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Social Welfare Administration as a Method of Social Work

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Introduction

Our country is aiming at sustainable social development and social welfare. You will be interested to know why the need for the practice of social welfare administration as a method of social work is gaining importance. It is because we have a large number of social welfare and social development settings. They include government departments, Welfare Boards, Corporations, Social Welfare Agencies, Non Governmental Organisation (NGOs), Inter Governmental Organisations (IGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs) etc. We also have a large number of National, state and local level welfare and development programmes. In addition, Panchayat Raj institutions oriented to development work have also been emerging as important institutional contexts for the practice of Social Welfare Administration. As our country faces the challenges of poverty, unemployment, disability, destitution, ill health, illiteracy, crime, suicide, violence, accidents etc. our social welfare administration should also become an effective social work method.

Meaning of Social Welfare Administration as a Method of Social Work

Social welfare administration is both scientific and professional activity. It promotes social work practice

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in administration. Therefore it is also called as social work. It administers or implements special programmes intended for vulnerable, disadvantaged and weaker sections of the population such as women, disabled children, chronically ill, the aged, scheduled caste/ scheduled tribes etc. through social work processes. It also organises programmes for sustainable social development. It also aims at the effective implementation of the regular and special programmes of social welfare agencies.

Social Welfare Administration translates social welfare polices and social legislation into social work practice. It administers the resources and personnel available for social work practice. It ventilates the many choices open to clients to adjust themselves as well as to recover themselves from problem situations.

Social welfare administration also enhances the psycho-social and economic functioning of the clients and beneficiaries. Application of social work administration in the fields of information technology and e-governance is also very essential. This is new area for the effective administration of social and social welfare services, social security and social work programmes at various levels. It can be used by local self governments, governments, Non governmental organisations, Intergovernmental organisation, co-operatives and private and corporate organisations. The target groups of this social work method can be individuals, groups, families, communities, agencies, organisations, committees or departments.

Extent of the Use of Primary Methods of Social Work

In a study on social welfare administration as a method of social work you will be interested to know how the primary methods of social work are used

in administration. The basic methods of social work such as social casework, social group work, community organisation, social action, etc., play a very important role.

Social casework is used with individual beneficiaries in the administration of social services. Social group work is used with families, and groups, which are at the heart of every society. Social group work is also used in working with neighbourhood groups and self help groups. It is also used to improve the effectiveness of working of various committees, which are part of social welfare administration. Community organisation is used in resource mobilization and equitable distribution of services at the community level. It is also used to make effective the functions of grama sabha/ward meeting under Panchayat Raj Institutions. Linkages and coordination is also used under social welfare administration. Social action is used in bringing social welfare strategies and collective action for analyzing, modifying and formulating social welfare policies. It translates the above into the administration.

Social work research plays a very important role in social welfare administration. It provides scope for action research, evaluate current programmes and provides social work indicators and statistical indices for developing strategies and programmes. It also provides necessary data bases for e-governance in Social Work Administration. Social welfare planning is an important component of social welfare administration.

Types of Services and their Delivery

Important types of social services are:

1) Education

2) Income transfer

3) Health and nutrition

4) Public housing

5) Employment and training

6) Personal social services

7) Services resulting out of social policy

There are seven types of social services and the main function of social welfare administration is to effect the administration of these social services.

The first social service namely education can be conceptualized as pre-school/elementary/primary, secondary, vocational, higher education, adult, continuing and non formal education. It is delivered either publicly or through cooperatives, corporate bodies, non governmental organisation and private organisations. It includes schools, colleges, universities, training institutes, professional bodies, internet facilities and e-learning facilities.

The second social service namely income transfer is called social security in a general sense. The service can be provided in the event of illness, disability, destitution, unemployment, natural calamities, violence, war etc. It is provided through social insurance, social assistance, pension scheme or labour welfare fund benefits. It is often collectively administered. It is also delivered by Panchayat Raj institutions or through local agencies. As social security programmes have to reach a large population in India, professional social workers have a responsibility to administer internet facilities, electronic conferencing, e-governance at various levels in social work practice and service provisions.

The third kind of social service namely "Health and Nutrition" may be private operated, public operated, or operated under health insurance system or through

people's co-operatives. It can be non-profit or for profit. In India, there are a large array of health services for health care delivery. They include specialised hospital/sanatoria, Medical College Hospitals, District Hospitals, Taluk Hospitals, Community Health Centres, Primary Health Centres, Dispensaries, Nutrition bureaus and so on. In addition, there are Maternal/Reproductive and Child Health Centres, Family welfare sub centers, anganvadies and so on at the local level.

