

## Methods of Social Work and Its Role in Understanding Team Climate and Team Effectiveness for Organizational Development

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### Abstract

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A method is well understood to be an orderly way of procedure and therefore it is always carried out towards achievement of a specific aim. Social work methods is such method that social workers use to help people of all ages and from various sections of society to enhance their social functioning and to cope more effectively with their problems. Social workers don't pick and choose what problems and issues they would like to address. They see a problem even a very difficult problem, and try to help people solve it. They must prepare themselves to help people with individualized personal problems on the one hand and very broad problems that affect whole organizations and communities on the other. This article throws lights on enhancing team functioning utilizing and practicing social work methods for team building and enhancing team climate for better team effectiveness. This paper focus the area of team functioning same as social or group functioning how social work method can be utilize for organization development through social administration, social welfare, social change and action for better team functioning and team effectiveness.

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**Keywords:** Social work method, Team Functioning, Team Climate, Team effectiveness

### 1. Social Case Work

Social case work is one of the methods of social work which is being practiced by social workers across the globe. It is one of the primary methods that enable the social functioning of individuals.

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It is a method which is based on one to one relationship. A method is well understood to be an orderly way of procedure and therefore it is always carried out towards achievement of a specific aim.

Mary Richmond gave us the deepest insights into the nature of social work and provided the best definitions of case work.

The most famous definition of case work is:

'Social case work consists of those processes which develop personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment' with their problems.

'Social case work may be defined as the art of doing different things for and with different people by cooperating with them to achieve at one and the same time their own and society's betterment'.

Case work is recognizable, according to Richmond, by its aim of social betterment and its method of differential treatment. Case work is concerned with the release of resource in the immediate environment and capacities in the individual, which may give him a fuller and more satisfying life, both economic and personal. The case worker deals with people and situations one by one.

### **1.1. Importance of Case Work**

All human beings are part of society and everyone in the society has different social roles and duties. While performing his role and duties, individual faces many problems in one or other form, which hinder his performance as a social being. Every individual is unique with different set of needs from others in society and has a different way of handling his / her life situations. To understand the uniqueness of human behavior and the individual differences, one needs to understand human being vis-à-vis his/her social environment and life experiences. A person is a net product of interaction between biological, psychological and environmental factors.

The unique pattern that emerges from this interaction is his personality, which comprises of his capacities and abilities, attitudes, beliefs and values, feelings and thinking and his approach, or strategies to deal with various situations of life.

Individual problems may arise either because of his unsuitable approach to social situations he encounters in his life or because of situations demanding something different or more than he possesses. These unresolved problems would affect the social functioning of an individual, which will in turn cause stress to the individual, affect his family and community life and all the social roles which s/he performs in the society. Social case work method tries to resolve individual problems mainly by restoring, maintaining or improving the person's social functioning using the knowledge of human behaviour, communication and relationship skills and the available resources. The case worker helps an individual in all his aspects of life to enable the person to function adequately and properly in his various social roles.

According to Hamilton the basic assumptions of social case work are:

- Individual and society are interdependent and complimentary to each other.
- Various factors operative in the society influence human behavior and attitude.
- Some problems are psychological and some are interpersonal in nature.
- Within certain limits, man can be understood and helped.
- Man can grow and change as per his/her inherent capacities and potentials.
- Every person is unique as well as similar to others.

These philosophical assumptions are:

- Every human being has to be considered as a person with dignity and worth.
- Human beings are interdependent and it governs their interaction in social groups.
- There are common human needs for growth and development of individuals. The existence of common human needs does not negate the uniqueness of individual. Every individual is like all other human beings in some aspects and like no other individual in certain aspects.
- Every individual has within him / her, the potential for growth an achievement and s/he has right to the realization of this potential. Form this it follows that people have the capacity to change.
- Society has an obligation to help those who do not have the means for the realization of their potentials.

- From the assumption it will help in understanding the team climate of team and how to create favorable climate within organization using social case work method on team member for better team functioning. Case work is one such method that social workers use to help people of all ages and from various sections of society to enhance their social functioning and to cope more effectively. The Case work will help to understand social functioning within team and will also to interpreting the team functioning for team effectiveness.
- It also help to understand team members behavior as individual and the unique pattern that emerges from their interaction is individual personality, which comprises of their capacities and abilities, attitudes, beliefs and values, feelings and thinking and their approach, or strategies to deal with various situations of their life within team . The unresolved problems would affect the social functioning of an individual, which will in turn cause stress to the individual, affect his family and community life and all the social roles which s/he performs in the society as well as member of team and their team effectiveness.

