Social Work in Educational Settings

Introduction

Education particularly school education, is recognized today as a fundamental human right. Educated people become more autonomous, make informed choices and take advantage of available opportunities. They are able to maximize their potential and lead more fulfilled lives. Poorly educated people, on the other hand, are more likely to be dependent on others.

The school of today is expected to teach reading, writing and learning skills, suitable to the potential and interest of the learner. It is expected to prepare young people for career opportunities and for healthy functioning in society. For this twin function of teaching subject matter and personality development, it is required to enrol and retain children till the task of schooling is complete.

Inspite of the recognized importance of schooling, many children do not get enrolled in school or drop-out of it due to poverty or other reasons. In such cases, effort is made to teach them by alternative means, such as non-formal classes or later through adult education programmes. For them as well, the goal of education remains more or less the same.

Can the broad-based goal of education, as stated above, can be attained by educators? How would a learner

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concentrate if not properly equipped, fed or medically fit? Parents, who live in abject poverty, may spend all their energies in the acquisition of basic necessities of food and clothing. Their children are likely to enter school without adequate stimulation, discipline and nurturing. How can such a learner maximize the schooling experience? Further, schools may themselves be a part of the problem. Bureaucratic functioning of schools, large size classrooms and equally large teacher-pupil ratio can make individualized learning impossible. It may be that the learner is taught subject matter unrelated to his social context. Teachers also have time bound syllabi and have no energy and motivation to help a learner placed in difficult circumstances. They may label such a learner as problematic and inadvertently encourage him to discontinue schooling.

The above mentioned hurdles are not limited to formal schools, but can also be found in other educational settings, such as vocational institutions, non-formal or adult education classes. It is to mitigate these obstacles that professionals other than teachers are required to assist the educationists.

The education system, particularly schools, have realized the importance of taking help from professionals other than teachers. These professionals include social workers, psychologists, physicians, nurses, speech therapists and special educators. These non-teaching professionals together are called 'Pupil Specialists'. They help teachers fulfill the broad based goal of education.

**Social Work in Education**

Social workers enhance the social functioning of individuals through maximum utilization of their inherent potential. Believing in dignity and worth of people, they hold that sometimes people can be in a
state of disequilibrium due to personal and social challenges. They, therefore, attempt to prevent and reduce this disequilibrium by linking people to appropriate social systems and resources. Besides this, they protect the most vulnerable members of society from destructive social influences. By virtue of the work, they are called upon to perform, they develop expertise in building relationships and facilitating communication.

The services of social workers are being used by social institutions desirous of working effectively with people. The social workers are being employed by hospitals, educational institutions, prisons, industry, etc. All these are secondary settings for social work practice. In other words, social work in these institutions is not the leading profession, but helps other professions in carrying out their tasks.

**The Purpose**

The leadership in education rests with teachers. Then what is the purpose of inducting social workers in educational sector? The skills of social workers are used in improving efficacy of education sector. By maintaining the school-home-community linkage, they help education achieve its central purpose. They prevent or deal with behavioural, economic, familial and scholastic problems, which interfere in learning. Relieved off the pressure, the learner then makes the maximum utilization of learning experiences. In short, social work represents the human factor in education.

With the purpose of social work in education somewhat clear, let us look at some other relevant questions. What are the values, which guide social work intervention? What is the knowledge base, skills and competencies that the social workers in educational sector require?
The Value Base

The values practised by social workers in education stem from the fundamental values held by social work profession. These values, however, are modified for use in education. Mears and other (1996) provide a framework, which, with minor alteration, is given as under:

