

Renu decided to take up the case to help the family. As the family had not asked the help, Renu had to explore the particulars of the family and gather other relevant information very slowly and discreetly (quietly) so that no member of the family felt offended. She learnt the following details about the family.

The Social Casework Process

Renu realised the importance of applying different principles of casework to be able to establish positive relationship not only with Kala, who Renu identified as her client, but also with Mrs. G and Mohan, Kala's husband. Only then could she hope to help Kala. She accepted Mrs. G, Kala, and Mohan; adopted a non-judgemental attitude; created an atmosphere in which the persons concerned could share their experiences and feelings freely (Principle of purposeful expression of feelings). She was careful not to allow her initial sympathetic attitude towards Kala and anger against Mrs. G to bias her and affect her exploration work (Controlled emotional involvement). She had to keep an open mind to gather and interpret information.

Study

Renu interviewed Mrs. G in her shop. She visited Kala in the presence of Mrs. G and by involving both of them in conversation learnt various facts about their situations. Once or twice she met Mohan along with his mother to observe their interaction. (Using tools of interviewing and home visit.)

Mrs. G in late forties, lost her husband when her two sons were still small. Her elder son had shifted, after marriage, to his own establishment in another *basti*. Mrs. G owned the single room tenement, acquired by her as a result of the slum clearance scheme of the municipal authorities. She also owned a small shop near her home where she sold basic items of daily needs.

Her younger son Mohan, aged 20 years, was employed as a worker in a factory nearby. He had left school after studying till class four. Mohan was under awe of his mother and obeyed her completely.

Kala was 16 years old and belonged to a village in the district of Jhansi, in the State of Uttar Pradesh. She had studied up to 7th standard and had been forced to leave studies. Kala was not used to cooking on kerosene oil stove. In the village, they used *chullah*, with wood and cow dung cakes as fuel. There was a big family with something going on all the time. She had been very scared in the city, very unsure of herself. Her mother-in-law never liked anything that she did. Her husband did not bother about her or her health problems. She had been feeling weak and sick for quite some time but had not been taken to the doctor. Kala had

become depressed and lost her appetite. She never had the energy to do work quickly or properly. Mrs. G did not agree with these observations.

Assessment

After reflecting on the facts (objective facts and feelings about those facts and experiences), Renu arrived at the following inferences tentatively:

- Kala was from a village and found living in the city stressful;
- She was perhaps not prepared for marriage, being quite young;
- Kala found herself under constant scrutiny of her mother-in-law, Mrs. G, their family consisting of only three members;
- Her sickness could be more due to depression than actual physical reasons (psychosomatic symptoms);
- In any case, it was advisable to get her medical care to eliminate any physical causes of sickness;
- Kala perhaps expected more support from her husband which was not there. Mohan just did not react to the situation;
- He did not want to be blamed or nagged by the mother for having supported the wife as had been the case with his elder brother;
- Mrs. G had felt hurt when her older son had left her;
- She wished to keep her younger son and daughter-in-law under her control;
- She felt insecure. After long widowhood and its associated problems, she felt that she had the right to demand obedience from her son and daughter-in-law;
- She wished to prove to the community people that she had full control over her household.

Plan of Action: Having achieved positive relationship with Mrs. G and Kala, Renu considered the following actions for initiating the process of helping the family:

a) Medical Care

- 1) Convince Mrs. G to allow Kala to go to hospital for proper medical check-up.
- 2) To persuade Mohan to accompany Kala to the hospital, otherwise offer to escort Kala for medical check-up.

This will also confirm whether Renu had really won the family's trust.

b) Facilitating Role Transition

- 1) Help Kala accept her new roles of the daughter-in-law and that of wife.
- 2) Provide her emotional support and an opportunity to express her feelings in a safe and encouraging professional relationship with Renu.

c) Improving Interpersonal Relationships within the Family

- 1) Help Mrs. G understand difficulties of a young bride from a small village;
- 2) In a joint session, help Mrs. G spell out her expectations from Kala and let the latter express her anxieties;
- 3) Help the two women develop bonds of affection.

d) Use of Social Interaction for Kala's Resocialization

- 1) Persuade Mrs. G to let Kala join women's group to increase her interaction with the community people;
- 2) In case Mrs. G agreed to this suggestion of Renu, this had to be done very cautiously because women's curiosity and comments may create complications. That may undo all that Renu had accomplished. (Community pressures may have both positive and negative influence.)

e) Assertiveness Training for Mohan

- 1) To try for a breakthrough with Mohan and help him to become more assertive without being disrespectful towards his mother (A tall order! Renu felt)
- 2) Mohan could be persuaded to join some group of men in the community or at his work place;
- 3) Help Mohan take on the role of husband and feel responsible for Kala.

f) Use of Community Resources

- 1) Identify some woman in the community who was friendly with Mrs. G and could help in reducing Mrs. G's antagonistic attitude towards Kala;
- 2) Enlist help of such a contact by ensuring that this woman understands Renu's intentions.

g) Professional Relationship as an Intervention

Intervention

How many of the tasks listed above could actually be done depended, of course, on the family members reaction to the first task decided upon. Renu could not take her rapport with Mrs. G for granted. She had to continuously work on maintaining relationship with all the members. Relationship itself could be therapeutic (healing).