The fourth social service is called "Public Housing". There are non profit housing corporations/boards, and housing co-operatives. There is also housing systems in plantations, slums and industrial townships. There are also privately operated housing systems in rural and urban areas. In India social welfare institutions, Government departments, and local bodies also deliver housing services. Indira Awas Yojana is an important housing scheme of government of India.

The fifth social service is "Employment and Training". Under social welfare administration, social work methods are used to upgrade services for employment. It is organised in the public sector as well as private sector. It is also organised by special agencies, professional bodies and trusts. Here imparting of skills through training is an important function of social welfare administration.

The following list includes items which would generally be called "Personal Social Services". They are care, development, and welfare of the child, probation and correctional services for the juvenile delinquents, crime prevention programmes, welfare programmes for prisoners, victims and their families, institutional care for women and children, care and adoption by special parents, family services and counselling, family social work, continuance of community services and

protective services for the aged or geriatric social work. Day care and pre-school programmes for the children, referral programmes, holiday/vacation camps for children, youth, parents, handicapped and the elderly, income-assistance and care programmes for average families, self-help and mutual aid programmes among disadvantaged and handicapped groups, counselling programmes for adolescents, marital counselling, planned parenthood counselling, disability counselling, aged counselling, specialized institutional services for destitute, infirm, beggars, poor, persons in moral danger etc. It also included De Addiction centres and programmes for the care of alcoholics and drug addicts, programmes for victims of HIV/ AIDS etc. It also includes human development programmes and other social welfare services.

The seventh social service is other services resulting from social policy. Transforming policy into social and social welfare services and use of experience and expertise in recommending modifications to policies comes under this broad area. We have to identify social inequities and social injustice and have to solve social problems. In this regard dynamics of leadership, job satisfaction and public relations are essential. Upliftment of disadvantaged, underprivileged and vulnerable section of society such as women, children, old and infirm, disabled and handicapped needs top priority. It also includes special services for scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and backward communities, and people of backward areas and slums. In the context of large population, relief and rehabilitation to migrants, social work practice among migrant families and rehabilitation of victims of natural disasters like floods, draughts, earthquake, landslides, tsunami and so on are situations in which social service in required.

The nature of social services requires social welfare administration to act as an essential method of

social work practice. Administrative position of persons who are associated with the provision of these social services in India, are designated as secretaries/ administrator/directors, welfare officers, medical social workers, psychiatric social workers, geriatric social workers, family social workers, school social workers, rehabilitation social workers, child development project officers, block development officers, research officers, local authority, social workers, project directors/ officers, inspectors of welfare funds etc.

In addition, the various fields of social work such as medical social work, local authority social work, social work in industry, social work in agriculture, family social work, psychiatric social work, geriatric social work, rural, urban, tribal and coastal development, contain large scope for services which need social work administration.

Creative literature in social work is another method of social work used in administration. Creative literature and creative media are used to bring out literature on social work application in administration. It can be in the form of fiction, serial, drama, dialogue etc. which personalize social welfare administration. So it can be seen that the extent of use of primary methods in social work have wider coverage.

Social welfare administration has to play an important role in the administration of creative, preventive, promotive, developmental and statutory social welfare services. Social welfare administration is not only needed in the Government sector but it is also largely used in the non governmental organisations, inter governmental organisations, community based organisations and in the cooperative sector.

Organisational Climate and Management Process

Here we are concerned with organisations and primarily structures for delivering social services, social welfare

services, and social work programmes. It can be departments, social welfare agencies or non governmental organisations. It can also be statutory agencies for implementing welfare provisions.

We can discuss organisational climate as organisational culture, environment, milieu and so on. It is experienced by the members of an organisation. It influences their behaviour. It is also conceived as the value of a particular sets of characteristics of an organisation. It distinguishes one organisation from the other. Some of the dimensions of the organisation climate are individual autonomy, direct supervision, better performance, rewards, team spirit, honest and open on individual differences, fostering of development, application of new ideas and methods, taking risks and freedom for individual to regulate their behaviour. Managerial values include autonomy, equity, security and opportunity.

When we consider organisational climate and management process we have several types of climate and processes. In a democratic organisational climate common standards based on policies, rules and regulations govern activities and welfare of beneficiaries. The leaders and superiors must develop group feeling and co-operation among staff of the organisation. Best way to maintain agency discipline is the democratic way of trying to develop the work groups, increase its cohesion and enable it to develop standards of behaviour. The climate requires overall progress of the organisation, sustainable human relations and staff development programmes. It should also bring out job satisfaction, beneficiary satisfaction and productivity. In addition, effective supervision is also essential.

