Second Edition

SOCIAL WORK

Lectures on Curriculum and Pedagogy

bodhi s.r.

NEW VEHICLE PUBLICATIONS

Social Work

Lectures
on
Curriculum and Pedagogy

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Dedicated

to

(Late) Professor S. Parasuraman

(Director TISS 2004-2018)

Foreword

The implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a pivotal moment in the restructuring of higher education in India. Among the disciplines undergoing major transformation is Social Work Education, both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. With the undergraduate programme shifting from a three-year to a four-year format, and the postgraduate programme now offered as a one-year or a one-year-with-research option, these structural changes bring with them a deeper pedagogical reconsideration. A significant feature of this renewed vision is the incorporation of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into academic curricula across disciplines.

This book emerges at this critical juncture as a unique and timely contribution. It not only supports the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into Social Work Education, but also challenges the dominance of Western-centric frameworks by rooting its theoretical and practical insights in concrete Indian realities.

A distinctive feature of this work is the inclusion of a dedicated chapter on Navayana Social Work—a framework that I find especially compelling. Its philosophical roots go back over 2500 years, but its contemporary relevance is shaped by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who reinterpreted these ideas within the framework of Buddhist thought and social justice. Navayana Social Work, as presented in this book, offers a paradigm that speaks directly to communities that continue to bear the historical wounds of untouchability and systemic exclusion. It is a framework with depth, dignity, and the power to speak to the lived experiences of the most marginalized.

Beyond Navayana, the book also explores a broad range of curriculum-related themes: the evolution of social work education in India, the role and understanding of 'field' in pedagogy, fieldwork supervision strategies, and a critical rethinking of social work theory for contemporary times. All chapters draw from grounded Indian contexts, offering fresh theoretical propositions and frameworks that break away from inherited colonial legacies in professional education.

For educators, scholars, practitioners, and students of Social Work, this book is an important resource. It offers an alternative lens—one that is indigenous, critical, and inclusive—to understand and practice social work in India. More importantly, it aligns with the spirit of NEP 2020: to foster a system of education that is holistic, rooted in India, and forward-looking. It is my hope that this work inspires dialogue, innovation, and a renewed commitment to building a social work practice that is truly reflective of India's diverse and pluralistic realities.

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Preface to Second Edition

There are five interconnected yet distinct phenomena observed in India that are shaping Social Work Education and Practice in contemporary times.

The first concerns the rise of 'Social Work Literature from Below' and concomitantly the assertion of such literature from decolonial spaces through 'margin publishers'.

The second concerns a significant historical break from the past in which the excluded or invisible/invisibilized groups are beginning to recognize the necessity of theory in the context of self and society, both for comprehending and actively engaging in the concrete conditions of their social life. They are now crafting different formulations in the domain of emancipatory theory and drawing out their own path to empowerment, while also questioning the hypocritical nature of dominant theorising, traditional knowledge production and prevailing social work theory.

The third is the underlying epistemic shift from indigenization to decolonization and currently, from decolonization to decoloniality.

The fourth concerns the global-local interconnectedness of contemporary Social Work Education and Practice. Together with this is the slow but persistent movement towards theoretical and methodological deepening; while at the same time nudging the doxa out from dominant-centric social work curriculum and theory.

The fifth is the conspicuous movement towards research and more rigorous epistemic engagements, marking the domain of knowledge as the new space of historio-political contestation for transformation and empowerment of the historically invisibilized groups.

This second edition of the book attempts to bring these observations into play. Sourced from field practice and observations, theoretical debates among social work colleagues, classroom lectures and discussions, students' theoretical interest and feedback, plus a consideration of the prevailing political climate, each of the chapters engages with these

phenomenological propositions asserted above. It throws new light on core issues concerning social work education and practice.

The book is envisaged as a text that captures the historical moment for posterity's sake. It is positioned to speak to social work educators and practitioners, especially those coming from marginalised communities, who seek to know the different perspectives that are arising and being debated in the margins. Within such a context, the book is formulated to manifest an epistemological endeavour that attempts to mirror the worldview of border thinkers. First for its own sake, second for the sake of knowledge, and third for initiating an equanimous dialogue among like-minded theoreticians seeking answers outside of the stagnated mainstream.

bodhi s.r.

Chapter I

The Evolution of Social Work Education in India

The Context and Frame

Broadly, the political position of most social workers in India is generally pro-poor, at times socially distorted and psychologically destabilized by an individual's religious affiliation, caste loyalties and region based linguistic affinity. But overall, most social workers view Indian society from class lens, and it is the category 'poor' that informs their perspective and practice. Their approaches to practice are grounded on the idea of 'developing the poor' and most interventions are framed on 'the upliftment' and 'in partnership with' the 'poor' classes. There are, however, a few social workers whose view of Indian society is grounded fundamentally around 'caste' rather than 'class', and their perspectives and intervention are directed at the structure of caste and against coercive caste relations.

At the personal level, i have been definitively impacted by these very conflictual perspectives about the nature of Indian social realities and have changed my perspective multiple times with wider field exposure and direct field engagements. In the light of these often-earth-shaking social exposures and concomitant insidious personal psychosocial transformations, i will attempt to capture in this book the changing processes of my perspectives around a single subject-Social Work Curriculum and Pedagogy, contemplated over a period of time.

I have written some of these analytical reflections in the form of field and lecture notes. A few of these notes have been written as early as 2007, making the propositions and content somewhat out dated and a little incongruous. That is to admit that while it would have been judicious from my end to update them and make it more relevant to my students and the social work community that i often engage more intensely with, i have left the main body of text as it is. I have however made minor alterations to these notes to make the text more coherent, readable, contextual and empirically grounded. I have often used these notes in lectures that i deliver to my students and have also presented them to colleagues in colloquiums. Over the years i have also enriched them further based on students' questions and more expansive field experiences.

At the core of most of my writings is a conscious theoretical attempt to view social work content from an alternative perspective, sometimes 'from below', at times 'from within', in other context from 'alternative centers' and also from a 'beyond the binary' points-of-view. These perspectives have a name. It is called the Dalit and Tribal Social Work (DTSW) perspective. All the chapters in this book, are fundamentally grounded on these points-of-view.

Social Work Education in India: Its Evolution and Underlying Historical Context

Before unraveling the evolution of social work in India it is important to note that in the year 1936 three schools of social work were set up in three unique cities. These are the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work Bombay (now Mumbai), the Sao Paulo School of Social Service and the Institute for Social Work for Girls in Cairo. Whether the setting-up of these institutes on the same year was a mere historical accident or a strategic response to national and global crisis depends on how one conceives social work.

Nonetheless the development of Social Work Education and its curriculum in India can roughly be identified around some key historical phases that began before 1936. While it is non-judicious to fix history rigidly, I will attempt to capture these phases loosely around eight somewhat distinct but key evolutionary time spans. I will look at the debates surrounding the period and also the curriculum offered by various schools during specific phases.

Phase One: Social Work Education - Ideas and Attempts before 1935

Before 1935, from a professional social work discipline point-of-view, there wasn't any framework of real theoretico-historical significance. There were activities of the elites that were fundamentally charitable and some even had a nuanced political vision embedded in charity such as those of the Servant of India Society initiated in 1905. In the late 19 and early 20 century, the practice of what could be loosely called social work was mostly remedial, reformist[1] and ameliorative. The activities taken up were relief

[1] The contributions at reforms of Hindu society such as those attempted by Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Sasipada Bannerji, Mahadev

for the poor, institutions for widows and orphans, care of the disabled, establishment of charitable dispensaries and the setting of hospitals. Most of these efforts however were contextual depending on activities and interest from one province to another. During this period, we also observed a concern for the protection of children as reflected in the Madras Children Act 1920, the Bengal Children Act 1922 and the Bombay Children Act 1924.

As against this backdrop, there were also historical actions and initiatives that can be denoted as fundamental and transformative. Most of these emanated from the 'depressed classes' themselves which included the contributions of Jotiba Phule on education, Shahu Maharaj on political representation and Babasaheb Dr.B.R.Ambedkar on total emancipation. Each organized the 'depressed classes' towards education, livelihoods, development, change and progress. A significant strategy observed during this time were the attempts at altering the consciousness of oppressed peoples while at the same time negotiating spaces with the powers that be through direct field interventions, mass mobilization and the print media.

