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## “Social Work in Gujarat: A Challenging Profession from the Perspective of Educators”

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### Abstract

Education that shapes human in its totality is understood to be the best education. Education changes the life of a person and person becomes better, humble, kind and intelligent through proper guidance and study. In education the educator plays a crucial role. The roles and responsibility of the educator becomes more specifically challenging and moderate. Educator is a crucial part in education and building a better world where peace, serenity and joy prevails. There are several streams of education that matters for the human growth. Social work is an important subject that deals with human existence and life on planet. Social work education is demanding and challenging as well. The study is focused on explaining the social work education in Gujarat which is based on the primary data. The objectives of study are that to identify the challenges of Social Work Education in the state of Gujarat and to study the practices of Social Work Educators in the state of Gujarat. The paper is further highlight the challenges faced by the social work educators in the field of social work education. The educators

are facing many problem and challenges in the social work profession like as lack of job security, lack opportunities of publication, practical exposure for professional development and so on.

**Key Words:** Social Work, Profession, Challenges, Perspective, Educator

### **Introduction:**

India is very lucky to have an awesome starting of professional Social Work underneath the management of Sir Clifford Manshardt, the founder director of its first college of Social Work, now popularly referred to as Tata Institute of Social Sciences at Mumbai. This visionary personality enunciates that expert education in Social Work stands for soundness of crucial concepts of education in the field of social work, for flexibility of method and for a working courting with the entire professional subject in order to supply each perspective and depth to its educational application. While the school, as a graduate organization (on the time of inception) sought to keep excessive academic general, it additionally sought to be eminently realistic, making use of the high-quality of cutting-edge social idea to the answer of the current social problems. He believed that scholarly activities aren't incompatible with simplicity and common sense, and that the professional Social Worker is to expand his potential to provide himself a sensible, skilful and disinterested provider to others. To be eminently realistic, Manshardt propounded that the sports of an excessive grade school of Social Work must fall into three preferred fields: the Academic Curriculum encompassing adequate knowledge of human nature, appreciation of environmental background, an adequate philosophy and theory of normal family members and expertise of all different available resources of alleviation; practical work or field work and social research that's each scholarly and accurate at the same time as being eminently realistic coping with the ordinary problems of social existence.

Social work is an international profession and similarly social work education internationally has always embraced both academic and practical components. Social work education comprises of a theoretical component taught in the classroom and field- based education involving integration of the academic aspect and practice. Fieldwork, which is also known as field instruction, field placement, field education, practicum or internship is therefore an integral component of social work education. In India, Social Work Education, for professional social work started in 1936. But, it has not yet, developed its own teaching material to train the students to function effectively and efficiently as professional social workers. In the words of M. M. Desai, "A deficiency of Social Work Education, that most educators admit is, its heavy reliance on foreign literature and the relative paucity of Indian case-material. One of the main roles of the education system is to adequately contribute in national development (Shah 1981:1). The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. The system has many concerns like access, equity and relevance, re-orientation with emphasis on values, ethics and quality of higher education, finance and management, assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These

issues are important for the country which intends to use higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge-based information society of the 21st century (Nigavekar 2003).

When the educators, practitioners and students are speaking approximately social work as a profession like medicinal drug, regulation, and engineering etc. The professors of scientific university or university exercise their career by using travelling wards of health facility at the side of the medical students, professors of engineering university contain in exercise and professors of Regulation University also exercise their career and update their know-how tiers, enhance their competencies to cope with the issues. In social work, the holistic view on teaching, exercise and research is lacking very a good deal, majority Social Work Educators are found to be comfortable in conventional classroom teaching and rarely found in practice and research domains.

Social workers are experts who aim to beautify general properly-being and help meet simple and complex needs of communities and people. Social workers work with many distinctive populations and sorts of humans particularly that specialize in individuals who are prone, oppressed, and living in poverty. Depending on their forte, task identify and region of employment, a social employee can be required to take part in legislative processes that frequently bring about the formation of social policies. They lean on social work values and standards, in addition to educational research to carry out their paintings. Social workers are knowledgeable and skilled to deal with social injustices and obstacles to their patron's average well-being. Some of those encompass poverty, unemployment, discrimination and lack of housing. They also guide client and groups who're dwelling with disabilities, substance abuse problems, or experience domestic conflicts.

### **Review of Literature**

Ranjana (2009) found that Low income and process stagnation, clean burnouts, high turn-over are some of the crucial problems that would be resolved if we're able to deliver standardization in the social work education and practice and at the equal time work an acceptable and advantageous image of social work profession in the country. Paying Meager Salaries to Social Work Teachers result in bad high-quality of education, practicum and research and excellent practices can't be followed.