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<tr>
<th>Social Work Values</th>
<th>Social Work Values in Education</th>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition of the worth and dignity of each human being.</td>
<td>Each pupil is valued as an individual with unique characteristics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The right to self determination.</td>
<td>Each pupil should be allowed to participate in the learning process and to learn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect for individual potential and support for an individual's aspirations to attain it.</td>
<td>Individual differences should be recognized, intervention should be geared to individual needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The right of each individual to be different from others and to accord respect for these differences.</td>
<td>Each pupil, regardless of race or social economic characteristics, has a right to equal treatment.</td>
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The above mentioned authors hold that the central focus of social work values is the learner the pupil. The social worker, while dealing with him directly or on his behalf with other stakeholders—the teacher, parents, peer or community members, must keep the "best interest of pupil" in mind. Ethical decision making on
behalf of pupil must be based on sound judgement of cost/benefit analysis and expected outcome of action. This can be explained with an example—a child incapable of meeting the excessive demands of the curriculum of a private school may be supported to be shifted to a less demanding neighbourhood school. In such case, the child could perform better, though parents may be reluctant about shifting him to a lesser known school.

**Knowledge, Skills and Competencies**

The knowledge base of social work in education as in social work is human behaviour particularly in the context of social functioning. The profession borrows extensively from disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, political science and medicine. The social worker in education requires skills in dealing with pupils appropriate to their age group and the factors that affect their learning. Broadly, the competency requirements are as under:

- Understanding the functions of education in contemporary society.
- Knowledge of sociological issues affecting education.
- Awareness of legal and policy issues that impact education, including provisions for categories of disadvantaged population.
- Awareness of challenges that affect pupils, such as poverty, violence, AIDS, homelessness, substance abuse, consumerism, etc.
- Ability to analyse the systems of education, home and community and their linkages.
- Knowledge of structures and lines of authority in educational institutions and community.
• Ability to locate and provide appropriate resources required to mitigate conditions that impede learning.

• Understanding the history of social work in education and current models of practice.

• Understanding and application of the multiple roles that a social worker can play within education system, home and community.

• Ability to deal with different stakeholders – learner, educator, administrator, family, community and co-professionals.

• Ability to effectively communicate with diverse population.

Social Worker and Educator

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 can offer, even to the most caring educator, new appropriate ways of handling children. Similarly, teachers can provide valuable academic and classroom data about each pupil for the use of social worker. Even then their goals and values can come in conflict. Social worker focuses on individual child and his environment, while for the educator, the progress of the group and class discipline is most important. Hence, an educator may not easily understand why a social worker can be respectful towards a child, who manifests aggressive behaviour in class. She may also not empathize with those parents, who show apathy towards school or their child’s education. Such conflict is natural, but must be resolved through open communication. The social work – education partnership presents a professional change for both professions.
These hurdles, notwithstanding social work, has gained a foothold in the educational sector and is here to stay. Besides India, social workers are employed in educational settings in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, Australia, Africa, Japan and Korea, etc. Their role varies in terms of social realities of the educational system in their countries.

**Historical Development and Functions of School Social Work in UK**

Social work in education is generally considered synonymous with social work in school. This is because most social workers are working in schools compared to other educational settings.

The school social work service in India occupies a crucial position. The professional social work, which we have adopted, has developed mainly in the United States. Similarly, our school system was founded by the British and has not undergone any radical change. Considering these factors, it seems logical that one understands the development of school social work in the United Kingdom and the United States before one attempts a similar study for India. Furthermore, these two countries have the oldest school social work service. Hence, tracing the development of school social work in these countries would provide a broader overview of this field. Given below is the history of school social work in the United Kingdom.

**Appointment of Attendance Officers**

In the United Kingdom, school social work is known as ‘Education Welfare’ and is disbursed by Education Welfare Officers (EWOs).

The services of the EWOs began with the appointment of school attendance officers. The Education Act of 1880
required local school boards to make attendance compulsory and empowered them to prosecute both children and parents for non-attendance.

The Act led to the appointment of a large number of 'School Attendance Officers'. They were usually former police or army personnel and some even chose to wear official uniform. These officers, nicknamed as 'Kid Catchers' or 'School board men', looked for children, who did not attend school, in parks and open spaces. They made home visits to convince parents to send their children to school.