Phase Two: The Formulation Period from 1935-1946

Significant during this phase is the setting up of the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work. There was also fervor to identify areas of interventions especially in Bombay Province. In the year 1936-1937 there was a series of lectures organized on the theme 'Some Social Service of the Government of Bombay'. In these lectures 10 topics were identified. They were Public health programmes, Medical department, work of the labour office, factory law and administration, work-men's compensation, work of labour officer, industrial housing in Bombay city, village improvement in Nasik District, the work of cooperative societies and the Bombay Children Act.

In 1938, a Volume was issued by H. M. Stationery Office, entitled Social Service in India. Its chapter included, Agriculture; Medicine and Public

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Govind Ranade and Pandita Ramabai, Natarajan was notable. For the Muslim society the efforts of Syed Ahmed Khan were noteworthy. There were also mass reformist movements such as the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Indian National Social Conference, Women's Indian Association and many others.

Health; Education; Industrial Labour; Co-operation; and Local Government; Voluntary Effort and Social Welfare. However, this period did fall within a period that began in 1920 and lasted till 1947 where the non-cooperation movements were very widespread and active. With a total lack of funds for social service, many social programmes did not proceed beyond a point.[2]

Phase Three: The Role Identification Period from 1947-1960

There were many journals that sprang up during this period. The International Social Work (ISW) was started by the International Conference of Social Work and the International Association of Schools of Social Work in 1958, with a base in India. The Social Work Forum (SWF) was started by the Indian Association of Trained Social Workers in 1963. The Lucknow University Journal of Social Work (LUJSW) was started by the Department of Social Work of Lucknow University in 1962. Other publication in social work got a further boost through these journals as well as through publication of books on various aspects of social work profession, authored by educators such as Frances Maria Yasas, D.P. Chaudhary, M.S.Gore and K.K.Jacob. The key event in this period concerns the appointment of the first UGC review committee on Social Work education.

Phase Four: The Reflection Period from 1960-1980

The TISS had just celebrated its silver jubilee in 1961. Significant events during this period were the setting up of the two UGC Review committees on social work education. The first was set up in 1960 and the second in 1975. The first committee submitted its report in 1965 and the second in 1980. An important event in social work history that took place in 1964 was when Professional Social Workers and Gandhian Constructive Workers collectively formed a study-group. Three individuals - Jayaprakash Narayan (Director, Gandhian Institute of Studies, Varanasi) Dr. M.S. Gore (Tata Institute of Social Sciences) and Sugata Dasgupta (National Institute of Community Development) initiated this process. Their vision was to create intersections, both in theory and practices,

[2] Many of these events were captured by Wadia, A.R (1961) in her book 'History and Philosophy of Social Work.'

between the two groups and formulate a 'culture-bound theory and philosophy of social work and to disseminate the information.'[3] Proceedings of this study group was published by the Gandhian Institute of Studies, Varanasi in the form of a book titled, "Towards a Philosophy of Social Work" in 1967 edited by Dasgupta. This text is rich in content and perspective and did provide an insight into the theoretical processes during the said period.

The Planning Commission also published the first edition of the Encyclopedia of Social Work in India in 1968, with 12 articles on different aspects of social work profession. A significant event took place in the form of G.R. Banarjee's felicitation on her retirement from TISS in 1972 where her papers on social work were compiled in a book form and was later published in 1975 titled 'Field Work Supervision' by the Indian Journal of Social Work (IJSW).

Phase Five: The 'Search for Meaning' Period from 1980-1990

This period was significant in many ways. For one, the report of the second review committee was out and many schools of social work were readapting their curriculum and incorporating new courses like social action and social problems in India. Supposedly there were attempts to engage with structure much more than at any point in time in the history of professional social work. While some social work institutes had moved towards a generic social work programme, there were string arguments made to continue the specialization framework in the TISS in 1982. In the domain of the production of social work literature, one could argue that it was this phase that saw the most creative writings in terms of arguments and even research and development. Further the second edition of the Encyclopedia of Social Work in India was published by the Ministry of Welfare in 1987 with 10 articles on the social work profession. R.K. Nayak and H.Y. Siddiqui edited a book on Social Work and Social Development in 1989, mostly based on papers presented at a seminar on social work education in Bhubaneswar.

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[3] Special Issues on Gandhian Contribution to Social Work Profession, Maharashtra Journal of Social Work.

The UGC also published a Report on the Curriculum Development Centre in Social Work Education in 1990. During this period, we also witnessed the crystallization of people's disenchantment with the development paradigm and its claims to usher a just social order. Saldanha[4] captured these processes in his article 'Towards a Conceptualization of Social Action within Social Work: Teaching Social Action as a Dialogue between Theoretical Perspectives and Between Theory and Practice'.

Phase Six: The Contemplative Period from 1991-2004

This was the period that saw the rise of the NGOs and the slow withdrawal of the state from welfare responsibilities. While there were some very innovative attempts by social work educators to enrich social work with newer perspectives and fields of practice, there was not much in terms of impact, both theory and practice made on the lives of the most oppressed and marginalized population in the country. This prompted A.Ramaiah to confront social work education in his famous article 'The Plight of Dalits: A Challenge to Social Work Profession' published by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences special issue brought out in its 60th year celebration on the theme 'Towards a Peoples Centered Development' in 1998. At this point, social work education seems to be engaging with many new domains and even incorporating new teaching content, except for the issues that really matter, in which mass oppression, atrocity and marginalization were all taking place rampantly. I shall engage with his ideas in greater details in the following chapter.

However, it is important to point out that on the issue of women's development, many social work institutes did engage with it in all seriousness. The Directory of Social Work Education Facilities in India, published by the Ministry of Welfare in 1995 which listed a total of 53 schools, mentioned seven institutes where courses on women's issues were part of the curriculum. The course was either titled "women welfare" or "women and child welfare". While the questions of caste were somewhat negated, many social work practitioners and educators have actively

[4] Saldanha, D (2008). 'Towards a Conceptualization of Social Action within Social Work: Teaching Social Action as a Dialogue between Theoretical Perspectives and Between Theory and Practice' in the Indian Journal of Social Work Vol. 69(2), pp. 111-137. There are some very interesting insights in this article. I shall touch on them in the next chapter.

through the years contributed to women's studies, women's movement and reforms in government policies and laws related to women. However, women's/gender issues are still part of a person-centered interest in social work. The issues of teaching courses on women and the effort to integrate gender sensitivity into the curriculum is a political process, as it is considered 'subjective' by the traditionalists who believe that education should be 'neutral'[5].

In 1998 the Indian Journal of Social Work published a special issue on 'Gender Aware Social Work'. Several social work educators and practitioners have written on a wide range of concerns of social work, including the imperative need for integration of gender analysis in social work curriculum, like Social Development and Social Policy, recognition of the bias in laws for women, and field instruction. Field practice included gender analysis of specific problems of women like wives of alcoholics, integrated rural development programme for girl children, etc. Further a critique of social work practice and development of theory of practice is essential for social work to effectively stand as a helping profession of the issue of violence against women.

Phase Seven: The Deconstruction Period from 2005-2012

The TISS went through a major restructuring of its social programmes in 2005. As part of this process, a conceptualization that tried to capture the Indian reality was formulated in order to provide a conceptual frame for the formulation of new masters' programme. This was discussed in general body meeting of social work educators in August 2005, in which i was an active participant. The debates and discussions were meant to arrive at an external and internal environment match, leading to the creation of new 'work teams' around Centers[6] that would provide direction for formulation of a new syllabus for the Social Work programme of TISS. The meeting was supposed to facilitate a movement from specializations to super

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[5] Dave and Desai, (1998) quoted in Anjali Dave's 'Feminist Social Work Intervention: Special Cells for women and children' from the Book, "The violence of normal times" edited by Kalpana Kannabiran (2005)

[6] The shift from five departments of social work to six centers includes, (i) Center for Health & Mental Health (ii) Center for Community Organization & Development Practice (iii) Center for Criminology & Criminal Justice (iv) Center for Social Justice & Governance (v) Center for Disability Studies & Action (vi) Center for Equity for Women, Children & Families

specializations, conceived as 'concentrations.' The earlier five specializations[7] had twelve courses each and in addition there were also basic courses, methods courses and optional courses taught over two years (four semesters). The programme at this point as it appeared after the external-internal environment match emanating from conceptualization of external reality that was presented to the faculty[8] is shown in Table 1:

[7] Family & Child Welfare, Medical & Psychiatric Social work, Urban & Rural Community Development, Criminology & Correctional Administration and Social Welfare Administration

[8] Since i was an active participant in this restructuring process, i kept a copy of this initial diagram when it was distributed and discussed among faculty colleagues.