## **1.2. Social Work's Contribution to Teamwork**

Social workers have been recognized in the literature as playing a critical role on teams (e.g., Roseblum et. al., 1996). Some of the factors that support the importance of social work on teams include:

- Social work values and ethics: When the profession's belief in client dignity and self-determination comes alive on a team, clients' rights become a fundamental consideration in the team's intervention.
- Characteristics of the profession: Dana (1983) points out that there are long held characteristics of social work that are easily transferred to working with teams. These include:
  1. beginning where one's colleagues are,
  2. respecting differences in values, knowledge and problem-solving styles,
  3. Willingly sharing one's own knowledge values and skills even when they may conflict with those held by others,
  4. having the capacity to work through, rather than avoiding, conflict,
  5. being open to the ideas and insights of others.

## 2. Social Group Work

According to Reid (1997) the purpose of group work is to help improve the well being of the members and relieve personal suffering. This is accomplished because groups have the 'power to enhance problem-solving capacity, prevent the development of serious social problems, and restore and maintain the social functioning of members'. Group work is used in all settings of social work.

The group work method is well accepted by social workers as a foundation method that helps towards improvement of social functioning of individuals. It is a method that uses groups as a medium of action. A method is well understood to be an orderly way of procedure and therefore it is always carried out towards achievement of a specific aim. Group work is one such method that social workers use to help people of all ages and all sections of society to enhance their social functioning and to cope more effectively with their problems. In doing so, social workers have become important members of clinical teams attempting to respond to social, emotional and mental problems. In addition, social workers also work in non-clinical settings in which they work towards social cohesiveness and integration. In these settings they may work with groups of children, women and youth in a community. These groups become instrumental in evolving a community based response for mitigating problems at hand or for **community change** and development.

### 2.1. Nature and Purpose

Group work is a method of social work practice through which individuals are helped in solving their problems and it is also directed towards bringing about desired changes at the individual, group and community levels. The group work method is functional at two levels the individual and the entire group. Social group work helps individuals to develop their inherent potential and identify their innate abilities to cope better with their environment. It helps them to learn and inculcate new patterns of behavior, which in no way are limited to their place within the group but need to be sustained beyond their participation in their life. Thus group work provides emotional and social support to its members; encourages democratic participation and citizenship; assists them in learning and performing new roles and remedies their maladjustments.

Professional social workers use their knowledge of group organization and functioning to affect the performance and adjustment of the individual. The focus is always on the individual and the group is the medium to bring about the change. The aim is advancement of social functioning. Programs are used as dynamics in fostering member to member interaction and change. To conclude the goals of group work are not limited to therapeutic interventions and treatment of emotional problems (see Barker, 1995).

## **2.2. Advantages of Group Work**

The advantages of groups are multi-fold. (a) They promote interaction and intermixing between individuals who join as members. A lot of learning comes through sharing of experiences and reflecting upon them in group situations. Through group experiences members learn to share, adjust, cooperate, lead, and tolerate; (b) This type of facilitated learning within groups brings forth a lot of change. Members can experiment with new actions in their groups, and learn to use them outside the group. The nature of group work promotes collective action and the group is a place where members learn to plan, understand and initiate collective actions; (c) As is well known, organizations are made up of collectivity of individuals that is groups. At the community level, when efforts of small groups succeed, they are used for building and strengthening people organizations. They become the foundation stone of organizations of youth, women or the older men. Groups thus prepare people for these larger roles they take up. This apart, groups are a place where the very fact that an interaction would take place with others who are having similar problems, provides immense security to the members. The individual problems when shared in groups become shared problems. Members feel less threatened with their problems when they perceive the problems of others being as much, if not more, grave. Members share their experiences, feel secure and find support within the group. Social Groups are a place where activities facilitate interaction and help members are helped to overcome their isolation and loneliness. Group members also have their own set of values.

Group workers are aware of these and also of the fact that member values are influenced by race, culture and ethnicity..

Worker's personal value systems also influence their way of working with groups. It is important that they are aware of their values and do not let these come in the way they approach their professional tasks in groups.