Evaluation

Kala carried on the medical treatment prescribed. Kala started talking more with her mother-in-law and took pains to cook food according to the latter's instructions. Mohan went with Kala to the hospital couple of times and worked in his mother's shop to enable her to take rest. Kala attended the *kirtan* along with Mrs. G. Mrs. G showed off her daughter-in-law proudly in the women's group. Kala had a good voice and sang devotional songs in the group, which were appreciated by other women.

Termination and Follow-up

As the things were under control and interpersonal relationships within the family improved, Renu reduced her visits to the family. As she continued to work in the *basti*, she would greet them occasionally but terminated the case.

Check Your Progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answers.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) What social problems are reflected in the client's situation?

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2) How did the worker win the trust of the client's mother-in-law?

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3) Who is the real client in the family casework? Support your answer with reasons.

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4) From the case, what is the kind of relationship of the family under study with other families in the community?

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Assignments – II

- a) In case Mohan had been addicted to alcohol or drugs, what would be your action plan?
- b) If the husband and mother-in-law had been beating Kala (domestic violence), what would your action plan (interventions) be?
- c) What legal provisions are there for dealing with cases of domestic violence?
- d) In the light of the concept of “empowerment”, work out an action plan for helping Kala.

- e) As a caseworker at a remand home, you are required to work with Mohan/ Mrs. G. Critically review the use of the principles of acceptance and non-judgmental attitude in such a case.

Write down your answers and discuss with your field instructor.

2.7 LET US SUM UP

We have seen that social casework practice is determined by the client (person), his/her social environment (context), the problem and/or concern for which the client needs professional intervention (problem), and the setting in which the worker is employed and where the client meets the worker (place).

Study of 'Person' and 'Problem' has two dimensions: 1) Needs and 2) Life Span (developmental tasks and social roles concepts) perspectives. Understanding goals, services and service delivery systems, and resources of human service organisations (Place), in which the worker is employed, is very necessary for the caseworker to utilise casework process for helping the clients.

You have also gone through a brief description of different client groups and settings where these client groups receive casework services.

The process of social casework (study, assessment, intervention, evaluation, and termination and follow-up) has been illustrated through two cases.

The illustrations and the questions raised in assignments will help you in appreciating various factors that are likely to influence assessments you arrive at and interventions you may decide to offer. The illustrations also sensitise you towards use of some of the principles and the skills in the social casework process.

You have also been able to get some idea of settings and areas of social casework practice to understand and appreciate its scope and relevance.

2.8 KEY WORDS

Empowerment : According to Barker's Social Work Dictionary, empowerment is "the process of helping individuals, families, groups, and communities increase their personal, interpersonal, socio-economic, and political

strengths and influence towards improving their circumstances.” Empowerment counters powerlessness and oppression.

- Proactive** : Reaching out to the clients without waiting for them to first seek help. It is opposite to the clinical approach.
- Rehabilitation** : Rehabilitation for persons with physical or mental disability means ‘restoration to the fullest physical, mental, vocational, and economic usefulness of which they are capable’.
- Dehumanising** : Degrading; not considering service users as human beings, worthy of respect irrespective of their status in life.
- Multidimensional** : Having many layers and aspects.

2.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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2.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

1) The worker accepted the client and with genuine concern for her, collected only the relevant data, the information which would help her understand the client's context and the problem/s affecting the treatment plan of the doctor. She found that the patient's anxiety arose from two main sources:

- a) Apprehensions about risk to life or post-operative complications
- b) Problems due to hospitalisation

These anxieties made the patient resistant to the medical treatment prescribed to her.

- 1) The worker decided an action plan and undertook the following interventions:
 - Giving accurate information about her medical problem and the chances of recovery.
 - Identifying and mobilising family resources (including kinship network-relatives).
 - Utilising resources at the disposal of social work department. Hospitals' Social Welfare Departments generally have a number of funds, concessions, free tests or medicines, contacts with other social welfare agencies, list of people available for working on wages, arrangements for temporary stay in or near the hospital and so on.
- 2) The worker was guided by the principles of acceptance, client's right to self-determination. She used the techniques of assurance, mobilising community/agency resources.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) Various socially constructed realities were responsible for the problem in question:

- Kala was much below the legal age for marriage. Despite her in-laws being in the city for a long time, they still followed many of the traditions, particularly related to marriage, of their native village.
 - She also had not been prepared for the role expectations she had to fulfill in her matrimonial home. Transition from a joint family set-up to a small family also had its own stresses.
 - Her husband's family had migrated to the city a long time back. Urbanised life-style and family norms had influenced her husband, while she remained socialised in village life.
- 2) Using the principles of acceptance, non-judgmental attitude and control of personal emotional reactions (maintaining objectivity), as also developing empathy with all the three members and communicating the same made it possible. Effective use of professional relationship proved to be important throughout.
 - 3) While the worker started her work on account of her concern for Kala, she realised quite early that all the three members needed help in achieving effective social functioning. As such the entire family became the client of the worker. The objective was to achieve harmony and positive interpersonal relationships, which would lead to emotional well-being of all the family members.
 - 4) The family was well integrated in the community they were living in. It is clear from the participation of the mother-in-law and later the daughter-in-law in women's group. Also, a neighbour was willing to assist the worker in her interventions.

