work institutions are located in the western and southern parts of India whereas only a handful in northern, north eastern and eastern India (UGC, 2000). National Network of Schools of Social Work in its resolution raised its concern on the growth of universities and colleges in urban regions catered to the need of the market with a heavy focus on commercializing its education (TISS, 2012).

This skewed growth has compromised the ethical stand in terms of curriculum, field work training and research. Currently M.A degree programs are marketed into specialisation, concentration models running into multiple streams, online and off campus mode through multiple partnerships. Overall, the majority of institutions are neither distributed geographically nor along the community requirements.

Field Work Training

Being a practice profession, field work training is an important component for young practitioners in social work. Students are trained to comprehend social problems taught in class room through reflective exercise in the field. The Association of Schools of Social Work workshop report in 1981, on field work records that field work must prepare students to: i) render direct service; ii) plan, develop policy and administration related to the delivery service; iii) engage in evaluative research iv) supervise, train and educate personnel required for managing the programmes and services (Mehta, 1981). Echoing

UGC review on social work the National Assessment and Accreditation Council's self study manual on social work institutions prescribes a minimum of 33 % of the aggregate of the total marks to be allotted for field work with at least 15 hours per week (NAAC, 2005). It records many constraints from universities, within school and social welfare agencies for effective implementation of field work programs. Some of the key issues highlighted in the manual are, inability to increase field work hours due to fixed university norms for other disciplines; non consideration of weightage for field work in the overall curriculum even though it absorbs 25-50% of the student's total time and lacunae in documenting experiences and models.

In spite of UGC guidance and regulation on field work the schools in India offer different patterns to organize field work. Various forms of field work practice are being followed across university affiliated colleges, autonomous colleges under state universities and central universities. Concurrent field work which emphasised praxis is reoriented into a block form; field work supervision is neither structured nor systematised; twisting hours of work to suit institutional needs, appointing teaching staff without calculating field work in the curriculum and diverting human resources for other profit oriented work. Overall, there are no agreed standard guidelines on field work practice and recording among schools of social work in India.

Specialization versus Generic Course Debate

The age old debate on specialization versus generic continues even now in India. Currently, social workers in India are trained more in specializations based on 'field settings or agency centric' than 'method based'. 'Concentration' as a new phenomena gained momentum in TISS and very limited schools from 1980's onwards. A Generic cum Specialization pattern is being followed in most of the institutions in India (2 Semesters generic paper and 2 Semesters specialization papers) as recommended by University Grants Commission's first (Specialization) and second (Generic) review committee.

It may be worth recalling the words of Dr. Manshardt to understand the hesitation then and the necessity to introspect the training pattern on par with other professionals. He stated, 'we do not believe in narrow specialization which prepares simply for one type of social work' (Manshardt, 1936:4). He compared social work training to that of medicine and law where a student will take a general course of study and then undergoes a specialization rather than studying heart disorders or gynecology or corporate law. Yet, he failed to underscore the need for doctoral programmes to professionalize social work education like specialities in medicine and law. Less rigour, no standard

curriculum and nil professional regulation has led to skewed development in social work with multiple specializations and varied years of training.

Institutions in recent years promoted demand based specialist courses instead of holistic training and curriculum. To cite the leading schools, the Madras School of Social Work offers more market based non social work courses viz M.Sc Counselling Psychology and an M.A in Development Management (MSSW). TISS on the other hand effectively sidelined the founding philosophy by offering two year thematic courses like M.A social work with children and families; Community Organisation and Development Practice; Criminology and Justice; Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action; Disability Studies and Action; Livelihoods and Entrepreneurship; Mental Health; Public Health; Women-Centred Practice (TISS, 2014).

Personnel Management and Industrial Relations (PMIR) and other specializations

The Factories Act of 1948 mandated labour officers for workers welfare. This statutory and legal requirement further boosted the demand for a specialized course on Personnel Management Industrial Relations (PMIR) away from labour centric training. Only in the late 1950's the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) and the Planning Commission of India felt the need for community workers due to the enormity of problems in India. This was much after The Factories Act of 1948 in which rules under the act included social workers as labour welfare officers as early as 1940s. Unlike other specializations, labour welfare training acquired prominence as it became part of the industrial system with state approval. Due to liberalized economic influence, service based industries influence in 1990's PMIR completely turned into Human Resources Management (HRM). Hence, the original idea of 'Labour Welfare Centric' has changed into 'Management Centric'; welfare of workers to managing workers and from 'Labour Officers' to 'Human Resource Officers'. Demand for the separation of PMIR (now HRM) from social work still persists, due to the nature of the work labour officers perform (now Human Resource Officers) and the type of training required, which is different from social work. Academia in India is deeply divided on including PMIR as part of social work since methods of social work was relevant to dealing with labourers (then) and it became obsolete and irrelevant to handle employees (now). Some of the leading schools of social work in India consciously train students on non PMIR courses. Given all the criticisms it had, PMIR as a specialization is a unique course in social work and it is much indigenized in India since it advocates workers welfare (Kulkarni, 1993). On the demand side, the majority of the

applicants who are first generation learners prefer this specialisation as it is easy for them to get into the corporate ladder on par with MBA graduates. For social work schools it is a way of promoting placement for young graduates. Yet, social workers as service professionals have been taught, researched, intervened and discussed insufficiently among the PMIR specialization.

Conclusion

Social work education in India has experienced multiple realities given the country's cultural, geographical, physical, social, ethnic and linguistic differences. This situates social work education into a peculiar yet challenging milieu in its journey to ensure well being for people. Such a challenge comes from the fact that social work in India has not contributed enough to develop 'Indianness' in its theory and practice. Contextualising curriculum to the present social reality with evidence based practice is a challenge and has not seriously been taken up.

Yet another challenge before Indian Social Work Education is the way academic programs and the curriculum is organised. Given the present social reality we need both 'upstreamists' who would reason out the cause and challenge the existing system but also 'intervenists' who address issues of immediate human deprivation and provide policy perspectives from the servicer user side. These streams should critically engage for a better well being for the people. Also family centered social work intervention, rural social work and facilitating delivery of welfare services was not a priority in social work for many years. Field work is being compromised systematically with no indigenously developed models in recent years.

Another factor that has played a significant role in the development of social work in India is the concentration of institutions in specific regions. Mushrooming of institutions in cities and in the industrial belt, mostly in the southern and western regions of the country led into lop sided development of social work institutions. Commercialising social work education in the form of off campus mode, online mode and distance mode programs became imminent after structural adjustment programs.

Overall, the absence of a Social Work Council is the major impediment in professionalising Social Work Education and training in India. Yet this proposition needs further analysis on the existing councils in the countries that are already established. Also a detailed analysis is required on how the Council responds and position itself on human suffering of the marginalised community. Social work role in India is recognised, catalogued and given prominence in: child related services, mental health field and HIV/AIDS program

implementation. Yet, social work professionals have not yet been able to establish a Council on the line of Medicine, Law, Dental, Accountancy, Nursing, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation due to multiple shortcomings.

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