According to Kanopka (1963) these values are:

- a) Participation and positive relations among people of different colour, creed, age, national origin, and social class in the group.
- b) The value of cooperation and mutual decision making embodied in the principles of a participatory democracy.
- c) The importance of individual initiative within the group.
- d) The importance of freedom to participate, including expressing thoughts and feelings about matters of concern to individual members or the group as a whole, and having the right to be involved in the decision making process of the group.
- e) The value of high individualization in the group so that each member's unique concerns are addressed.

From Social group work perspectives it helps to understand Work groups or teams are the primary medium within which a socially shared climate is likely to develop and sustain through active social co-construction of work-related meanings (Anderson and West) Group workers have to continuously help members understand their own values and respect those of other members. Where required he has to clarify their values and resolve value conflicts Groups are best suited for the exercise of these values and group workers need to be well trained and sensitive to the different values systems so as to bring out the best results from their group work practice. One reason why teams can work effectively together is because they create a positive group climate based on the personal relations that they form and particular rules and principles that they all share (Zander 1993). While exploring the team work benefits to Indian public and private sector managers, the researchers found that promoting trust and cooperation by reducing hierarchical bindings renders better team work. They further advocated willful contribution and involvement of members for improving Team Effectiveness and pointed out that cooperation and coordination both are required for fruitful results of team work. This way their findings suggested trust, cooperation, involvement, cooperation and coordination as significant elements for better team work.

## Community Development

Community development was defined as a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community, with the active participation and if possible at the initiative of the community. While Community Organization is the process of mobilizing and empowering communities through their institutions, organizations, groups, leaders, advocates, and volunteers.

It is a long-term process whereby people who are marginalized or living in poverty work together to identify their needs, create change, exert more influence in the decisions which affect their lives and work to improve the quality of their lives, the communities in which they live.

Kramer and Specht defined community organization as a method of intervention whereby a professional change agent helps a community action system composed of individuals, groups or organizations to engage in planned collective action in order to deal with special problems within the democratic system of values.

This involves two major interrelated concerns:

- (a) the interactional process of working with an action system, which includes identifying, recruiting and working with members and developing organizational and interpersonal relationships among them which facilitates their efforts; and
- (b) The technical tasks involved in identifying problem areas, analyzing causes, formulating plans, developing strategies and mobilizing the resources necessary to effect action.

Gangrade ( 2001) defined community organization as the process by which the social system of the community provides for integration and adaptation within the community. This is a process that continues regardless of the work of the community organizer whose function it is to initiate, nourish and develop the process. In participating in this process the community organizer will have regard for certain values relating to the forms of social change and the means by which they may be brought about.



The concern of social worker is based on an understanding of the dynamics of human behaviour. The social worker takes pain to identify causes, The social worker possess special skills in motivating people to use their capacities in working towards desirable goals which they themselves have identified. His knowledge and skill especially in the community organization process form an integral part of his skill in working with individuals and groups.

The mobile team approach at the local as well as the regional and national levels is becoming acceptable in India Teams of persons specialized in community health, agriculture, home science or intermediate technology move from place to place be accessible to people in remote areas to motivate, educate and mobilize them.

The community organizer with his/ her expertise in human relationships can hold the team together under difficult conditions in India's far flung areas by providing leadership. He has developed a technique of solving countless human needs and problems affecting the individual by means of specific skills enabling the individual to utilize both his own and community resources to the maximum advantage. Only such types of programmes which reach out are a real challenge to the professional and can touch and improve the lives of India's people. Thus, it will help in developing team within the organization, understanding community development linking with team development with that organization development.

### **3. Social Action**

Social action should not be seen only as a method but as an overriding philosophy behind social work education in India.

—Armaity Desai

#### Social action

It s an organized group process solving general social problems & furthering social welfare objectives by legislative, social, health or economic progress. The term social action refers to organized & legally permitted activities designed to mobiles public opinion, legislation & public administration in favor of objectives believed to be socially desirable.

The profession of social work has looked at the human environment situation through the remedial lens of the primary methods for long. Such a view was based on certain assumptions about human problems prevailing in the first quarter of the 20 century. The perception then was that there were certain individuals who were in need; that there were those who required leisure time engagements through associations and groups, and also those who needed better community services through coordination and cooperation. The methods which were evolved to address these larger groups were called social case-work, social group work and community organization in the professional literature. They qualified for inclusion in the primary category on the basis of above assumptions. Other methods were thought to be supportive to them were relegated to the secondary category. Further in the development of the profession of social work, the human situation was looked at more in compartments and clients were seen as fitting into one or the other method rather than the real need which was felt for them by the professionals.