UNIT 3: SOCIAL CASE WORK IN EDUCATIONAL SETTING

* Dr. Rose Nembiakkim

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3.2 Social Case work in Educational Settings

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3.4 Standards for Social Case Work in Educational Setting

3.5 Let Us Sum Up

3.6 Keywords

3.7 Suggested Readings

3.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the relevance of social case work in educational setting;
- Know about the current trends and challenges of social case work in educational setting; and
- Chalk out the future prospects for social case work in educational setting.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

‘The pen is mightier than the sword’, this statement holds true in all respect and hence, people all over seek to be educated as education is a lifelong learning process and is a fundamental human right. This is because educated people make informed choices and become dependent on their ability to take a decision. However, attaining complete and wholesome education is harder than it may seem. Bureaucratic functioning of schools, widening teacher-students ratio, class differences within the classroom, parent-child relationship, etc., can make individual learning impossible. The education system has realised the importance of seeking help from professionals other than teachers to meet the growing demands of the ever changing youth. These pupil specialist-social workers, psychologists,

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physician, special educators, etc., help the school to achieve the goals of wholesome education.

The social worker in particular has seen an increasing demand in the schools. Social worker and educator have common goals. Both aim to bring about holistic development in all learners, so that they become productive adults. Social worker's prime focus is on the individual child and his environment. In order to deal with the problems manifested by the child (client) the social worker uses social case work method. Social case work is a method of social work practised by a large number of social workers in different problem settings. It is based on knowledge, understanding and use of techniques that are skillfully applied to help people to solve problems. Social case work is a method of helping people individually through one to one relationship that taps personal and other resources for coping with problems. In recent times, social case work in educational setting has gained importance due to the changing pattern of adolescents in the educational set up. Comparatively, coming to school for help with the child's problem does not carry stigma that may have been associated with visiting a clinic or any other agencies.

Nowadays, parents are more competitive than the children themselves and therefore, there is a greater readiness to utilise the services of a qualified social case worker in the school.

For a more professional term we shall use the term 'client' to refer to students having problems in the educational setting.

3.2 SOCIAL CASE WORK IN EDUCATIONAL SETTING

The social case worker is a qualified professional who possesses the knowledge, skills and experience needed to work with individuals to solve their problems. These case managements may be done in different settings such as education, health, industry, etc. In this unit, we shall discuss the role of a social case worker with specific reference to the educational settings.

The case worker in an educational setting may be employed in schools, colleges, universities and other learning institutes. In such a setting, the social case worker works with the individual clients and his/ her parents to solve the problems. If need be, the teachers and the peer group and other significant people in particular extended family, siblings, etc., may be involved. It may not be the school policy to work with the parents always to solve the child's problems encountered in the school, but the professional knowledge of the importance of

parent-child relationship in the development of the child makes working with parents' imperative.

In recent times, problems faced by the clients have been addressed more religiously and schools all over have started to take an initiative to employ school social worker to deal with the clients' problem. This may be because the issues and problems faced by clients in the new age are more diverse and may be more complicated which then affects their academic, social and personal well being. Problems faced by the school going adolescents may include a) psychological b) academic c) social/ behavioural and d) emotional/personal. Addressing problems at an early stage helps to build a mentally and emotionally strong individual. The social case worker before working with the child assesses his/ her strengths in coping with the problems and may devise coping strategies to help the child. In most cases it may be best to work with the child alone but in certain case parents' involvement and active participation may expedite the healing process.

1. Psychological

Adolescence is a time of opportunity and change but also of vulnerabilities. The problems faced by adolescents during these times are not discussed openly in the society for fear of rejection. Some common psychological fears among clients are examination related stress, psychiatric problems which may not be diagnosed initially, over indulgence in technology out of fear of missing out on information, childhood abuse, taking the life of crimes to meet certain standards and even thoughts of suicide or attempted suicide due to inability to cope in school. These problems may take time to manifest in the clients but eventually when the academic performance gets affected, the cause may surface. Here, the social case worker works with not only the clients but also the parents to first evaluate the cause of psychological trauma. Once the cause is known the next step is to prevent further psychological trauma. The main aim of the social case worker is to improve the mental health of the victim and ensure perceptions of safety. The social case worker ensures safety by proving timely interventions with the help of the parents and this may be an on-going process. Here, both the parents and the child work together and respond to the psychological needs. The case worker along with the parents then evaluates the effectiveness of the crisis intervention and chalk out future interventions for the overall development of the child.

