UNIT 3: BASIC CONCEPTS RELATED TO SOCIAL WORK

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3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- Identify the different concepts closely related to social work
- Discuss what is social service, social welfare and social reform
- Analyze how these concepts are related to social work profession
- Explain what is social justice, human rights, social legislation and social development

3.2 INTRODUCTION

Social Work Social Work as a profession is of recent origin. In the previous unit we have discussed the concept of social work, its objectives, basic assumptions, principles, functions and the methods that form the core of social work profession. As stated, social work is a novice profession, it draws its ideas and values from other concepts and is related to them.

Konopka (1958) has defined social work as an entity representing three clearly distinguished but inter-related parts: a network of social services, carefully developed methods and process 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. Thus in this unit, let us discuss the other concepts closely related to social work like philosophy of social service, welfare, reform was the basic foundations of social work. Social reform, justice, social policy and legislation, human rights, social security and development are all indispensable to social work.

3.3 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:

3.3.1 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 Service stems from the desire to help the needy: Social work deals directly with persons who have problems relating to the social environment.

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.

3.3.2 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.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: How is social service different from social work?

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Q 2: What is the goal of social welfare and administration?

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3.3.3 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.

3.3.4 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.

3.3.5 HUMAN RIGHTS



Human Rights are Universal,indivisible, inalienable and intergenerational.

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.

3.3.6 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.

3.3.7 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.

3.3.8 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.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: What are the three sets of rights as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

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Q 4: State the objectives of social policy and legislation.

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3.4 LET US SUM UP

- 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.

- Social Welfare 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 security 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.
- 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.
- 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 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.



3.5 FURTHER READING

1. Jacob, K.K. (1965) Methods and Fields of Social Work in India. Bombay: Asia Publishing House

2. Misra, P.D. (1994) Social Work: Philosophy and Methods. New Delhi Bhattacharya, Sanjay (3003) Social Work: An Integrated Approach. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications

3.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

Answer 1. The difference between social service and social wok is- 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.On the other hand, social work is a profession that fulfils the objectives of social services. The main aim is to equip individuals with the competence and resources essential for effective social participation.

Answer 2. The ultimate goal of social welfare administration 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.



Answer 3. The Universal Declaration contains three distinct sets of human rights:

a. 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.

b. Economic, social and cultural rights

c. 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.

Answer 4. 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.



3.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q.1: Define social welfare. How has this concept evolved from social service?

Q.2: How does social policy ensure the protection of human rights?

Q.3: How can social development be enhanced through social work?

Q.4: State the significance of welfare administration in social work profession.