These attendance officers soon realized that negligence of the parents was not the only reason for non attendance. The child might not attend school due to factors related to poverty, fear of teachers or peer group pressure. Slowly, their interventional strategies, like the causes, became multifarious.

**The Education Act of 1944**

The importance of attendance officers and their work was recognized by the Education Act of 1944. By this Act, the Local Education authorities were made responsible for securing adequate facilities in their area for all children of school going age. Hence, attendance officers were required to provide medical inspection of pupils, free meals, free medical treatment where necessary, and special educational help for the disabled children. As attendance officers started disbursing welfare services, they were renamed as 'Education Welfare Officers'.

**The Plowden Committee**

It was the Plowden Committee, which in 1966 looked closely at the work of the EWOs. After studying large number of EWOs, it commented that bulk of their time
was spent on school attendance, clerical work and in dispensing school meals and clothing to the child population in their area. It felt that EWOs did not undertake much work for home-school liaison. Emphasising the need for undertaking such work, the Plowden Committee recommended that EWOs be trained in social work. The implication of this report was that either the EWOs undertake social work training or be demoted as welfare assistants. This led many EWOs to undertake social work training.

**Seebohm Committee**

The recommendation of Seebohm Committee led to the establishment of Social Service Departments in 1971. These departments were established to carry out comprehensive services in the field of health, nursing, welfare and education with the help of trained social workers for individuals and families who were at risk. A large number of clients of these social service departments came from schools. The Social Service Departments can take a child into its care if the child has no parents or guardian or where his development is being prevented or neglected.

**The Present Position**

The school social work services in the United Kingdom are now being provided through Education Department and Social Service Department. The EWOs of education department work closely with social workers of the Social Service Department. For example, EWOs are responsible for ensuring that within their area of jurisdiction, the parents send their wards to school regularly. In cases where they feel that the child is beyond the control of parents or in need of care, they bring such cases to the notice of social service department.
Today, a number of EWOs are trained in social work, though many still hold graduate degree in social sciences, such as sociology, social administration, psychology, etc. Promoting home, school, and community liaison, the EWOs provide a wide range of services. Yet, enforcing school attendance remains a central part of their work.

The school social work programme, as we have seen, has a long history in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, it could not develop into a comprehensive service. The reason cited for this include exclusion of EWOs from the mainstream social work, absence of professional associations and inadequate funding at their disposal.

**Historical Development and Functions of School Social Work in USA**

The initiation of school social work (visiting teacher work, as it was called initially) was made in 1906-07 in the USA schools of Hartford, Boston and New York. The private agencies and civic organisations sponsored the work of visiting teachers to improve attendance and faster corporation between home and school.

**The Recognition**

A breakthrough in the school social work programme was achieved when in 1913, the board of Education of Rochester, New York accepted the appointment of a trained social worker as a visiting teacher. With this governmental recognition, boards in several parts of the United States appointed social workers in their school, resulting in expansion of visiting teachers.

**Expansion of Service**

The visiting teacher movement underwent a rapid expansion in 1920s with the support of the
Commonwealth Fund. The sponsors of the Fund were concerned with the problem of Juvenile Delinquency. They felt that the visiting teacher, by decreasing maladjustment at school, can play a significant role in preventing juvenile delinquency.

The Commonwealth Fund in 1921 offered liberal grant to these boards, which agreed to host demonstration projects by employing visiting teachers. The boards were assigned visiting teachers for a period of three years with a condition that they would take over the service, if at the end of demonstration period, it was found useful. With the efficacy of visiting teachers demonstrated, a large number of school boards hired their service.

As visiting teachers grew in number, the National Association of Visiting teacher was formed in 1919. It made valuable contributions through publications and setting high standard of work.