2. Academic

With the technological development in the society and a vast network of world wide web opened to clients, the most common difficulty faced by adolescents of school going age is academic in nature, i.e., retention of what is being taught and concentration, failing in subjects, under performance in class, etc. As compared to before, there are many things which take away the concentration of school going children in terms of virtual games, online sites and various other multimedia options, and books then take a back seat. This then affects the performance of the child in the class. A studious client may end up failing in most of the subjects due to lack of parental control at home and may end up being an under performer in school. There are also clients with special education needs. They may have conditions like dyslexia, autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, etc. These clients lack social adjustment skills, motivation, and self-management skills. In such a situation, the social case worker is of great relevance in the educational setting and helps the clients by teaching them effective study habits, effective memorising skills, effective note taking skills, handling examination anxiety, time management and relaxation training sessions. Here, the support of the parents becomes necessary in order to help the client maintain the exercises given by the social case worker and adhere to it.

3. Social/ Behavioural

Man is a social animal and cannot do without the help and support of another human being. We have studied that family is the first social unit of a child but what was not informed is that if the family is dysfunctional and disorganised then the child may grow up to be socially awkward and end up believing what he/she does or how she/ he behave is normal. Such behaviour may lead to more problems in the school where children from different family background and parenting practices come together. This may affect the performance of the child academically and she/he may be an under achiever in the school and outside and affect his/her relation with the peer group. In worse situations, it may even lead to the self-isolation of the child. The child may then grow up to be a social embarrassment for the family. Here, the role of the parents is more important than that of the child but the social case worker may have difficulty in working with the parents if the parents are not willing to accept that there is a problem in the first place. For the social worker, working with the parents is of

great help as it will help understand the root cause of the problem and work towards developing coping strategies for the child. In such a situation, the social case worker may involve the peer group (classmates) of the child and/or the school through some activities so that a bond is created and helps the child to come out of his/her social awkwardness.

4. Emotional/personal

Every human being has emotions, some are able to express it and some keep it to themselves. Those who are able to express emotions tend to have a better personal life and those who are unable to express emotions-good or bad-have problems in adjusting to life situations. Similarly, children also have emotional problems which may arise due to various factors such as: inability to handle stress, difficulty in handling negative emotions-anger, fear, rejections, etc, broken family, relationship issues, inability to handle stress of failure in class and to take decisions regarding career, subject choice, etc., substance abuse, victim of child abuse and so on. When a child is confronted with such a problem, his/her academic performance gets affected and gradually his/her relation with the peer group and eventually with the family gets worse. Some of the minor problems faced by children may be due to lack of proper coping skills and the social case worker may resort to teaching them life skills which may act as a preventive measure. For effective treatment, the social case worker must therefore be clear that his/her responsibility is to help the child to bring about a change in his/her attitude towards life and situations. The social case worker may conduct specific prevention programmes and deal with child abuse victims, children coming from broken family and substance abuse issues by involving the parents and the child in question. She/he may use selective/targeted strategies and may include intensive individualised interventions and refer the child to experts such as clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, etc.

Check your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer

b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Discuss the academic problems faced by students in today's contemporary time.

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3.3 TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS REQUIRED BY SOCIAL CASE WORKER IN EDUCATIONAL SETTING

Dealing with children requires a certain amount of expertise and hence it is not everyone's cup of tea to deal with children in educational settings with their myriad issues-big or small. A social case worker working in the educational setting should have set techniques and skills. We shall discuss the some of them here.

- Purpose and concern for client system-The social case worker should have a concern to find out problems of clients in the school, must talk to teachers and/or observe client and try an identify children with problems and help them solve the same. He/she should initiate the process by establishing a good rapport and aim at individualised action.
- Expectations- Expectation may be at three levels:
 - a) Expectation of the social case worker from the child with whom he/she does the intervention. This expectation may be in terms of how the social case worker feels about the child's ability to cope with the problems and the strategies.
 - b) Expectations of the child from the social case worker. This expectation may arise out of doubt from the child as to whether the social case worker will be able to help with the problem or not.
 - c) Expectation from the educational settings. This expectation may be from both the social case worker and the child as to how much positive support would they receive from the educational institution.
- Accuracy of empathy and clear communication- Empathy is the ability to understand other's feelings but it should never be confused with sympathy. The social case worker should have the ability to communicate effectively with the clients and perceive their problems sensitively.
- Genuineness and acceptance-The social case worker must be practical in nature and should not get overwhelmed with emotions. He/she must show and express genuine concern and have an honest approach towards the client.