Employees get an opportunity while in work to accept challenges, serve others, earn money, enjoy prestige

and status and can be creative and independent. Initiative taking behaviour leads to high level of activity and experimentations.

Happy and peaceful employer-employee relations, employee-employee relations, care provider beneficiary relations are the core of successful organisational climate. Good management practices are essential to improve organisational climate.

Some of the important management practices include the following.

Fulfillment of defined social needs

Finding out growth opportunities and solutions to problems

Handling of conflict

Equitable allocation of resources

Determining priorities

Assigning duties and functions

Social diagnosis

Making estimates and projections for future

Provision and selection of alternatives

Organisation of division of work

Scientific approach based on facts

Innovation and modification of services

Evaluation of results and making improvements

Ensuring economical and wise utilization of public funds

Improving the quality of life of beneficiaries and care providers

Application of methods, techniques and skills of social work at every stage of management practice to improve organisational effectiveness.

Programme Development

Social work education has opened new vistas of social development. Programme development also relates to transfer and utilization of technology. Social work administration has effective applications in this regard. It includes handing over of new technology and use, modification and renovation of existing technology for sustained social welfare through a process of social work. It improves the levels of living and quality of life of the target groups.

Programmes are developed by task forces – or task groups, within the agency setting based on related policies and legislations. It relates to controlling of social, physical and mental ill health and morbidity. It should increase the availability of major articles and services for community consumption. Programmes have to be developed for increasing social security. Then there are vertical and horizontal process to approve the programmes. Vertical processes include approval by Local Self Government, District Planning Unit, State Planning Board, Planning Commission etc. and horizontal process include consideration by various departments, institutes etc. at the same level. Programmes are also to be developed for redistribution of population, improved housing and human settlements, attainment of skills, enrichment of values, and knowledge and improvement in growth opportunities. Programmes are also developed for addressing the seven basic social services namely education, Income Transfer, Health and Nutrition, Public Housing, Employment and Training, Personal Social Services and other services resulting from social policy elaborated in this chapter.

Programme development covers two major fields. One is for Developmental social work practice and the other for Panchayati Raj systems.

The goal of developmental social work is to develop programmes for social development. It covers socio-cultural, political, administrative, and social work processes. All available resources of a state, community or agency are pooled together. It harnesses the capabilities of human service personnel of different sectors. It also involves beneficiaries, families, communities and care providers. In addition to the traditional functions of social welfare, the processes of developmental social work have to be administered for sustainable social development.

We have to develop special programmes for e-governance, e-conferencing, Internet, use of multimedia, information technology and online programmes like interactive internet counselling to cover social welfare needs of large populations with in a limited time. Social workers have to apply the above programmes and software along with social work practice to reach every client, beneficiary and care provider to become efficient social work administrators. E-governance also speed up implementation of income transfer and social security programmes, programmes of inmates of institutional services and so on.

Another major area of programme development is under Panchayat Raj based local self-governments. There are a number of social services and social welfare services under local self-governments. In this regard programme development is a challenge for the social work administration. It is in this context that social welfare administration becomes a priority based social work. Formulation of programmes requires modifications and reformulations before the efficient social work programmes are developed. In this respect

we have to make use of legislations, special rules and subordinate service rules to prepare and to guide programme development.

Public Relations

With the increasing role of social welfare administration as a method of social work, one of its components like public relations becomes an important programme of social welfare agencies. Public relations is a major process of social welfare communication and development support communication. Public relations interpret ideas and information from an agency to its publics. It also enlist information, ideas and opinions from the public, from the beneficiaries and from the care providers. Such processes lead to harmonious adjustment of an agency with its environment. Such an activity also helps to enlist public support to the social welfare agencies and its programmes.

The important objectives of public relations in social welfare are:

1) Psycho social informational preparedness for the beneficiary.

2) Building confidence in staff and care providers by creating awareness regarding the agency among its public.

3) Informing tax payers and donors about the problems faced by the agency and how it functions to meet the needs of social welfare. It also explains how the money allotted to the agency is utilized.

4) It explains the benefits from the agency to the clients and the community.

5) It is also a method of resource mobilisation as well as increasing membership of the agency.

There are a series of activities, which can be taken up under public relations. They can be:

1) The observance of important days, weeks, year, decades etc. of local, national, international importance. The local days of importance are foundation day of the agency and its anniversaries and celebrations. The national days of importance include observance of Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanthi etc. International days of importance include World Human Rights Day, World Mental Health Day, Women's Day, World Disability Day, World AIDS Day, International Literacy Day etc. It increases the image and goodwill of the agency among its public.

2) Conferences, seminars, workshops etc. are organised relating to the important functions of the agency from time to time. It improves the status of the agency. Here techniques of e-governance can also be utilized.