Table 1: Deconstructing the TISS Programme[9]

Focus	Thrust	Field of Practice Concentrations	Knowledge Based / Practice Concentrations
Structural Changing Social, Political, Economic, Cultural & Technological Context	-Political Economy of Development, Poverty & Environmental Justice - Social Structure Resistance & Change - Globalization, Technology Culture & Identity - Democracy, State, Civil Society & Human Rights		(1)Conflicts, Peace & Human Security
Sectoral Capabilities, Mechanisms, Systems	-Development & Governance, -Law & Social Policy, -Health & Education, -Human & Natural Disasters	(1)Health & Development	(2)Rural Devp, Environment & Sustainable Livelihoods (3)Urban Devp: Unorganized Sectors & Livelihoods (4)Social Work in the Field of Mental Health (5)Social Policy & Planning (6)Community Health (7)Disasters, Impoverishment & Social Vulnerability
Realities Group & Identities	-Women, Dalits, Adivasis (Tribals), Minorities, Children, Youth, Aged, Disabled, Delinquent	(2)Women Centered Social Work (3)Dalit & Tribe Centered Social Work (4)Persons with Disability & Equalization of Opportunity (5)Criminology & Justice	(8)Juvenile Justice & Youth in Conflict (9)Developmental/Therapeutic Counseling (10)Socio-Legal Rehabilitation Practice (11)Advanced Practice with Children & Families (12)Youth & Change
Organization Units of Social Organization	-Family & Community	(6)Social Work with Children & Families (7)Community Organization & Development Practice	(13) Family Social Work

The debates concerning the TISS restructuring centered to a great extent on the deconstruction of the earlier specializations. At times it was pitched as a challenge to the earlier specialization framework and in other occasions as an improvement on the same. Fundamental in this process however was the emergence of new areas that were called 'Fields of Practice'.

[9] TISS Restructuring documents available with the author

Around the years 2006 to 2010 there was also numerous attempts across the country to indigenize social work curriculum and a number of proposals, innovations and frameworks were institutionalised. These were observed in the curriculums of Mizoram University (2009), Loyola College (2009), Bharati Vidyapeeth University (2009), Lucknow University (2009) and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (2009).

In the TISS, Mumbai however, a new concept called 'concentrations' replaced the earlier 'specializations' in social work. They were formulated around major and minor concentrations. The major concentrations were conceived around 'Fields of Practice' (FOP) and the minor concentrations were conceived around 'knowledge based', 'skill areas' and 'thematic based'. While the first year was generic in approach and thrust, beginning third semester students were to choose their field of practice concentrations. There was a total of seven Fields of Practice concentrations of 12 credits each with a rural practicum attached to the concentrations. These concentrations were offered to the students of which they can choose one. In the fourth semester students had to opt for one out of twelve thematic, knowledge based or skill-based concentrations of total 8 credits each. First year field work placements were generic while the third and fourth semester fieldwork was attached to the third semester concentration.

Interestingly around the years 2011 to 2012 there was another critical re-assembling of social work curriculum that kick-started in the TISS. The reasons for the same are plenty but it suffices to state that somewhere the immediate curriculum was not sitting well within the school context when other factors like student's choices, faculty expertise, field requirements and institutional capacities were considered. The realization that came about was that there was a need for rationalization of the curriculum keeping in mind faculty workload, student's needs and possibility of offering all social work programmes. Based on the system of giving students a free choice to opt for their areas of interest, a hierarchy of sorts was setting in among the FOPs which was felt important to dilute. A number of committees were set up to relook and streamline the curriculum in which colleagues from other social work departments of different universities also participated actively.

During this period i had personally travelled to many social work colleges[10] and had detailed discussions with social work colleagues on curriculum. Most were very keen to hear about the new TISS curriculum. While some were appreciative of the innovations taking place, others were not so enthused by such wide spread conceptualization of social work. I did feel a tension around curriculum among colleagues from colleges who were strict adherents of the generic programmes and the specializations. The TISS however went ahead with its second round of restructuring of their programmes in 2011 and by 2012 its Academic Council passed the new social work curriculum that was offered for the upcoming batches. I have provided a detailed account of the same in the third chapter of the book while conceptualizing the 'field'.

Phase Eight: The Navayana Period beginning 2012

During this phase we observed the rise and consolidation of more organic social work curriculum that spoke directly on domains that emanated from marginalized and excluded groups. Significant among them are Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action which constitutes Dalit Social Work and Tribal Social Work, Women Centered Practice and Disability Studies and Action.

Many other schools of social work were also reviewing their curriculum at this point and inserting components that directly engage with structure, structural issues and social development. However, while new courses were added to existing curriculum, there was nothing significant in terms of new domains of social work practice. Some still sought a generalist practice while some still follow the specialization model. The TISS in 2012 offered three new Masters of Arts in Social Work with nine social work programmes. I will touch upon only the three new programmes as i have noted above.

The Masters in 'Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action' (DTSA) offered 78 credits. There were 26 credits of thematic courses, 12 credits of fieldwork and 6 credits for research. The other remaining credits had a generic thrust. The DTSA programme was unique and the only one of its kind in the

[10] I visited the social work department Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi University, Lucknow University, Nirmala Niketan, Rajagiri College of Social Work, Karve Institute of Social Service and discussed their curriculum with them and also shared the new curriculum in TISS.

country. It has a very philosophical but contextual thrust and is wide in scope and theoretical depth. It engages with global realities from a Dalit and Tribal perspective. These are conceptually rich perspectives that provide students with an extensive understanding of social realities.

The M.A. Social Work in Women Centered Practice (WCP) had similar credit structure like DTSA. It is also one of its kinds in the country and is rich both theoretically and in practice.

Finally, the Disability Studies and Action (DSA) programme which is an important area that the School of Social Work in the TISS, Mumbai has been trying to augment and strengthen over the years also came up with its own curriculum structure.

There are other new programmes that emerged during this time but the above three were unique as it was for the first time that social work curriculum began to enter such challenging domains. Since these very unique programmes have been introduced in the TISS, their curriculum has gone through further alterations. Each of these programmes have now incorporated the new concept mandated and institutionalised by the University Grants Commission around the concept of CBCS or Choice Based Credit System courses. Nevertheless, the overall structure of most curriculum remains as structured initially.

It is also important to note here that during this period new social work journals came into the public domain. Significant among them are the Indian Journal of Dalit and Tribal Social Work (IJDTSW) that published its first issue in 2012. Later in 2013 another journal, the Indian Journal of Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action (IJDTSA) was introduced. Both these journals were copyrighted by the Tribal Intellectual Collective India.[11]

In the domain of social work perspectives, a number of ways of seeing began to emerge during this period having implications both on social work education and practice. While i have detailed these perspectives from across regions of the globe in the following chapters, i will try to bring them together in a conceptual frame and present it in Diagram 2 below under the title – Perspectives in Indian Social Work after 2013. However,

11 The Tribal Intellectual Collective India began in 2009 and i have been its National Convener (Academic) since.

a note of caution regarding the same; when one brings all social work perspectives together cutting across context in the world, including those emerging from India under a single framework, the conceptions overlap and become more complex. The perspectives from India that i place in the framework were available in the public domain around 2013, some of which have been further refined into various Master's programmes.