- Authority-Showing empathy and an honest approach do not mean the social case worker should not be strong mentally. He/she should be in control and be able to handle any problem or difficult situation. He/she should possess strength and be helpful, and have knowledge and experience to guide the clients towards holistic cure.
- Active listening- During the initial sessions, most communication between a client and the social case worker in the educational settings tend to be non-verbal communication and this is the time when the social case worker has to be an active listener in terms of identifying the emotions that is being communicated to him/her and even the verbal messages.
- Paraphrasing- Sometimes during a session the clients may not be able to openly discuss or find a word to describe his/her situation. The social case worker can reword, restate or even summarise what has been communicated to achieve better clarity.
- Interpretation- The social case worker must reach beyond the stated problem and examine more deeply the problem situation at hand. This may provide the client with an alternative way of viewing the present problem and put the focus on the clients' strength.
- Self disclosure- A social case workers' disclosure of personal information to the clients may be sometimes therapeutic and help improve the client's emotional or mental state only if used methodically. But if use incorrectly it may signify incompetence and hamper the healing process.

Confrontation-This enables a social case worker to point out certain discrepancies to the clients but it should be done co-operatively. Such confrontation can happen only when trust and honest relationship is established between the case worker and the client.

Check your Progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Why should a social case worker be an active listener?

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3.4 STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL CASE WORK IN EDUCATIONAL SETTING

The social case workers have to maintain certain standards to work with clients in the educational settings. Without proper standards the social case work will not yield any positive result and it may further hamper the personal growth of the client. The following are few of the standards to be maintained while working with the clients in the educational settings:

- a) The social case worker should maintain the confidentiality with regard to the issues of the clients. For the case worker, the client's interest should be of utmost priority. The problems discussed in private should be kept confidential.
- b) The social case worker must put into practice the professional skills, knowledge and competence attained to work towards the progress of the clients whose interests are of primary concern.
- c) The social case worker must ensure that there is complete involvement of the clients in all the intervention stages while dealing with their issues and if the need arises, the parents of the clients should also be effectively involved.
- d) The social case worker should actively participate at the client's level to provide for and coordinate the intervention strategies towards the treatment of the clients and his/her family.

There are also certain standards that have to be maintained by the social case worker while working in the system, i.e., educational setting, while delivering the intervention plan. Let us discuss some of them here.

1. The social case worker in the educational settings may have to intervene at the service system level to support the existing case at hand and to expand the supply of and improve access to needed services.
2. The social case worker has to be aware about the available resource and budgetary limitation in the educational settings and has to be responsible while undertaking the case work functions and activities.
3. The social case worker should participate in the evaluative and quality assurance activities that are designated to monitor the effectiveness of the service delivery system. He/she should ensure professional accountability.

Let us now discuss some of the personal standards that have to be maintained by the social case worker.

- a) The most important standard to be maintained is the qualification. The social case worker should be a qualified social case worker accredited by the council on social work education and should possess the knowledge, skills, sensitivity, empathy and experience necessary to successfully perform case work.
- b) The social case worker should maintain and develop intra-professional relationship in the educational setting among the different teachers and staff.
- c) The social case worker should take up reasonable caseload which will allow him/her to effectively plan, monitor and evaluate.
- d) The social case worker must provide for an effective intervention plan without putting too much burden on the parents or the client in particular for the smooth recovery of the client.

Check your Progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) List any two standards to be maintained while working with the clients in the educational settings by the social case worker.

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3.5 LET US SUM UP

Social case work is a professional service carried out by professional case worker based on scientific principles. The social case worker in an educational setting is a qualified professional who works towards creating a relation between the client and the school. Social case work in the educational setting reduces the effect of environmental, social and institutional barriers that may impede the academic progress and success of a student. A social case worker is an integral part of the education system and provides support to students in elementary, middle and high school and beyond. They have been employed by the

educational institutions across the world since ages but in recent times, their importance has been recognised. In this advanced and diverse society most students tend to encounter challenges beyond the teachers and parents management and comprehension. Such students need support, guidance and opportunities to share their problems and be provided with an effective intervention alternative which can be provided only by the social case worker in the educational settings. The presence of the social case worker in the educational institutes also minimises the role of the parents but here, parents may also be involved depending on the intensity of the problems.

3.6 KEYWORDS

Education : The process of acquiring the body of knowledge and skills. It leads to lifelong learning.

Social Case Work : Social case work is a method of helping people individually through one to one relationship that taps personal and other resources for coping with problems.

Social Case Worker : A qualified professional who possesses the knowledge, skills and experience needed to work with individuals to solve their problems.

Empathy : The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Paraphrasing : Express the meaning of (something written or spoken) using different words to achieve greater clarity.

Confrontation : A hostile or argumentative situation or meeting between two or more people.

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3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

1. The retention of what is being taught and concentration, failing in subjects, under performance in class, etc., are few of the academic problems students face in educational institutes. As compared to before, there are many things which take away the concentration of school going children in terms of virtual games, online sites and various other multimedia options, and books then take a back seat. This then affects the performance of the child in the class. Thus, the major problems faced by school children are the following:
 - a. Psychological,
 - b. Social / behavioural,
 - c. Academic, and
 - d. Emotional / Personal

Check Your Progress II

1. The client may not open up easily to the case worker and it may take a while before relationship of trust is established between the client and the case worker. Also, during the initial sessions, most communication in the educational settings tend to be non-verbal communication and this is the time when the social case worker has to be an active listener in terms of identifying the emotions that is being communicated to him/her including the verbal messages.