Arthur Dunham (1958) defines social action as efforts to bring about change or prevent change in current social practices or situations, through education, propaganda, persuasion or pressure, on behalf of objectives believed by the social actionists to be socially desirable.

In a revised edition he refers to situations of conflict and allows for goals of change and methods to deal with them. Social action implies potential conflict situations and promotion of a cause, measure or objective in an effort to obtain support or official action. He advocates procedural and direct action to deal with conflict situations. Social work in a developing country ought to go beyond the role of dispenser of social welfare services or a therapeutic agent.

As per Kulkarni "Social action creates the necessary conditions and climate in which social work could be done more effectively."

According to Siddiqui, Welfare approach is gradually wearing off and the contradictions in democratic system underline the need for new alternatives. According to him this is the most controversial and most challenging method. Social work as a profession has its core values as social justice and equality. Social Action is the method advocated to achieve this.

Thus it can be used in conjunction with the other methods of social work practice for effective goal achievement. It will help to understand how team can be effective for achieving organizational goals. Social action aims at making the programmes of development and welfare more functional for their respective clientele than any other method could do. In procuring the welfare services that are their due or in the claims for their right to develop, the method can be very effective.

#### 4. Social Research

According to Fanshel (1980) every profession must systematically carry out high quality research about its practices if its performance in the service of clientele is to remain effective and up to date. He states that a sustained and creditable program of research is also essential to a profession's self-respect and to its ability to maintain the positive regard of outsiders whose opinions help support and legitimize the profession's endeavors. Given the above, an important area of practice skills is of research for the social work practitioners. Research offers numerous tools to professional social workers to describe, define, measure and evaluate their work. (a) A **description** of the situation our clients come from and a description of the complex phenomenon that impact upon the lives of our clients are important. It may be a description of the strengths and potentialities of our clients. (b) With use of research we learn to **define** the concepts we use in social work in an accurate and consistent way. (c) We follow this with **measurement** of the phenomenon. Research tools help us to measure the needs of our clients, prioritize them and then determine how to help them. Measurement is also necessary to determine the progress of a client. (d) With measurement tools one can measure the client's progress or lack of it over time. It helps to make a decision on the effectiveness of our interventions.

It can therefore be seen that research skills are important for social work practice. Social work is both a science and an art and research is a source of knowledge for social workers. As social scientists, there is a lot of dependence on data base that informs social workers about the client's situations. Empirical data base is therefore an important pre-requisite for social work intervention.

When answers to various social situations cannot be found in prevailing literature or when there is a need to study the effectiveness of interventions social workers conduct their own research.

Also, research is sometimes carried out to establish the need for a new service. In fact, social workers continuously access data from multiple sources, document the progress of clients in individual or group interactions towards predetermined goals, write reports and carry out many tasks that fall in the purview of research process. from Social research it helps to focus on social issues prevailing in organization through studying various aspects such as to study the team climate for understanding factors that are affecting team effectiveness through proper understanding of group effectiveness.

## **5. Social Welfare Administration**

Social welfare administration has twin concepts of social welfare and administration embedded in it. Thus it requires an understanding of welfare and its origins as well as administration as a tool for achieving welfare. Administration as a part of governance is as old as society itself. People in a society have inherently tried to take care of destitute and underprivileged individuals either because of benevolence or because of religious and customary obligations. As governance systems evolved, with the changing political and social systems, there was an effort to institutionalize welfare.

The issue of society meeting human needs has been part and parcel of human societies. Such an effort led to incorporating these in constitutional obligations.

The welfare discourse has seen changing dimensions from charity to needs, to rights based approaches. Whatever may be the mode of approach, welfare provisions have become an integral part of governance system, hence a part of administration. Thus understanding welfare administration perforce needs an understanding of welfare and its linkages to other concepts like justice, development rights, equality etc.

At the same time the administration of welfare provision Social work dictionary defines administration social work as 'methods used by those who have administrative responsibility to determine organizational goals for a social agency or other unit; acquire resources and allocate them to carry out a program; coordinate activities towards achieving selected goals; and monitor, assess and make necessary changes in processes and structure to improve effectiveness and efficiency. In social work, the term is often used synonymously with management".