Diagram 2: Perspectives in Indian Social Work after 2013[12]

Focus on Structure	**Radical Social Work** (Raisers of consciousness) {Anti Oppression Perspective}	**Structural Social Work** [Pro Equality] {Pro Change Perspective}	**Women Centered Social Work** {Anti Patriarchy} {Pro Women Perspective}	**Dalit Social Work** {Anti Untouchability} {Perspective from below}
Focus on Community	**Tribal Social Work** {Diversity - Dialogue} {Perspective from within}		**Gandhian Social Work** {Reform - Reconstruct} {Perspective from above}	
Focus on Individual	**Interactionist Social Work** (Seekers after meaning) {Systems Perspective}		**Traditional Social Work** (Fixers) {Perspective: Status quo}	

Note: Howe's (1987) labels for each grouping are given in parentheses ( ) and Mullaly's (1993) label for Structural Social Work is given in square brackets [ ]. The author's formulations are given in curly brackets { }.

[12] Based on the earlier framework by Howe (1987) which includes Traditional Social Work (fixers), Marxist Social Work (revolutionaries), Radical Social Work (raisers of consciousness) and Interactionist Social Work (seekers after meaning) Sources: Whittington and Holland (1985), D. Howe (1987), i have added Mulally's (1993) conception of structural social work and made my own interpretation of his position. In addition, i have also further refined the conception of the ideologies in social work practice in the domain of the theoretical premise from an earlier paper published by adivaani in bodhi s.r(2016) on Tribal Social Work, Dalit Social Work, Gandhian Social Work and made minor additions and changes to Structural Social Work, Radical Social Work and Women Centered Social Work. An important point to note regarding social work perspectives in India is that among the many newer social work ideas that i have placed in Diagram 8, the school of Gandhian social work remains dominant in both teaching and practice. Other perspectives and schools of thought to this day, still occupy miniscule theoretical space in social work education.

As on 2019, there are also newer ideas that have emerged around Livelihoods. However, as a consolidated theoretical closure to the above eight phases of the evolution of social work education, i will attempt in the next chapter to provide an overarching framework to read the same around the idea of social work epistemologies.

The Theoretical Thrust of the Text-Context

All the chapters in this book have two key motives. One is more personal, that is to engage more deeply with social work education, to problematise the 'given' and to produce the new. Two is more related to my students, that is to write in ways that clarify perspectives and transmit social work 'skills' and insights through writing to them.

Over the years i have personally used these lecture notes to clarify my own thought process and to deepen my understanding of the said domain, all the while transacting skills to my learning/teaching community whenever i prepare my lectures and deliver them.

Following this introduction, in chapter two i attempt to engaged with theory in social work education and practice. In chapter three i discuss the history of social work education in India sourced from my own experience.

In chapter four, i engage with a key concept in social work; the 'field'. The concept 'field' is used so often and across such wide domains in social work education that we have lost sight of what it probably refers to. Sometimes taken as given, i felt there was a need to deconstruct such conceptual 'givens', not only to produce new meanings but also to challenge the status quo.

In the fifth chapter i touch upon the micro elements of the social work curriculum and attempt to unravel their premises, their objectives, their expected outcomes and how they link to other processes within the curriculum framework. This reflection was important for me for many reasons, but the key reason being the need to re-imagine the social work curriculum.

The sixth chapter constitutes the notes of a lecture i delivered to the Navayana Social Work community in Mumbai on the subject of the

'Navayana learning process'. Under the aegis of the Navayana Buddhist Sangha, we meet often to discuss and reflect on theoretical issues that concerns the learning and unlearning process of 'Navayana'. In this chapter i engage little more deeply with the constitutive concepts and the Navayana Social Work framework.

The seventh chapter focuses on fieldwork pedagogy, pedagogical practices and pedagogical strategies. Here i attempt to flesh out minute processes involved in fieldwork supervision and the learning/educating process. I had wanted to cover the whole two years programme but the article became too lengthy and thus restricted myself to only the first-year fieldwork. Over the years i have also engaged more deeply with second year fieldwork and have gained many more insights into fieldwork education. I will leave this part out of this book for now.

Chapter II

Framing Social Work Theory for Contemporary Times

The changing nature of social reality(s) since the 1990s have begun demanding new ways of knowing (epistemology), doing (methodology), being (ontology) and living (axiology) from professional social workers. This chapter is an attempt to throw light on theoretical trends that are considered important for social work in contemporary times. Divided into four sections, the chapter discusses the implications of the IFSW Global Definition for social work in India, a conceptualisation of social work history as a theory, the intersections between social work and sustainable development goals and the epistemological bases of social work sourced from teaching and practice.

Laying the Context and Frame

When social work began to break free from its post-independence conservative shell after the second review in 1985, new social work theories began to emerge. Among those educators and practitioners considered progressive within the profession, the social nature of problems embodied in a structure of exclusion and marginalisation began to occupy their analyses of the Indian society. This period could be identified as a fundamental shift in social work theorising, where social workers took upon themselves the responsibility to generate new social theory relevant to their context and practice within the confines of the profession. Key markers of this period were, the felt need to intersect and embed social science discipline into the curriculum.

There were however many questions that remains unanswered, remnants of which reverberates to this very day. These concerns the possibility of identifying a core in social work education, the universal versus the diverse nature of social work theory and practice, the contradictions between Western social work and an indigenous Indian social work that is born out of its own context, the disagreements over the best way to teach social work chosen between generic, specialization or different context specific programs, the debate between context as definitive or method as a prerogative for approaching social work, and the tension between those who see social work as a discipline and a profession. Over and above these

issues lay the persistent confusion about the location of social workers in the state structure, the non-government sector and civil society at large in terms of roles and responsibilities.

The Broad Theoretical Framework Crafted by the IFSW and IASSW

The framework set by the International Federation of Social Work (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IIASSW) (2014)[13] in its General Meeting, while debatable, has provided an important direction and disciplinary boundary for Social Work education and practice across the globe. Identifying that social work is both a profession and a unique discipline, it identifies the promotion of 'social change', 'social cohesion' and the 'empowerment and liberation of peoples' as its fundamental task. It also asserts the 'respect for the inherent worth and dignity of human beings', 'doing no harm', 'respect for diversity', and 'upholding human rights and social justice' and 'collective responsibility' as its guiding principles.

These concepts together as a framework and theoretical position, kind of mark social work as a unique profession, that directs itself to address life challenges and enhance well being by engaging with peoples and structures. Coupled with this, the discipline of social work, embodied in the definition, also included available theories from the social sciences, humanities, indigenous knowledge and also those theories produced by social workers themselves.

Theorizing Social Work Education and Practice in Contemporary Times

The Social Work Profession is currently located within very complex and conflictual contexts. Broad politico-historical trends that characterise global reality at this historical juncture includes the use of violence and war as a project of threat, dominance and control; the weakening of International systems as a space of dialogue and conflict resolution; an

[13] International Federation of Social Workers:(2014) Global Definition of Social Work. https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/

explosion of reactionary forces around religious ideology; the refugization of peoples; the usage of sanctions by one or more countries against the others outside the United Nations Security Council system; the rise of the fascist state and the withdrawal of the welfare state from public responsibility; the privatisation of education and health; the consolidation of massive wealth in a few hands; the deterioration of the climate systems inclusive of the likelihood of an impending ecological crisis; the rise of artificial intelligence and its intersection with multiple domains of social life; and a looming threat of nuclear war among the big powers. These broad global trends coincide with national trends that are characterised by massive incorporation of citizens into a digital culture; increased religious, linguistic and ethnic conflicts; the privatization of welfare; the subjugation of the social by the economic; development as power, religion as ideology; increased regionalism; and the rise of a more cohesive conservative culture.

In the light of these above trends, the education and practice of social work, require a fundamental restructuring and re-imagination of its theoretical base. This is so because earlier theories are becoming limited in helping educators and practitioners to comprehend very dynamic and complex realities arising from these fundamental changes at both the international and national levels. Reading the context from such a perspective as noted above, an attempt is made to discuss a theoretical proposition located within the historical evolution of social work theory.

Social Work debates arising within the Indian context now points to intrinsic linkages between discourse and void as fundamental domains that social workers need to engage more seriously with (Bodhi, 2019[14], 2022). In India, discussions around these specific domains are observed taking place within those engaging in Anti-Caste Social Work (Ramaiah, 1996[15];

[14] Bodhi S.R (2019). *Social Work: Lectures on Curriculum and Pedagogy*. First Edition. The New Vehicle: Nagpur

[15] Ramaiah.A (1998). The Plight of Dalits: A Challenge to Social Work Profession. In M. a. Narayan, *Towards People Centered Development Part I and II* (pp. p.124-146). Mumbai: Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

Bodhi, 2016[16]), Tribal Social Work (Bodhi, 2014[17], 2016[18]), Women Centered Social Work and a minuscule group within Structural Social Work (Saldanha, 2008[19]). Each of their attempts has been to locate social work within a theoretical framework that unravels the broad socio-ecological canvas in which social workers attempts to intervene for change-cohesion.