Check Your Progress III

1. The following two standards may be maintained while working with the clients in the educational settings by the social case worker:

- a. Maintaining the confidentiality with regard to the issues of the clients.
- b. Putting into practice the professional skills, knowledge and competence while working with the client.



UNIT 4: SOCIAL CASE WORK IN INDUSTRIAL SETTING

* Prof. Rose Nambiakkim

Contents

4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Scope and Goals of Social Case Work in Industrial Settings

4.3 Task, Responsibility and Skills of Social Case Work in Industrial Setting

4.4 Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs)

4.5 Let Us Sum Up

4.6 Keywords

4.7 Suggested Readings

4.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the relevance of social case work in the industrial setting;
- Know about the scope and goals of social case work in industrial setting;
- Understand the role, task, responsibility and skills of social case work in industrial setting; and
- Find out social case work as part of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs).

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Industrial social work refers to the application of social work knowledge, skills and values to workplace problems. This is needed in today's contemporary society because we live in an industrial age. The machines have contributed to the material wealth of the world. Now, industrial workers find it possible to enjoy more leisure and comfort as compared to few decades ago. However, if the industrial society has placed at the worker's disposal many comforts, it has also created a new threat to the economic, social and emotional security. The

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ever changing economic and technological conditions require workers to keep thinking and reinventing themselves. As a result, jobs for many people, consumes most of their time and there is no time left for family and personal aspirations thus, affecting the way they work. The employer therefore, has the ethical responsibility to provide a conducive working environment which is stress-free and such an environment will also increase efficiency and production value of the workers. In the industry, groups and individuals should be able to live and work together in harmony.

In recent years, social work profession has been involved with many and newer areas of practice. The service delivery differs in many settings but the common practice of facilitating support in difficult settings connects them all. Social work practice in industry is receiving a lot of attention nowadays. The business community is trying its best to improve the overall functioning of its human resource and hence, the services of professional social workers are in great demand.

For a more professional term we shall use the term 'client' to refer to workers having problems in the industrial setting.

4.2 SCOPE AND GOALS OF SOCIAL CASE WORKER IN INDUSTRIAL SETTINGS

The social case worker is a qualified professional who possesses the knowledge, skills and experience needed to work with individuals to solve their problems. These case managements may be done in different settings such as education, health, industry, etc. In this unit, we shall discuss the role of a social case worker with specific reference to the industrial settings.

Industrial social case work is one of the areas in which the case worker extend their skills and expertise in helping managers and employees in the industries and other work places to manage their work related issues and stress and in turn lead to organisational development. The industries all over have started to employ social workers who uses the case work approach apart from other social work methods to a large extend to help the client overcome problems /issues and increase not only the performance of the client but the profit of the business as well. Industrial social work can go a long way in improving the social climate and quality of human relationships in an organisation. Work in today's time, is central to majority of the people. They are known by the position they hold, the kind of work they do and the

kind of company they keep. Hence, having a job and keeping it to assert one's identity is very stressful. Sometimes, many people cannot separate their professional life with personal life. Workers may bring their work related stress to home which may result in disharmony within the family members or a person who is having family related problems may bring such unpleasant attitude to work. Such anxiety and irritation creeps in affecting either the professional work or the personal life. When such a condition prevails among the worker, the work gets affected and the much needed results are not achieved. In the present context, many business houses/firms and industries –big or small-have introduced professional social workers into their work systems to deal with the employees personal or professional problems.

Rationale for Introducing Social Case Work in Industries

Let us now discuss the rationale behind introducing social case worker in the industries:

1. The management's interest in increasing the efficiency of workers in the workplace in terms of productivity as a way of lowering cost and increasing the profit.
2. Industries commitment to corporate social responsibility and garnering a positive effect on the community.
3. Rapid societal and environmental changes that brings out individual stress in the workplace/home front and the community at large.
4. Nature of work-working with chemicals, explosives-giving rise to emotional and functional stress and the physical dangers created by the nature of work.
5. The need to renew connections between family, work and community.
6. The importance of work in everyone's life not only because of the economic benefits but because of its function in ascertaining meaning and value to one's life.
7. The attention given to person-in-environment as the focus of practice in a non-judgemental way.
8. New workplace, new group, new concerns may lead to new set of stress and work related performance anxiety.
9. Working women may feel guilty of leaving home and children and thus affecting their performance and service delivery.
10. Fear of job security among workers or no job satisfaction may further aggravate the environment within the workplace.

There is plenty of scope for social work practice in industry. This is because the larger the

organisation, the more complex are the problems faced by the workers. In small organisations, employees have direct access to the managers so many of their problems get sorted out early. In larger organisations, there is no such opportunity as it follows a ‘through proper channel’ kind of a routine and workers have access only to mid-level managers who are not decision makers.

Check your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) List out any five rationale for introducing social case work in the industries.