**The Thrust on Casework**

Along with the expansion, there also gradually came a shift in the focus of tasks performed by the visiting teachers. While the initial workers gave top priority to home-school liaison work, the present workers gradually shifted to casework tasks with children.

The reason for this was the enforcement of attendance laws and the influence of mental hygiene movement. The enforcement of attendance laws brought to school children from varied backgrounds and abilities. Some of these children were from difficult home situations and brought with them problems, requiring individual attention. On the other hand, the popularity of mental health movement encouraged visiting teachers to develop techniques for prevention and care of social
maladjustment in children. This popularized the case work approach.

As the visiting teacher work had become closer to casework and social work in general, the nomenclature of ‘National Association of Visiting Teachers’ was changed to ‘American Association of School Social Workers’ in 1945. In 1955, this body merged with the present ‘National Association of Social Workers (NASW) of the United States.

**The Shift in Service**

From the 1960s, the Government of United States passed a number of legislations to which school social work service had to respond. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 encouraged special educational programmes for children of poor families. The Emergency School Aid Act of 1972 provided grants for programmes aimed at mainstreaming of immigrant children. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 provided assistance to states, which adopted programmes for integration of handicapped children in regular educational setting with the non-handicapped children.

In the light of the above developments, the school social workers cannot just stop at performing casework task. Instead, they are also required to undertake tasks focused on bringing changes in school system that would benefit immigrants, handicapped and poor children. As new challenges emerge, school social workers respond with appropriate services. They now work for pupil rights, issues of violence, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and discrimination based on gender. The school social workers are now moving to ecological (the interaction of child, school family and environment) perspective.
The Present Position

Due to long history and professionalism, the school social workers are firmly established in the schools of United States. They are an integral part of the 'pupil service'. To ensure minimum national standard and competence, NASW has formulated a list of standards for school social work services (NASW, 1992). A journal, “Social Work in Education”, published by NASW, has been devoted exclusively for spreading knowledge in the field of school social work.

Historical Development and Functions of School Social Work in India

India, unlike UK and USA, does not have a common school system. There exists a hierarchy of schools, such as:

- Elite schools offering international certifications.
- Private schools catering to upper middle and rich classes.
- Schools for the children of central government, public undertakings and defense staff.
- Low fee private schools in rural areas.
- Government and Municipal schools for lower middle classes and the poor.
- Non-formal classes for non-entrants and school drop-outs.
- Special schools for children with disabilities.

Broadly speaking, these schools can be divided into two broad categories – private schools and government schools. People from upper middle class and above send their children to private schools. The people from lower
economic classes send theirs to Government and Municipal schools. Hence, a comprehensive school social work programme catering to all children could not develop in India.

Logically, the induction of social workers would have taken place first in the Government schools. These schools abound in poverty related problems and could benefit more from social work intervention. Contrary to expectations, the school social work programme was first introduced in private schools.

**Why Private Schools?**

The reasons for above development are as follows:

1) When school social workers were to be inducted in Indian schools, the predominant method practised by school social workers in USA was casework. The social workers in India were only familiar with this model of school social work. Such a model was found more suitable for private schools catering to upper, middle and rich classes.

2) The private schools, being less bureaucratic, were more receptive to school social work experimentation. Only when the utility of social workers in schools was demonstrated, the social work programme was introduced in Municipal schools.

The text on historical development of school social work is, therefore, divided into two sections — (A) Private schools (B) Municipal schools.

**A) Private Schools**

**Induction in Maharashtra**

The expansion of social work education and search for placement agencies led many colleges of social work to place their students in schools.
The Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi in 1958 was the first institute to use local school as field work agency. The following year, the Nirmala Niketan and Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai also introduced school placement. Unlike Varanasi, the placements in Mumbai led to the employment of social workers in a few schools.

The Karve Institute of social sciences in 1964 persuaded the Pune branch of Maharashtra Parent Teacher Association to accept student placements in its affiliated private schools. This placement also led to the appointment of social workers in some schools. These experiments brought into existence a cluster of school social workers in Maharashtra.