Diagram 3, titled 'Meta Discipline Approach to Social Work Intervention in India,' which is posited as a theory for social work, represents a particular conceptualization of the debates and discussions about the nature and context of social work engagements. Formulated in the form of a frame of reference, a brief discussion is attempted.

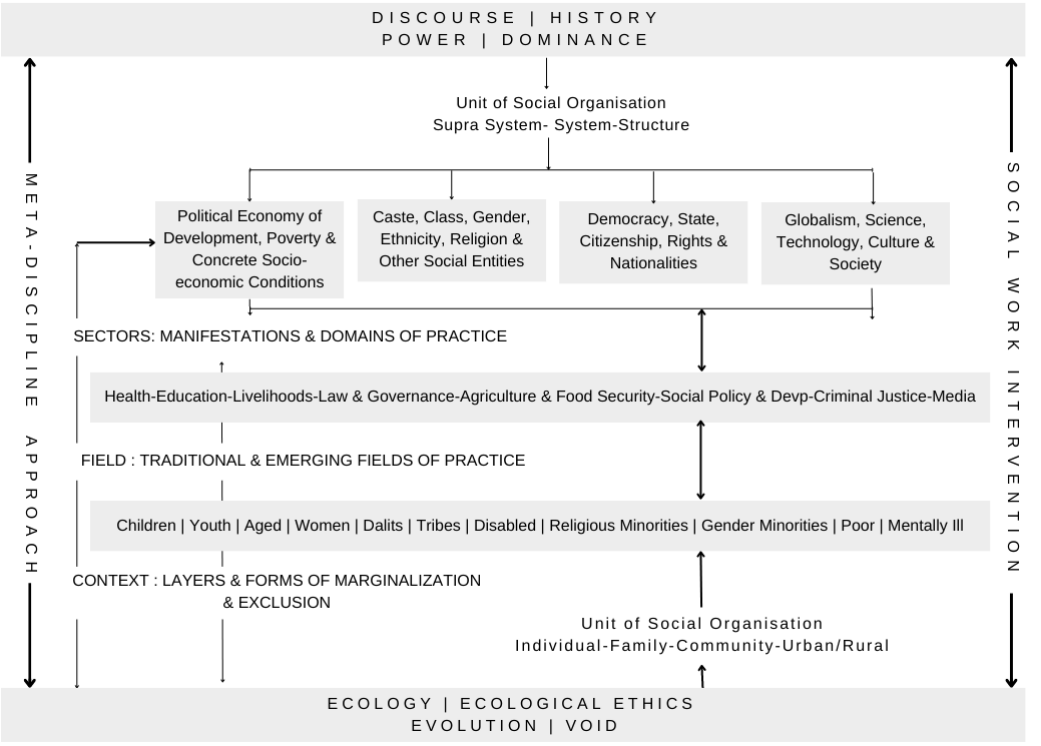
16 Bodhi S.R (2016). Dalit Social Work: Reading Its Theory from a Tribal Location. In *Social Work in India* (Ed.) Bodhi S.R, pp. 397-414.

17 Bodhi S.R (2014). Towards a Theory of Tribal Social Work: Some Reflections on its Methodological Foundation. The Journal of Development Practice, Vol 1. Don Bosco University.

18 Bodhi S.R (2016). Tribal Social Work: Reflections on Its Philosophical Foundations. In *Social Work in India* (Ed.) Bodhi S.R, pp. 415-429.

19 Saldanha. D (2008). Towards a Conceptualization of Social Action within Social Work: Teaching Social Action as a Dialogue between Theoretical Perspectives and Between Theory and Practice. *Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol.69 (2), p.111-137.

Diagram 3: The Meta-Discipline Approach to Social Work Intervention in India



In direct relations to the immediate domain of sectors of social work intervention such as health, education, livelihoods, law and governance, agriculture and food security, social policy and development, criminal justice and media, are four overarching interrelated binary concepts – discourse, history, power and dominance. The relations that this discursive domain is intrinsically linked to the structures and systems of sectors of social work intervention is now being asserted much more than at any point in time in the history of social work. Mediating between the discursive domain and sectors of social work intervention are systems and structures such as (i) political economy of development, poverty and concrete socio-economic conditions of peoples, (ii) caste, class, gender, ethinicity, religion, and other social structures that define peoples' identities, (iii) democracy, state, citizenship, rights and nationalities, and (iv) globalism, science, technology, culture and the immediate reality of a society.

Based on how these structures and systems manifest through sectors of social work intervention, traditional and emerging social entities in which marginalization and exclusion takes place are identities such as as child, youth, aged, women, dalits, tribes, disabled, religious minorities, gender minorities, the poor and mentally ill. This particular domain of social reality is one of the most complex layers that requires a great degree of sensitivity and theoretical finesse because of its dynamic nature and also the question it poses to the social background of social workers.

These social entities are also located and organised around various units of social organisation such as the individual, family, community and around the rural/urban. At the base of this frame of reference lies ecology, ecological ethics, evolution and void. While the first three concepts are not difficult to explain, the category 'void' requires a somewhat deeper understanding of the physical nature of the universe and its building blocks.

Theorizing the Sustainable Development Goals from a Social Work Perspective

The seventeen domains of intervention identified and framed by the United Nations around Sustainable Development[20] are an important indicator for social work theorising. Domains such as poverty; hunger; health and well being; education; gender equality; water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; reduced inequalities; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; life below water; life on land; peace, justice and strong institutions; and partnerships for the sustainable development goals have traditionally been areas where social workers have intervened actively. These goals adopted by the United Nations Member States in 2015, envisaged to achieve by 2030 "provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future."

The discussion that led to the development of SDGs began in the Earth Summit, held in June 1992 in Rio de Jenerio, Brazil where more than 178

[20] United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2015). The Sustainable Development Goals. https://sdgs.un.org/goals

countries adopted the Agenda 21 which is "a comprehensive plan of action to build a global partnership for sustainable development to improve human lives and protect the environment." In the year 2000, September, a follow up of the 1992 discussion led to member states declaring and unanimously adopting the Millennium Development Goals which kept as its goal the attempt to reduce poverty by 2015. This was then followed up by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg South Africa, 2002 where member states "reaffirmed the global community's commitments to poverty eradication and the environment, and built on Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration by including more emphasis on multilateral partnerships." Again in 2012, in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development or Rio+20, Brazil, member states adopted the outcome document titled "The Future We Want" in which they decided, inter alia, to launch a process to develop a set of SDGs to build upon the MDGs and to establish the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. This led to a setting up of a 30-member Open Working Group in 2013 by the General Assembly to develop a proposal on SDGs. Negotiations in the General Assembly culminated in the subsequent adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the seventeen SDGs in September 2015 which is a "landmark year for multilateralism and International Policy." (United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015).

The collectivisation of efforts by states and various stakeholders around the SDGs is a key marker for social workers, as they are nudged to reframe their theoretical understanding of domains of practice and rework their intervention models and strategies. That each of the 17 domains had always been areas where social workers had actively engaged in is a fact, but now that state structures and financing are tuned constructively to intervene in these critical areas, opportunities for social work intervention have opened up both in the domains of theory and practice.