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Goals of Social Case Work in Industrial Setting

The primary goal of a social case work is to optimise client functioning by providing quality services in the most efficient and effective manner to individuals with problem issues. The following are the goals of social case worker in the industrial settings:

- a. Enhance the coping and problem-solving capacities of the client to make them more resilient to problems and increase their productivity.
- b. Helping the client to develop mental and physical strength and promote a fruitful personal and professional life.
- c. Creating and upholding an effective operation system that provides resources and proper services to the work force.
- d. Linking and liaisoning people with systems that may provide them with resources, services and opportunities and increase innovative ideas.
- e. Encourage decision-making capacity in order to stimulate the individual to evaluate, accept and act upon his/her choice and assessment of problems.
- f. Initiate process of improving relationships among employees to become more

- effective in their interpersonal relations for the better good of the workplace.
- g. Facilitate the client to exploit their potential to the maximum in the workplace.
 - h. Working towards improving the capacity of the service delivery system.

According to M.M Desai, the professionally trained social worker can develop his/her programmes at two levels:

- Preventive and developmental,
- Curative.

Preventive and Developmental

- 1) Informal education programmes aimed at enlightening the workers on issues pertaining to work life such as industrial safety, functional literacy, saving habits, social security, etc.
- 2) Promoting the use of health and medical programmes for workers and their families such as health check-ups, vaccination campaigns, family planning, informative sessions on nutrition, seasonal diseases, diets, childcare, etc.
- 3) Sessions on personal and environmental hygiene, etc.
- 4) Developing recreational programmes like library services, skill competitions, film shows celebration of cultural festivals, vocational guidance, etc.

Curative

Curative programmes are aimed at handling problematic situations faced by the individual worker by helping him to make maximum use of his own potential, capabilities and resources offered by the industry and the community. Counselling can be provided for personal problems such as alcoholism, indebtedness and absenteeism, etc. Social work professional help can be used for preventing problem from happening as also for enriching the life of the workers and their families. Early detection of problems by the social case worker can prevent employees from becoming serious casualties.

Check your Progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Define curative programmes.

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4.3 TASK, RESPONSIBILITY AND SKILLS OF SOCIAL CASE WORKER IN INDUSTRIAL SETTING

We have already discussed how social case workers are employed in industries to guarantee healthy working conditions and fair treatment for all people in the work place and to provide such service delivery systems to improve the social functioning and productivity of the employees. In order to address the problem issues among the workers, social case worker has to find ways to address the stressors inside and outside the workplace. Let us now look into the tasks, responsibility and skills of social case worker in the industrial setting.

Some tasks of social case worker in the industrial setting

- Counselling- The social case worker has to counsel client who may show signs of having issues within and outside the workplace.
- Welfare- The social case worker works towards providing for the welfare of the client in the organisation and looks for various opportunities where the client can excel in his/her performance.
- Training- The social case worker should assist proper training of the client in various departments for their overall development.
- Facilitating-The social case worker should facilitate the client in all possible areas for complete recovery.

Responsibility of social case worker in the Industrial setting

- Individual, family and group counselling and home visits at the preventive level.
- Active participation in corporate social responsibility activities and community development initiatives of the industry.
- Employee management and effective intervention of worker related problems and issues.
- Health and educational support which may involve referral services as well.
- Planning for worker's recreational activities.

Skills of social case worker in industrial setting

- **Interpersonal skills:** The social case worker is equipped with the ability to communicate effectively with the client, negotiate with the workplace on behalf of the client (if necessary) and have the ability to handle conflict situation in the work place.
- **Analytical skills:** The social case worker assesses the situation and develops strategies for intervention as well as plan future action to help the client to deal with the problem situation and evaluate the intervention process.
- **Self-management skills:** The social case worker is able to handle work pressure in terms of client problem issues. He/she has time management skills and is able to devote quality time to diverse clientele and works to further his/her professional development.
- **Problem-solving skills:** The social case worker in the industrial setting has empathy for the client and is able to work around problem situations by staying focussed and planning an intervention which relies on individual problem solving approach.

Social work intervention in industrial sector can be at micro level or macro level. At micro level, the social case worker can provide treatment to the client and his family, employer and union members. Help may be given in relation to problems related to work, self and others around them such as job performance and satisfaction, conflict situations, absenteeism, etc. Problems such as anxiety, depression, phobia, mental disturbance, substance abuse, marital

and family conflict, etc., may also be attended to.

At the macro level, it can be organisational intervention where the social worker can provide individual and group consultation to supervisors and managers at all levels regarding understanding of human behaviour. The scope of social work in business and industry would, in real terms, depend upon:

1. The attitude of the management;
2. The quality of relation between needs of business and the extent to which these needs can be addressed by the social case worker;
3. Cost effectiveness of the services provided.

Check your Progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) What are the tasks performed by the social case worker in the industrial setting?