**Induction in Delhi**

The credit of introducing school social work programme in Delhi goes to the Delhi branch of Indian Association of Trained Social Workers (IATSW). The IATSW in 1969 undertook demonstration programmes similar to the one adopted by Commonwealth Fund in USA reported earlier in the text.

The school hosting this demonstration was to bear part of the salary of the social worker, while IATSW shared the major cost. It was agreed that after successful demonstration, the school would meet the total cost of the programme. The workers were to be guided by an 'Implementation Committee'. The members of this Committee were social work educators and practitioners. They continued to guide initial workers, raised funds, addressed parent-teacher meetings, and organised seminars. This popularized school social work programme in Delhi. Soon private schools in other major cities also employed social workers.
The Tasks Performed

The basic physical needs of the children attending these schools were adequately met by their families. Hence, the schools were expected to provide for maximum development and optimum preparation of students for their future roles. These being the expectations, the schools became particularly concerned with those of their pupils whose potentials remain grossly unrealized. Further, some schools also felt that their children grew up unaware of social realities in society. They made efforts to introduce their children to these realities. These considerations determined the tasks carried out by social workers. Prominent among them are given below:

1) The thrust of social workers is on helping children having problems. They mainly deal with problems related to emotional disturbance, learning, peers, parent-child and teacher-child relationship. With changing urban scenario and its impact on children, newer challenges are emerging. Hence, social workers are increasingly involved with problems, such as increasing consumerism, substance abuse, violence and issues of gender and sexuality. Some social workers also undertake career counselling work.

2) The school social workers in private schools are also engaged in Socially Useful and Productive Work (SUPW) undertaken by their schools. They facilitate working of their school children in hospitals, special schools for the handicapped, with villagers through village camps and in similar other activities. The aim of such work is to develop an ability to think and reason, qualities of leadership and empathy for people living in difficult circumstances.
3) Some private schools have undertaken integrated education of children with disabilities in their schools. The school social workers protect the rights of disabled children, help them with an opportunity for development without discrimination. Depending on the need, they take up social work intervention with children and parents of handicapped and non-handicapped children. They provide support to teachers and liaison with outside agencies for economic rehabilitation of disabled children.

B) Municipal Schools

The Beginning

The municipal schools in our country are run by local bodies and provide free education to the urban poor. Large number of children attending these schools are first generation learners and lack financial and other requisites to accomplish the task of schooling. Hence, many children among them manifest problems, such as high drop-out rate, absenteeism, academic underachievement, ill health, etc. Such schools are expected to develop appropriate educational strategies to improve school attendance and retention.

Two Municipal bodies—the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai and New Delhi Municipal Committee—responded to the above challenge by undertaking school social work programme. The details are as under:

Induction of Social Workers in Municipal Schools, Mumbai

The college of social work, Nirmala Niketan, as stated earlier, had some experience of initiating social work services in private schools. It was now concerned with the plight of slum children enrolled in Municipal schools. It visualized that the best way to bring a breakthrough
in their plight was to provide integrated services through social work programme. Unlike private schools, these services should provide close linkages between school, home and community. To be effective, it must also address the school environment, its method of teaching and content.

These considerations led to the placement of social work students in Municipal schools. The successful demonstration of the utility of this service resulted in the appointment of two social workers in 1971 and 1973 in the Municipal schools. The programme got a boost in the International Year of the Child (1979), when it was extended to fifteen more locations. In accordance with the agreement, the Municipal Corporation undertook the major responsibility of administration and finances, while Nirmala Niketan was responsible for management and supervision of school social work programme. The programme was to be implemented by social workers with the assistance of paraprofessionals and student social workers.