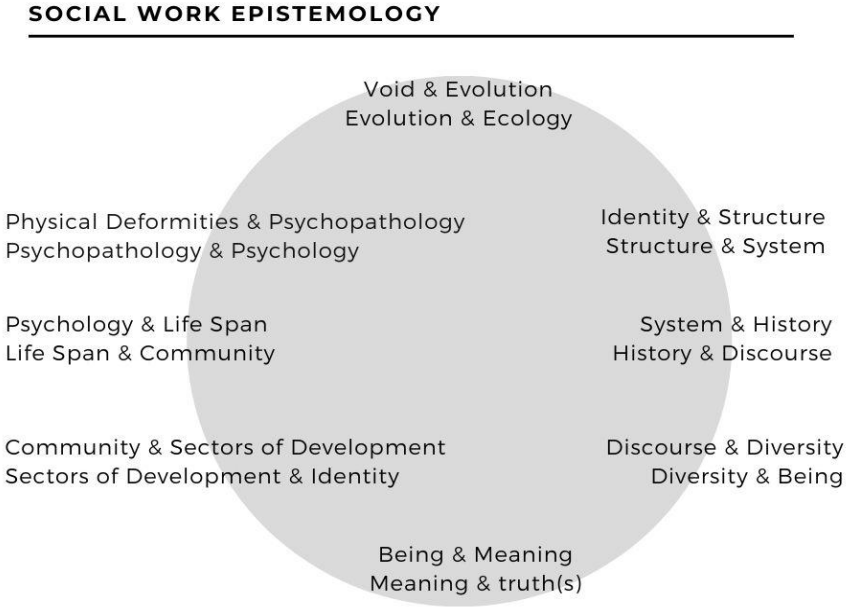
Theorising the Practice Domain of Social Work: An Epistemological Approach

In this section, I wish to describe the framework of a context based social work theorising from the perspective of epistemology. This is critical for the project of social work episteme as it resolves certain internal

contradictions within social work at two levels. One concerns the bounded nature of social work theory that is rooted in practice as social workers engage with their field, and two, the way social workers perceive the work of other social workers outside of their own domain of work.

Diagram 4 titled Social Work Epistemology provide a glimpse of the more fundamental and sublime ontological epistemic conception that, at least in my observation, many of the social workers i know hold as a frame of reference, or more succinctly, an epistemological orientation, to then evaluate or judge social reality, social issues and social intervention. Social workers hold certain beliefs, and these beliefs constitute the frame of reference in which their ontological views and epistemic practice are perceived and grounded. This frame of reference is the backdrop against which social workers logically evaluate other propositions which they conceive, perceive, interpret and concomitantly act upon.

Diagram 4: Social Work Epistemology



In this section, i would try to provide a brief explanation of this frame of reference which i think, for the sake of this chapter, should suffice. The locus classicus could be the rise of the methods and specializations in social

work education. This is a good point to start. While all schools of social work in India do not necessarily follow the methods framework nor the specialization framework, the emergence of the social work methods to gain greater expertise of the practice component in social work intervention did change social work course curriculum, teaching and teachers. A set of teachers began to specialize in Casework, some in Group Work, others in Community Organization, while others also developed expertise in Social Welfare Administration, Policy Practice, Social Action and Social Research. Over and above these methods were built and formulated a number of specializations starting around 1940 (please see Diagram 5).

Over the years as this framework entrenched itself in social work education, clear lines of demarcation between methods, specialized departments engaging in a particular field of practice linked to the Method, and teachers and practitioner's expertise in a said area began to be developed. For those who had greater interest and expertise in the issues concerning people with physical deformities and psychopathology, including psychopathology and psychology, the Method of Casework came naturally to them and two specializations emerged from this grouping- Medical and Psychiatric Social Work and Disability Social Work. For those who were interested in psychology and life span, including life span and community, the Method of Group Work came naturally to them, and the from this grouping the specialization of Family and Child Welfare and partly Criminology and Correctional Administration emerged. For those with interest in Community and Sectors of development, including sectors of development and identity, the Method of Community Organization became their forte and two specializations emerged – Urban and Rural Community Development and Social Welfare Administration. For those interested in Identity and structure including structure and system, the Methods of Policy Practice and Social Action became their domain of theorizing and practice, from which specializations like Women Centered Social Work Practice and Dalit and Tribal Social Work emerged. For those interested in systems and history including history and discourse, the Method of Social Research took priority over all other Methods. Knowledge was seen by these social workers as the key domain for consciousness raising and social change. Many new areas of interest have emerged, such as discourse and diversity including diversity and being;

being and meaning, including meaning and truth(s); and finally void and evolution including evolution and ecology. But these are yet to become Methods in social work that corresponds to these fields of practice.

Concluding Remarks

In my lecture on this subject of this chapter to both Masters and Bachelors students, the engagement has been very fulfilling. Delivering the lecture was challenging but students seemed highly receptive to this overarching view of both social work episteme and new emerging theoretical domains of social work practice.

The lecture, i need to state, was located within a course titled 'International Social Work and Indigenous Peoples'. It formed the second component of the course. Thus, the lecture content must be read in the context of this framework. At a personal level it took me 6 hours on average to deliver this lecture. While the thrust for Bachelors was informative, for the Masters the lecture was more discursive and dialogical.

Assignments submitted by Master's students on the particular subject matter was fascinating. It was rich in content and extremely insightful when students applied the theory proposed in this note to different practice contexts and structural issues.

Discussion with social work colleagues across the country, however, have brought in mixed response. Some do not seem to make any meaning with the framework, while others, especially those coming from marginalised groups, seemed to connect much more easily with the framework. Meaning-making in social work is important. It forms the fundamental core of active social work engagement. It holds a social worker's interest to a particular work domain and energises commitment and engagement to one's field of practice. Within the meaning-making framework, it is without doubt that theory constitutes the critical core and also plays a crucial role in tying up and fabricating these cumulative meaning-making processes. Thus, recognising and actively engaging in producing theory is important to keep the discipline and profession of social work vibrant and relevant. This lecture-note semantically organised in the way that i have done, is an endeavour to partake in such a process.

Chapter III
Historicizing Social Work Education: An Exercise in Discursive Practice

This chapter is framed as a critical reflection on the 'historical shift', directed not only at problematizing the discipline of social work but also as a means of identifying the progressive trends emerging in theory and practice within the social work profession. I attempt to identify the global contours of contemporary debates within the profession, critically examine the historical status of social work education in India and conclude by unraveling invisible, yet pulsating indigenous liberatory social work theory that are being articulated from India that resound with other emancipatory frameworks across the world.

In the year 2016 i brought out an edited book on 'Social Work in India'. I titled one of the chapters engaging with the history of social work education as 'Professional Social Work Education in India: A Critical View from the Periphery'.[21] Interestingly this article did strike a chord with a few social workers in India. I received two requests from social work colleagues to permit me to translate this article into two other Indian languages – Hindi and Kannada. Other than this little excitement that i thought it generated, there was neither talk nor discussions on the said subject. Social Work education in India is very interesting for two very counter intuitive reasons. One, it does not have its own indigenous theory. Most of the teaching content in terms of basic courses is borrowed from western literature, and two, there is no excitement in theory building. I do not remember the last organic emancipatory theoretical piece produced about

[21] The ideational seeds for this article can be found in a 'Field Note' that i published in a social work journal in India in 2011. Later in 2016, i made few changes to the earlier note and included the same in a book I edited on Social Work in India. This was part of the series on Tribal and Adivasi Studies, Perspectives from Within by the Tribal Intellectual Collective India, published by adivaani, Kolkata. Over the years i have delivered many lectures based on this article to my students. Sourced from my own insights and teaching experiences, i have reworked this article, fine tune the language, deepened the footnotes and brought in new content related to the history of social work education in India.

Indian social work that does not borrow ideas from Western European thought.

Even the debates within social work education in India did seem more western than Indian. As educators we are far more informed about knowledge produced by western social work educators and workers from Britain, Australia and Canada. This is not to take away from the fact that the social work teaching content in India from the mid forties was greatly influenced by Gandhiji's ideas. Based on my own observation of social work education, (but more as a matter of opinion), most Institutes of social work in India actually teach Gandhian Social Work, but because the idea has become so mainstreamed, it is simply called Social Work. What perplexes me though is why those who adhere to his vision are so fond and dependent on western theoretical formulations, the very ideas he rejected.

This is not to say that i myself devalue or disagree with western social work formulation and teaching. They are indeed a genuine attempt by western social workers to confront and resolve the problems of western society. What i disagree however is its imposition or acceptance as a universal framework that applies across time, space and context.