3) Significant contacts: The office bearer, Board Member etc. contact important officials, leaders, donors etc. and maintain cordial relationship with them and inform them on the policies and work of the agencies. The important personalities and media men are either invited to the agency or the representatives of the agency personally meet them.

4) Public relation handouts, serials, newsletters, journals, advertisements, etc. can be issued explaining the services and products of the agency.

5) Traditional cultural media like drama, dance, song, puppet show etc. can be organised to communicate the message of the agency to the public. Personal contacts, visual media, printed or written words and spoken words are also

important. Radio, Television, other electronic and satellite media can also be used in public relation work.

The principles include focusing of groups/audience, organisation of thematic publicity materials, providing attention to needs of various clients, regular time table in public relations work, formation and functioning of public relations committees, enlisting community participation etc.

The machinery for public relations includes official/ volunteer's on public relations, task forces, groups or committees. In sum, public relations work has to be a sustained effort under social welfare administration.

Understanding Conflict Resolution

There is need for the social work administrator to understand conflict resolution. There can be a serious disagreement and argument regarding some thing important. It can be in the form of a serious difference between two or more beliefs, ideas, interest, programmes which cannot be reconciled. There can be conflict between principles and privileges. Conflict can also be between departments, agencies, organisations, groups and individuals or vice versa. Sometimes there will be conflict when one party makes some conscious effort to frustrate pursuing the goals or interests of the other party. This is called intergroup conflict. There will be conflict like intra-individual, Interpersonal, Intergroup, and between organisations. Sometimes conflicts are inevitable and in some cases desirable. The social work administrator should understand the conflict from its very preliminary stage and should take measures to resolve it. Conflict resolution denotes final solving of the conflict. There are a number of ways to resolve a problem, argument or difficulty by applying social work methods, techniques and skills.

Management of conflict is very essential. Conflict can be managed as individuals work out differences. The satisfaction of needs, cooperation and success underlie each negotiation. The usual method of conflict resolution is mutual negotiation by individuals, families, groups or through consensus. Conciliation is another method of conflict resolution in which the settlement is reached in the presence of third party usually a conciliation officer. Arbitration is yet another method of conflict resolution in which the decision of the arbitrator is binding on the parties. In most of the social work contexts the negotiations should continue until it is reconciled, as failure is usually not acceptable.

For example, if there can be a conflict between the doctor and the parent regarding a particular treatment for a disabled child, the social worker has to bring in an agreement. The parties and the conciliator must remain calm and considerate and clear about the requirements to attain an agreement.

Positive Climate

Social workers have a role in, and a responsibility for the creation of positive professional relationship with their colleagues. Workers must exercise conscious control over their behaviour and in doing so they come closer to the realization of good working relationships.

When staff members and volunteers work in harmony there seems to be greater likelihood that the agency will attain its goals and that beneficiaries and care providers will have a good experience together. Working together in harmony, devotion and conviction will lead to meaningful endeavours. Social worker uses conscious self-control over himself/herself all the time. The professional integrity of social worker is based on the understanding that public interest is above self-interest. The Professional constantly strives

to develop a sound professional philosophy based on nurturing of values, attitudes, feelings and responses for creating a positive climate. Positive professional relationship is a feeling of mutual respect, trust and confidence with one another. It can be experienced rather than measured. It can be felt in most favourable situations. For example: When people are warm, friendly, relaxed, open, free with one another, it creates an atmosphere of respect for human being and for human values. Pride in the quality of work done also creates a positive climate. It contributes to success of total enterprise. Persons who are well related to one another seek for an even higher standard of performance. We have to consider that every human being has dignity and worth, strength and weaknesses and capacity for growth and change. Trustworthiness, responsibility, articulating sound philosophy for personal growth, good channels of communication etc. ensures positive climate. A positive climate is created when agency procedures and policies are clear. Positive climate is also the result of sharing of work together.

Social work studies social needs to understand them. If we have to understand our groups, we meet to understand the community situation in which the group members live, their needs, influence of family life and other social political forces affecting them.

Conclusion

In this chapter we studied the essentials of social welfare administration as a method of social work. It is both a specialized professional activity to administer care provisions for the vulnerable and disadvantaged section of the society as well as an activity to achieve social development and developmental social work practice. It uses scientific methods of social work as well as skills in communication, administration and management.

It organises and implements social welfare programmes. It makes the social welfare agencies efficient to administer its programmes and services. We also observed that its major thrust is transferring social welfare policies and social legislations into programmes of social services, social welfare services, personal social services and social work programmes. The application of social work administration in e-governance sector is also essential.

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