**Tasks Performed**

The major tasks undertaken by school social workers are as follows:

1) The social workers undertook the prevention of drop-out as their priority area. The teachers of the respective classes were required to notify the names of children who, without any intimation, did not attend school for 10-15 days. A representative of social service unit visited the home and provided individualized help for such child. The service ranged from providing school equipment (uniform, books, etc.) to specific medical care or financial assistance to ensure the return of the child to school.
2) The highest drop-out rate was observed among children of standard I. It was felt that prior to their entry to school, most municipal school children had no exposure to ‘Balwadis’ and Nurseries. Intimidated by the formal structure of curriculum and teaching, they dropped out of school system. Responding to this, social workers designed a school Readiness programme of a few weeks prior to the entry to standard I. This programme had inputs on crafts, songs and other group activities. As children developed skills and attitudes necessary for formal learning, the drop-out rate for standard I fell considerably.

3) A large number of Municipal school children living in overcrowded slums do not have facilities to study at home. Lack of space, inadequate lighting and non-availability of guidance by parents are some of the major factors. The social workers made arrangement for evening study classes. Under the supervision of Municipal school teacher, students completed home assignments and studied informative books. The social workers provided support to study-classes by organising parental meetings, cultural programmes or competitions among children.

4) The Municipal schools are not equipped with adequate science laboratories required particularly for senior students. The social workers made arrangements with local colleges, so that they allow their laboratories to be used by these students. The students of these colleges were also enrolled as volunteers to help these children conduct science experiments.

5) The social workers helped in conducting non-formal education programme to bring children upto 14
years of age to the fold of education. The focus of these classes was on children, who were either non-entrants or had decided to quit school for one reason or another. In these classes, the social workers helped teachers in syllabus formation, developing teaching aids and inculcating mental health components in teaching. They also worked closely with parents to enlist their support for the task of education.

6) In order to enhance the attracting and retaining capacities of schools and also to distract children from anti-social activities, some recreational programmes were conducted. Relying heavily on student social workers, the social workers organised summer recreation centers, day camps or annual fanfares.

The undertaking of above tasks proved the efficacy of school social work programme to the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. As a result, it now runs the school social programme on its own and not in partnership with Nirmala Niketan.

**Induction of Social Workers in NDMC Schools**

The New Delhi Municipal Committee (NDMC) like the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai was concerned with high drop-out rate prevailing in their schools. Besides, many children falling in its area of jurisdiction were not attending school. It is ironical that neither social work educators of Delhi or NDMC officials were aware of the Comprehensive School Social Work programme already developed for Municipal schools in Mumbai. Hence NDMC could not fall back on the experiences gained by its counterpart in Mumbai.
The Education Officer of NDMC had been exposed to the work of 'Implementation Committee' and, hence, was convinced of the utility of school social workers. Mainly due to his initiative, the NDMC in 1975 appointed 15 social workers for its schools. These workers were designated as student welfare workers. Their main task was to prevent drop-out and attain universalization of primary education in the area falling under NDMC. For this, each worker was assigned a specified area and the workers were placed under the supervision of senior educator of NDMC.

Task Performed

In accordance with the objectives, the task performed by student welfare workers were as follows:

1) For enrolment of children in schools, the student welfare workers conducted an annual survey in its area. After such children were located, they assisted parents in admission work by procuring birth certificates, affidavits and escorting parents to schools for admission. They also made children receive incentives from NDMC in the form of text books, uniform, scholarship, etc. As a result of these efforts, within a period of five years, almost all children were enrolled in schools falling under NDMC.

2) To prevent drop-outs, the workers, like their counterparts in Mumbai, visited the homes of children who absented from school for a period of 8 to 10 days. In accordance with the directive, no teacher could strike off the name of any child. This was possible only after the welfare officer had satisfied himself that no further effect can be made to bring the child to schools. Intensive help was provided to the child and the family to bring the
child to school. Hence, within four years, the student welfare workers were able to sustain and control the problem of drop-out as well.