A deeper look into western social work knowledge reveals that such frameworks are nothing more than rules of thinking of a single community (Western European) that positions itself as the only producer and final arbiter of all knowledge that should be considered valuable. With this caution in mind, i will attempt, in the following section to capture as many ideas as possible that have emerged from various context(s) (and not only Western European) in the world. My argument is that western social work knowledge is not 'more' superior to other forms of knowledge(s) produced from different locales and multiple contexts. Thus, while i will engage with western social work knowledge, my attempt is premised on acts of knowing that sees the same as one of many knowledge(s), appreciating western knowledge for what it is in a 'pluriversal' world rather than what it claims to insinuate in a western dominated 'universal' world.

The Changing Context of Social Work Education and Practice

Let me first factor in an argument which i consider imperative to state that is related to the concrete conditions of social work education across

various regions of the world. Social Work Education, in my opinion is now experiencing a tectonic political shift generating some degree of intellectual panic among educators. The shift is not merely theoretical (which is true partially) between conservatives and progressives, but the shift has turned ideological, characterized fundamentally by a historical rupture of perspectives around religious identity, language and nationalist sentiments that are unraveling every moment both in social work education and practice. We observe these historio-philosophical patterns and socio-political shifts erupting in many parts of the globe, with major impact on social work education.

With this concrete condition in mind, it is important to note that social work history is replete with stories of attempts to produce humane innovative knowledge in response to varied context. Social workers across the world and specifically in some regions, as observed post the 1970s, did produced some very sophisticated radical ideas which found its way into the social work curriculum. The situation was also characterized by genuine discussions and sharing of such ideas that did enrich the discipline.

However, the production of these ideas and some form of inter-epistemic dialogues that took place between these schools of thought seem to have suddenly taken a back seat. This is (as i have asserted earlier) in the light of the insidious, yet abrupt rise of an overwhelming toxic fear and tension generated by religion, proselytization, identity, nationality, with crass capitalism and brute neo-liberalism as the key stimulant of structural and systemic undercurrents.

As social workers, we now live in very challenging times and as a collective of engaged peoples we are faced with two humongous tasks. First, to make sense of our own self, embedded in very complex political realities and secondly, to try to get some grip of our practice in a world that seems to have lost sight of both the 'good' and the 'beauty'. Contemporary situations are suddenly characterized by a seemingly irresistible onslaught against ecology, endless conflicts, wars, mass displacements of peoples, food and water shortages, extreme poverty, environmental crisis and to top it all the silencing of humane ideas and a backlash against the realization of the collective good.

Evolving Theory in Social Work Education across the Globe: Unveiling Perspectives from Multiple Contexts

Social work history speaks of educators producing and discussing innovative ideas and sharing deep insights about social work practice under multiple frameworks. Theories such as radical social work[22], critical social

[22] Roy Bailey and Mike Brake edited a book 'Radical Social Work' published by Edward Arnold (Publishers) in 1975. They engaged with social work in Britain and the United States. Also read 'Radicals in Social Work' by Daphne Statham (1978) published by Routledge and Kegan Paul. An interesting theoretical analysis and political position of the radical social workers can be captured in the last paragraph of the Case Con Manifesto written by a group of radical social workers who published Case Con magazine in Britain in the early 1970s. "Case Con believes that the problems of our 'clients' are rooted in the society in which we live, not in supposed individual inadequacies. Until this society, based on private ownership, profit and the needs of the minority ruling class, is replaced by a workers' state, based on the interests of the vast majority of the population, the fundamental causes of social problems will remain. It is therefore our aim to join the struggle for this workers' state."

work[23], structural social work[24], marxist social work[25] and feminist social work[26] have abundant literature available for a good read for anyone

[23] Please see 'Critical Practice in Social Work' by Robert Adams, Lena Dominelli and Malcolm Payne published by Palgrave in 2002. Also see 'Critical Social Work, An Introduction to Theories and Practice' edited by June Allan, Bob Pease and Linda Briskman (2003) published by Allen & Unwin. An interesting conception is made by Fook, J. (2002) in his book Social Work: Critical theory and practice published by Sage Publications. He identifies Critical Social Work as "A postmodern and critical social work practice is primarily concerned with practicing in ways which will further a society without domination, exploitation and oppression. It will focus both on how structures dominate, but also on how people construct and are constructed by changing social structures and relations, recognizing that there may be multiple and diverse constructions of ostensibly similar situations. Such an understanding of social relations and structures can be used to disrupt dominant understandings and structures, and as a basis for changing these so that they are more inclusive of different interest groups." p. 18.

[24] Robert Mullaly wrote a very comprehensive book 'Structural Social Work - Ideology, Theory and Practice' (1993) published by McClelland & Steward. Then in the second edition written as Bob Mullaly (1997) 'Structural social work: Ideology, theory and practices' published by Toronto: Oxford University Press, he framed Structural Social Work as "Based on a socialist ideology, located within the radical social work camp, grounded in critical theory, and operating from a conflict view of society, structural social work views social problems as arising from a specific societal context - liberal, neo-conservative capitalism- rather than from the failings of individuals" (p133).

[25] Please see the book series "Social Work Practice Under Capitalism - A Marxist Approach" by Paul Corrigan and Peter Leonard (1978) published by Macmillan. In the Introduction to the series, Peter Leonard states the rational for a marxist social work approach to welfare as follows: "In the context of the crisis in the welfare state and the failure of alternative ideologies and theories to explain this crisis (referring to Britain) and the continuation of poverty, deprivation and exploitation, Marxism enters as a method of analysis. The problem is that Marxism is many things, is itself in a state of flux and development, and is subject to highly divergent interpretations. We can see that Marxism is a philosophy which attempts to explain the natural and social world and the place of men and women in it, with particular reference to their role as creators, with nature, of the social world. On this basis, Marxism is also a critique of the capitalist mode of production in economic and social terms from the nineteenth century to advanced contemporary capitalism. But Marxism is not simply a theory: it is a political practice which confronts capitalism with an alternative model of a social order. The forms that this model takes and the debates which are joined on the best way of achieving them are the basis of the fragmentation within

interested in knowing the ideas more deeply. These were followed by very refined social work perspectives like those such as the anti-discriminatory

Marxism in Britain. We cannot hope, therefore, to do more than offer some alternative Marxist perspectives in the series (referring to the book series as noted above). We do not intend to indulge in sectarian dogmatism but, rather, to contribute to the development of the debate on the Left about the nature of the welfare state and the possibilities of socialist practice within it." p.xiii – xiv. Another very insightful text is 'Social Work and Received Ideas' by Chris Rojek, Geraldine Peacock and Stewart Collins (1988) published by Routledge. This book touches other interesting perspectives such as feminism, humanism and discourse analysis.

[26] Mary Langan and Lesley Day wrote an edited book in 1992 on 'Women, oppression and social work, Issues in Anti Discriminatory Practice' published by Routledge. They look at Britain and the patriarchal power relations in all spheres. Also see 'Feminist Social Work Theory and Practice by Lena Dominelli (2002) published by Palgrave Macmillan. In this book Dominelli lays a context for the rise of Feminist Social work noting that "Feminist social work arose out of feminist social action being carried out by women working with women in their communities (Dominelli and McLeod, 1989). Their aim has been to improve women's well-being by linking their personal predicaments and often untold private sorrows with their social position and status in society. This has meant that private troubles have been redefined as matters of public concern". She then attempts a definition of Feminist Social Work as "I define feminist social work as a form of social work practice that takes women's experience of the world as the starting point of its analysis and by focusing on the links between a woman's position in society and her individual predicament, responds to her specific needs, creates egalitarian relations in 'client'–worker interactions and addresses structural inequalities. Meeting women's particular needs in a holistic manner and dealing with the complexities of their lives – including the numerous tensions and diverse forms of oppression impacting upon them, is an integral part of feminist social work. Its focus on the interdependent nature of social relations ensures that it also addresses the needs of those that women interact with – men, children and other women." pp.6-7. Also see the book by Vicky White (2006) on 'The State of Feminist Social Work' published by Routledge

social work[27], anti-racist social work[28], ethnic sensitive[29] and culture sensitive social work[30].