A renowned Indian sociologist Singh (2006) depicted the truth of Indian society within the following manner. As a nation, India may be very diverse in cultural traits. Influenced via the West, it's far pluralistic and democratic with numerous political ideologies. Consequently, the Indian social work experts are confronted with an extremely complex reality. There is interplay of many socio, cultural, monetary, political and even geographical factors inside and from one place to the alternative. People within India are divided alongside ethnic, linguistic, cultural, nearby, caste and religious lines. India has extra than 2000 ethnic groups and sub groups. There are 4693 communities, which consist of numerous hundreds of endogamous organizations, speaking 325 functioning languages and writing 25 exceptional scripts. With 1.19 billion population size, it is characterized by using a multi-ethnic, multicultural, multi lingual and multi spiritual surroundings that makes the society surprisingly various. To add to the complexity, 72.2 percent of the population lives in about 638,000 villages and the ultimate 27.8 percent in over 5100 towns and over 380 city agglomerations.

According to UGC there are 250 schools/departments of social work in India. Most of them not doing something for the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) within the form of conducting workshops, organizing seminars, doing research, engaging in survey, begging field motion projects from investment businesses, taking students for examine excursions to out of the nation. Through subject movement tasks/discipline work labs on the departments/schools cause the increase opportunity to the personnel, learning opportunity to researchers and college students.

Thomas (2010) stated that we want to standardize the first-rate of education and training that are provided by using several colleges of social paintings across the United States of America. These social work educational institutions fluctuate from every other in phrases of curricula, well-known direction vs. Specialization supplied, sports, consciousness, education inputs of fieldwork additives and so on. There have to be minimum preferred of education and fieldwork practicum inputs supplied to students in those establishments.

### **Objectives:**

- To understand Social Work Education in the state of Gujarat
- To identify the challenges of Social Work Education in the state of Gujarat
- To study the practices of Social Work Educators in the state of Gujarat
- To recommend the steps to improve the Social Work Education in the state of Gujarat

### **Research Methodology:**

The present study has used the interview schedule to collect data from the field. The universe of the study is Gujarat State. The researcher has taken up mix method. The study consist all educators of the all institutions imparting social work education in the state of Gujarat considering all universities named Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University, Sardar Patel University, Kutch University, Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar University, Saurashtra University, VNSGU, Gujarat University, Ganpat University, Govind Guru University, MSU, Parul University, Navrachna University, C. U. Shah University, Gujarat Vidhyapith. The study has been involved all the educators of social work profession of the Gujrat State with number of respondents 177 educators.

### **Social Wok Education in Gujarat:**

In Gujarat Social Work Education started in 1949 with the establishment of Faculty of Social Work at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara. In 1967 Gujarat Vidhyapith started at Ahmedabad founded on the Gandhinan Principles. Both these institute remained pioneer for several decades. Both have different medium of instructions. Faculty of Social Work imparts education in English language and Gujarat Vidyapith in Gujarati language. Later on in 1997 to 2000 four colleges were started to impart social Work Education in Gujarat. Mushrooming of Social Work Education irrupted in the period of 2001; almost 45 institutes were started in between 2001 to 2010. This could be due to liberalisation in establishment of the educational institutions.

## Result & Discussion

### Academic Challenges

**Lack of Research and Publication:-** Research is a basic component to create knowledge in any field. Social Work is a field which is more dependable on research and action. It is found that the Social Work Educators have lack of interest in Research and publication and due to this there is a lack of indigenous material in social work field. So the social work educators do not get exposure to understand the terminology. A field survey conducted by the researcher and was found that the number of book published by the social work educator is found as below;

The study found that the majority of 93.8 per cent (n=166) of the respondents haven't published any book at the international level, while 6.2 per cent (n=11) of the respondents have published one book at the international level. Additionally, it can be found that the most of 14.7 per cent (n=26) of the respondents have published 2 books at the national level. While 3.4 per cent (n=06) of the respondents have published only one book, 1.7 per cent (n=03) of the respondents have published more than 15 books, 1.1 per cent (n=02) of the respondents have published 3 books at the national level. Whereas 79.1 per cent (n=140) of the respondents haven't published any book that is why it is not applicable here. It can also be signified that the majority of 93.8 per cent (n=166) of the respondents haven't published any book at the international level, while 6.2 per cent (n=11) of the respondents have published one book at the international level. It is crystal clear that the number of Research Papers publication in journals and other sources. Research papers indicate that the educators identify the thrust area and conduct study. But it is seen that there are no research publications of the educators.

### Educational Institutions:

In Gujarat only few colleges have Government status most of them are private or Self Finance College. In Gujarat there are 14 universities. In 14 universities there are more than 67 colleges have social work course. Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University and Maharaja KrishnakumarSinhji Bhavnagar University have highest number 13 affiliated colleges compare to other universities. There are 4 Deemed universities and 1 Central university in Gujarat. Compare to other states the Government of Gujarat has invested very little in the field of Social Work Education. There are only two colleges which have the Social Work Education managed by state government. These institutes have only master level course whereas there are no institutions imparting bachelor level course in social work.

In Self Finance College the focus of the management is not much towards research or Education betterment. Social Work Research project was mandatory in some ISWE (Institutes of Social Work Education) for all the MSW students and some ISWE gave choice to the students to select research or term paper or other elective subjects to gain knowledge of specific issues. Students opting for research study were expected to select topics, conduct research and submit their thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the PG degree.