The efforts of student welfare workers were successful in achieving its aim of universalization of the primary education and prevention of drop-outs. However, the service could not grow into a comprehensive programme due to limited vision and expectations.

**Models of School Social Work Practice**

The historical development of school social work, as traced above, has also given us a glimpse of the tasks performed by social workers in schools. The focus of social work service differs in accordance with the type of school, target population and emerging social challenges. Resultantly, school social work service has evolved into different Models (Theoretical description that help understand how a process works). Alderson (1972) has introduced four models of school social work to which Costin (1975) has added another.

**Traditional Clinical Model**

This is a widely applied model in school social work. It focuses on individual student and the social and emotional problems that block attainment of their potential. Its goal is to enable students to make optimum use of school experience. The school is considered faultless and the individual student is expected to adjust to the conditions prevalent in school.

This model of school social work is suitable to schools catering to upper middle and rich classes of people. The private schools in India have, by and large, adopted this model.
School Change Model

It mainly focuses on dysfunctional conditions in school, its policies and practices. It encourages changes in school that are seen as causing student malperformance or diminish its appeal.

The school social work programme of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai has some features of this model. The School Readiness Programme for standard I and recreational programmes undertaken by social workers are the examples to support this claim.

Community School Model

This model favours close school community relationship. It aims to develop school programmes to assist disadvantaged students. The worker attempts to alleviate community conditions of deprivation that hinder learning. It is suitable to deal with problems, such as juvenile delinquency, high drop-out rates, etc.

The social work programme of Municipal Corporation Greater Mumbai also has some features of this model. The organisation of study classes, non-formal education programme and appointment of paraprofessionals are the examples in this direction.

Social Interaction Model

This model views students as part of various social systems, i.e., family, school and community, all of which interact and need each other. The main role of the social worker is to facilitate communication and linkages between various systems.

The school social work programme of private schools as well as Municipal schools in India represent features of this model.
School Community Pupil Model

It focuses on group of pupils and helps them use learning opportunities by bringing about change in the interactional pattern of school-community relationship. The goal of school social work programme is not to target school or community, but to identify group of student showing problems of underachievement, truancy, drop-out, absenteeism, etc.

The school social work programme undertaken by New Delhi Municipal schools followed this model. The social worker targeted the definite group of pupils who did not enroll in school or were potential drop-outs.

Social Work in other Educational Settings

The competencies of social worker can not only be used in formal school setting, but in other educational settings also, such as special schools for the handicapped, non-formal classes for the street children or in adult education programmes. The goal of social worker, however, would vary in accordance with the needs of the learner and the social realities surrounding them.

The social worker supporting people with disabilities requires special knowledge of disabilities and legislations governing learner’s rights. Her work can range from preparing social and development history of the learner to provision of support and resources to teachers and parents to enable the learner derive maximum benefit from education.

The social worker associated with non-formal classes for the street children may have to deal with special issues concerning these children. The learner may lack adequate food, clothing and supportive environment. In
addition to special teaching needs, the challenges of violence, crime or sexual abuse may have to be dealt with.

The adult learners have their special needs. The social worker may be called upon to help teacher design learning programmes more appropriate to the social reality issues faced by them. The programmes may range from provision of nutrition education to skill development for effective parenting.

**Conclusion**

The goal of education is not only to teach, but to prepare learner for healthy functioning in society. Such broad-based objectives of education cannot be achieved by educators alone. Hence, educational institutions, specially schools, are increasingly relying on other professionals. One such professional is social worker.

The social worker brings values, knowledge and skills of social work profession to education to help achieve its central purpose.

The United Kingdom and United States have the oldest social work service. The attendance and home-school liaison were its initial components. Over a period of time, social work service in educational setting has evolved into various models. Some bold experiments in school social work have also been made in India.

With the successful demonstration of the utility of social workers, a large number of schools, world over, are utilizing their services. However, the competence of social worker can be used with equal advantage in other educational institutions as well.
References