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4.4 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES (EAPS)

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are worksite based programs and/or resources designed to benefit both employers and employees. EAPs help businesses and organisations address productivity issues by helping employees identify and resolve personal concerns that affect job performance. The main purpose of employee assistance programme is to enhance the quality of life of the workforce. The EAP helps employees to deal with issues pertaining to relationships, family problems and financial problems. Companies offering EAP found that those who participated in the programme were happier, more punctual, and more productive.

Stress counselling was also beneficial for reducing anxiety and depression, improved self-esteem and reduced absenteeism.

Social case work is practiced as part of the EAPs. The following are the benefits of EAPs as identified by Rothermel et al:

1. EAPs leverage the value of the organisation's investment in the workplace by:
 - Improving employee engagement.
 - Improving employee and dependents' skills for successfully responding to life's challenges.
 - Offering employees short-term problem resolution services or referring employees and dependents to mental health treatment services, when indicated.
 - Developing employee and manager competencies in managing workplace stress and improving work team performance.
2. EAPs address the costs of doing business by:
 - Reducing workplace absenteeism and unplanned absences.
 - Reducing workplace accidents.
 - Reducing employee turnover and related replacement costs.
 - Facilitating safe, timely, and effective return-to-work for employees following short-term and extended absences.
 - Reducing health care costs and improving the value of organisational investments in wellness and health promotion, self-care management, continuity of care, and work-related efforts.
 - Improving efficient use of health care through early identification, care management and recovery efforts.
3. EAPs mitigate business risks by:
 - Reducing likelihood of workplace violence or other safety risks.
 - Managing the effect of disruptive incidents, such as workplace violence, injury or other crises including facilitating a swift return-to-work after adverse workplace events.
 - Supporting disaster and emergency preparedness and assisting in minimising the disruption following disasters and emergencies.

- Facilitating successful adjustment to mergers, acquisitions, site closures or other workforce change events.
- Reducing the likelihood of legal action/liability.
- Promoting and supporting companies' drug and alcohol free workplace policies and programs.

Check your Progress IV

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Draw the similarities between EAPs and the social case worker in the industrial setting.

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4.5 LET US SUM UP

Industrial social case work is a systematic way of helping individual and groups towards better adaptation to work situation. This determines the role of social work in the industrial setting as well as examines the role(s) of social worker as a case worker which they perform in the workplace which maximise the application of social work skills, knowledge and training. If the industries accept that they are not merely profit-oriented institutions, but have a social obligation as well, then social case workers can play a vital role to help achieve its social goals which may be aimed towards the holistic development and growth of the workers. In today's time it is not only the production or sales of goods that is management's concern, but the social climate inside the organisation, the work culture and the mental health of the workers is of equal concern.

In spite of the obstacles, there is a promising future for social case workers in industry and business houses. The social workers are no longer confined to being a link between the management and the managers but are also now seen as extending their expertise in all occupations and work situations. It is indeed a challenge to the social case workers and the

social work in particular as a profession to apply its skills and knowledge to these non-conventional fields in new and innovative ways to increase productivity and organisational effectiveness.

4.6 KEYWORDS

CSR : Corporate Social Responsibility is a business approach that contributes to sustainable development by delivering economic, social and environmental benefits for all stakeholders.

EAP : Employee Assistance Programs are worksite based programs and/or resources designed to benefit both employers and employees.

Industry : Economic activity concerned with the processing of raw materials and manufacture of goods in factories.

Social Case Work : Social case work is a method of helping people individually through one to one relationship that taps personal and other resources for coping with problems.

Social Case Worker : A qualified professional who possesses the knowledge, skills and experience needed to work with individuals to solve their problems.

Workplace : A place where people work, such as an office or factory.

4.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

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4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

1. The rationales behind introducing social case work in the industries are as follows:
 - a. Increasing the efficiency of workers in the workplace in terms of productivity.
 - b. Industries commitment to corporate social responsibility and garnering a positive effect on the community.
 - c. Rapid societal and environmental changes that helps to reduce individual stress in the workplace/home front and the community at large.
 - d. Rise to emotional and functional stress and the physical dangers created by the nature of work.
 - e. The need to renew connections between family, work and community.

Check Your Progress II

1. Curative programmes are aimed at handling problematic situations faced by the individual worker by helping him to make maximum use of his own potential, capabilities and resources offered by the industry and the community

Check Your Progress III

1. The tasks performed by a social case worker in the industrial setting may be identified as the following:

- Counselling
- Welfare
- Training
- Facilitating

Check Your Progress IV

- Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and social case work in the industrial settings are similar in various aspects. EAPs are worksite based programs and/or resources designed to benefit both employers and employees and the social case worker design programmes which are individual oriented and help solve workers issues. Social case workers and EAPs help businesses and organisations address productivity issues by helping employees identify and resolve personal concerns that affect job performance. The main purpose of EAPs and social case worker in the industry is to enhance the quality of life of the workforce. The EAP just like the social case worker helps employees deal with issues pertaining to relationships, family problems and financial problems. Stress counselling for reducing anxiety and depression, improved self esteem and reduced absenteeism is also taken up by the social case worker.