## Lack of Job Security

The study found that the majority of 57.6 per cent (n=102) of the respondents are doing temporary (regular) job, whereas temporary (contractual) are 28.8 per cent (n=51), and very less percent are permanent job with per cent value of 13.6 per cent (n=24). It is significant that majority of the recruited teachers in Social Work Education are Temporary Regular teachers. Compare to permanent teachers they are very few. Hence, it can be stated that there is no job security of Social Work Educators in Gujarat.

## Field Challenges:

**Lack of Field Work Supervision:** Social work Educators are engaged in many activities in institutions for the overall development of the students. The activities are of curriculum, extra-curricular. Social Work educators also assist in administrative functioning of the institution. But most of the time their efficiency is utilised in administrative than field.

**Updating of syllabi is not regular:** Every course should be in line to the modern market demands. The up gradation of the syllabus in accordance to the field enriches the profession in a grand way. Often it is seen that the social work institutions do not regularly update their syllabi in a regular span. This is a huge challenge to the social work educators.

**Lack of Specialization:** -Social Work Education in most of the institution is generic. It covers all the general components of the social work. Here, the other side of few institutions provide specialisation in social work. Hence, market demands of specialisation demands expertise. In Gujarat the social work institutions do not have specialisation.

**No proper criteria for field work evaluation:** -Evaluation is essential for improvements of any course or subject. Social Work education comprises theory as well as practice. Evaluation plays a crucial role in theory as well as practice.

## Practices of Social Work Educators in the State of Gujarat:

**Curriculum** Generally curriculum of social work institution is designed by the university through board of studies. The approval is done by the university and implemented at the institution level. Generally every three years the syllabi are revised and implemented.

**Field Work** Field work in social work plays a significant role in training and connecting students to field. There are four common segments where students are placed namely Rural/Urban, NGOs, Medical and Industry. Most of the social work institutions practice field work twice a week, wherein four days of classroom teaching takes place and two days in the field. Most of the institutions follow university criteria for the internal fieldwork evaluation. Most of the institutions have departmental or college criteria for internal field work evaluation. Student are evaluated on the on the basis of Assignment, Field Work Report and Viva.

**Evaluation of Theory:-** Evaluation is an important component of any activity. There are two types of evaluation in social work practice. Internal evaluation is done by the institutions and external evaluation is conducted by the respective university. Internal evaluation carries 30 marks and external evaluation counts 70 marks.

**Study tour rural camp:** Study tours and rural camps are part and parcel of the social work education practice. These practices provide the understanding to the teachers and the students about the different region. Most of the institutions carry study tour and rural camp to expand the mental horizon of the students.

### **Suggestions**

- ❖ Research and publications are important and should be fostered in social work education. The teachers and students should be provided with conducive environment to undertake research for students' and societal upliftment. Research cell should be established in the social work institutions. The findings of the research should be published in various sources like newspaper, journal, magazine and periodicals.
- ❖ There should be social work association that unites the social work institutions and educators. The state government should establish government aided social work colleges in good number. The government colleges should be covering representation of all the areas of the state to recognize social work profession. The government should initiate institutions of bachelor as well as master level.
- ❖ Security in all the sphere of life is wanted and needed. The job security should be given to the social work professionals in social work institutions. The job security may provide growth opportunity and long term service to the field. The long term service may assist the social work profession to grow immensely.
- ❖ Social work is a practice based and an academic discipline. The social work educators should be provided with proper guidelines to train the scholars. There should be common indigenous guidelines to guide and evaluate the students pertaining to their field work practice. The university and the social work institution should look after the field work practice guidelines.
- ❖ Periodical change in syllabi should be carryout by the university and the social work institutions. The board of study and the social work association should assess the societal need, market demands and indigenization of social work practice.
- ❖ Social Work Institutions and Universities should make provision for pursuing specialization in social work education. The specialization may assist in development of the profession and society.

### **Conclusion:**

To be conclude that the way the world and life style of the people of the community are changing, social work becomes all the more effective. The need of monitoring and revamping of social work education is in demand. Research and publication improve the quality of social work educators. Research and publication understand the demand of the society and bridging the gap between the market need and curriculum. The motivation and appreciation to the social work educators is needed. It is high time to understand the society and societal need and reflections in the social work education. This study is based on the primary methods with using mix method in the state of Gujarat. The objectives of the study are to understand Social Work Education in the state of Gujarat and

to identify the challenges of Social Work Education in the state of Gujarat. There are many challenges faced by the educators in the state of Gujarat which are lack of job security, lack of payment, less publication because of they are not getting adequate opportunities and leaning to publish a book or article. Educators are not facing problem of lack of platform of practical exposure in the field. The paper is tried to consolidate the issues and demanding situations, motives for those and suggestions for addressing the ones troubles and demanding situations. Teachers, practitioners and learners must come together with collective vision and project to triumph over all those issues and demanding situations to bolster the social work education and education in Gujarat.

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