Harleigh Trecker interprets social work administration as a process of working with people in ways that release and relate their energies so that they use all available resources to accomplish the purpose of providing needed community services and programs. The major principles of social work administration as:

- a) Administration is a continuous dynamic process.
- b) Process set into motion in order to accomplish a common purpose or goal.
- c) Resources of people and material harnessed to achieve the common goal.
- d) The above is achieved through coordination and cooperation.
- e ) Implicit in these definition are the elements of planning, organizing and leadership.

Social welfare administration is to deal with areas of management and human relations in the social work arena. The scope has expanded tremendously with both the government and voluntary organizations engaged in welfare activities.

## **Conclusion**

### **1. Social Case Work**

Social case work is a method which helps by counseling the individual client to effect better social relationships & a social adjustment that makes it possible him to lead a satisfying & useful life. Gordon Hamilton points out that, "The objective of case work is to administer practical services & offer counseling in such a way as to arouse & conserve psychological energies of the client activity to involve him in the use of the service towards the solution of her/his dilemma."

Especially in occupational health care it is important to pay attention to social support and team climate at work when assessing the psychosocial factors at work and the employees' well-being. The perceived social support and team climate can be screened quite quickly in occupational health care when work-related problems are encounter social casework helps to resolve problems.

## 2. Social Group Work

Social group work is an activity which helps to participate in the activities of a group for their intellectual, emotional & physical growth and for the attainment of desirable goals of the groups. Group work as such as a method by which the group worker enables various types of groups to function in such a manner that both group interaction & programme activities contribute to the growth of the individual & the programme activities contribute to the growth of the individual & the achievement of desirable social goals.

## 3. Community Organization

Community organization is the process of planning & developing social services in order to meet the health & welfare needs of a community or larger unit. Mildred Barry says, "Community organization in social work is the process of creating & maintaining a progressively more effective adjustment between community resources & community welfare needs."

From community development it can help to understand the Team Functioning and individual role in community or organization development.

## 4. Social Action

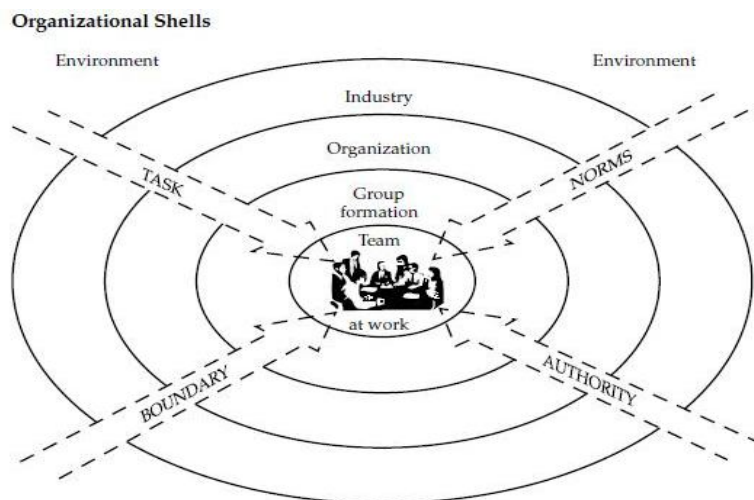
It is an organized group process solving general social problems & furthering social welfare objectives by legislative, social, health or economic progress. The term social action refers to organized & legally permitted activities designed to mobilize public opinion, legislation & public administration in favor of objectives believed to be socially desirable.

## 5. Social Welfare Research

Social welfare research systematic critical investigation of questions in the social welfare field with the purpose of yielding answers to problems of social work & of extending generally social work concept. The methods applied in social work research have been to a large extent derived from those used in sociology & social psychology as well as in history and Anthropology.

## 6. Social Welfare Administration

Social welfare administration process is to organize & to direct a social agency. The administrative aspects of social work have to do with the organization & management of social agencies public & private, including in those terms general administrative relationships among units of the same organization, personal problems, questions of finance & so on.



It is critical that social workers have a strong sense of professional identity so that the unique perspective of social work practice can contribute to the team's decision making process in the best interest of clients. This is a great challenge for social workers whose identities have often been formed by the nature of their employment, the culture of an organization or their position title. Social Workers should take pride in their preparedness for interdisciplinary teamwork and have confidence in their potential contribution to increasing the quality of service received by clients.

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