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[27] An important read on the subject is the book 'Key Concepts in Anti-Discriminatory Social Work' by Toyin Okitikpi & Cathy Aymer (2010) published by Sage. In attempting to provide a framework of ADP the authors notes that "Anti-discriminatory practice was developed in response to social work practices that perpetuated discrimination, injustices and inequalities. The calls for an end to oppression and discrimination have a long history which gained some momentum in the 1960s. However, it was not until the 1970s and 1980s that the demands for equality were formulated into an approach that practitioners could attempt to integrate into their work. Anti-discriminatory practice challenged the negative assumptions that were endemic in society regarding race, social class, gender, age, disability and sexual orientation." (p.1) Positing that the seeds of the framework are to be found in the 17th century Western European movement, the authors posit that "Anti-discriminatory practice is about developing a way of working that is not based on bias, prejudices, discrimination, injustice or unfair treatment. It is an approach which calls for people to be treated with respect and holds that people should not be treated badly or unfairly because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, impairment, class (be it middle class or working class), religious belief or age. Apart from how people should be treated, ADP requires a certain degree of introspection in order to be appreciative of the kinds of negative attitudes and beliefs that foster prejudicial views and discriminatory actions that are ultimately manifested in day-to-day practices...Anti-discriminatory practice is based on the notion of social justice and that it is possible to treat people fairly and not view or react negatively towards them as a result of some preconceived ideas." P.26.

[28] Please see 'Anti-Racist Social Work' by Lena Dominelli (1997) published by the British Association of Social Workers. In her introduction to the second edition of the book Dominelli notes "Anti-racist perspectives focus on transforming the unequal social relations shaping social interaction between black and white people into egalitarian ones. Additionally, these offer white people hope - hope of changing society in egalitarian directions. In being committed to making racial equality a reality, white people working from an anti-racist perspective can build bridges between themselves and black people working towards the same objective from a black perspective." p.4

[29] Located within the American context, the book 'Ethnic-Sensitive Social Work Practice' is written by Wynetta Devore and Elfriede G.Schlesinger (1991) third edition and published by Merill, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Company. provides important insights into approaches and strategies to work from such a perspective.

[30] Please see the chapter of Ling How Kee 'The Development of Culturally appropriate Social Work Practice in Sarawak, Malaysia' in 'Indigenous Social Work around the World. Towards Culturally Relevant Education and

Further as many more social workers across the world began to think seriously about the role of knowledge in social work, newer more politically sophisticated ideas also emerged, like Anti-oppressive Social Work[31] in Western Europe[32] and the North Americas, Black Experience-Based Social

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Practice' edited by Mel Gray, John Coates and Michael Yellow Bird (2008) published by Ashgate., pp.97-106.

[31] For Dominelli (1993) anti-oppressive social work "is a form of social work practice which addresses social divisions and structural inequalities in the work that is done with 'clients' (users) or workers. Anti-oppressive practice aims to provide more appropriate and sensitive services by responding to people's needs regardless of their social status. Anti-oppressive practice embodies a person-centered philosophy, an egalitarian value system concerned with reducing the deleterious effects of structural inequalities upon people's lives; a methodology focusing on both process and outcome; and a way of structuring relationships between individuals that aims to empower users by reducing the negative effects of hierarchy in their immediate interaction and the work they do together." Quoted in Dominelli, L. (1998). Anti-oppressive practice in context. In R. Adams, L. Dominelli and M. Payne. (Eds.), Social Work: Themes, Issues and Critical Debates (pp. 3-22). Houndmills: MacMillan Press Ltd. (p.24) For "Canadian social work, the term "anti-oppressive practice" is generally understood as an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of practice approaches including, but not limited to, radical, structural, feminist, anti-racist, critical, and liberatory frameworks. Therefore, rather than being seen as one "practice approach", anti-oppressive social work can be more accurately understood as a stance or perspective toward practice. The term 'anti-oppressive social work' represents the current nomenclature for a range of theories and practices that embrace a social justice perspective."

http://aosw.socialwork.dal.ca/index.html Also Please read 'Anti-Oppressive Social Work Theory and Practice' by Lena Dominelli (2002) published by Palgrave Macmillan. Another insightful book on the same perspective is 'Emerging Perspective on Anti-Oppressive Practice' edited by Wes Shera (2003) published by Canadian Scholars' Press Inc. Also read 'Anti-Oppressive Practice, Social Care and the Law' by Jane Dalrymple and Beverley Burke (2006) published by The McGraw-Hill Companies. Also read Siobhan E.Laird book 'Anti-Oppressive Social Work A Guide for Developing Cultural Competence (2008) published by Sage.

[32] An insightful Anti Oppressive Social work framework in Britain can be found in the book 'Social Work, Politics and Society From radicalism to orthodoxy' by Kenneth McLaughlin (2008) published by the Policy Press. Also see 'The Politics of Social work' by Fred Powell (2001) published by Sage.

Work[33] in America, Aboriginal Social Work[34] and Indigenous Social Work[35] in Canada and Australia respectively, Green Social Work[36] in Europe, the formulation of Decolonial Social Work[37] from South Asia, South America, Africa and Australasia. We are now witness to even the rise of the perspectives and practice formulations of 'beyond-god religion' such as buddhist social work[38] in the South East Asian regions and countries like Japan and Mongolia. The traditional[39] school in social work

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[33] Please see 'Social Work and the Black Experience' by Elmer P.Martin and Joanne Mitchell Martin (1995) published by NASW Press.

[34] See an interesting conceptualization of 'aboriginal social work' by Cyndy Baskin in article titled "Aboriginal World Views as Challenges and Possibilities in Social Work Education" published by Critical Social Work an Interdisciplinary journal dedicated to social justice. Vol 7 No 2 (2006)

[35] Please see 'Indigenous Social Work around the World. Towards Culturally Relevant Education and Practice' edited by Mel Gray, John Coates and Michael Yellow Bird (2008) published by Ashgate. The term 'Indigenous Social Work' is posited as challenge to the universalizing tendencies of 'Western Social Work' which is now being repositioned as 'global social work'. This claim to universality is seen by the authors as "continues to promote professional and cultural imperialism by adhering to its particular universalizing ethical, ideological and political value biases" … instead "Indigenization must be viewed against the historical processes of globalization and colonization"., pp.14-15.

[36] Please see 'Social Work Practice, An Ecological Approach' by John T.Pardeck (1996) published by Auburn House. Also see the book 'Green Social Work- From Environmental Crises to Environmental Justice by Lena Dominelli (2012) published by Cambridge

[37] Please see 'Social Work in India, Tribal and Adivasi Studies Perspectives from Within' edited by bodhi s.r (2016) published by adivaani. Also, an interesting chapter by Linda Briskman on "Decolonizing Social work in Australia: Prospect or Illusion" in 'Indigenous Social Work around the World. Towards Culturally Relevant Education and Practice' edited by Mel Gray, John Coates and Michael Yellow Bird (2008) published by Ashgate., pp.83-96.

[38] Please see 'Towards Buddhist social work and Happiness' by Soontaraporn Techapalokul. Then also visit the initiative of the Asian Research Institute for International Social work at https://www.ariisw.com/home-eng

[39] A more traditional (status quoits) social work practice has also, over the years, developed a number of very sophisticated approaches to social work practice. Some of these approaches like the psychodynamic approach, psychosocial approach, the problem-solving approach, the task-centered approach, the systems approach, the life-cycle approach, etc. Most of these have roots in

has also deepened its knowledge and produced very refined practice frameworks.

The Indian Context

In India, social work education began with a Diploma in Social Service Administration,[40] offered by the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work. Later after India attained its independence from British rule, social work education was theoretically positioned as an informed approach to the 'training of personnel' to give a professional touch to services provided by state and non-state welfare agencies. The thrust of Indian social work post independence was 'reconstructive', build around Gandhi's Constructive Work. Many social work educators during this period were active members of the Indian freedom movement. The responsibility to frame and strengthen welfare agencies and to deepen the 'welfare' component in the new state fell on them. To achieve this purpose, social workers came together in a platform they named the Indian Conference of Social Work (ICSW). The ICSW was envisaged as a platform to discuss, debate and refine models of social welfare interventions with various identified populations.

While not fully out of the American model of social work education[41], both in perspective and content, there was a prevailing sense that an element of

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western context but they have also been applied in other settings outside western society.

[40] Rao, V. (1993), Urbanisation, Slum, The State and Self-Help Approach: Organisation and Limits to Citizen Participation. Mumbai: Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

[41] M.C.Nanavatty (1967) notes that "In 1944 'basic' eight areas of studies were adopted in the USA for social work education at the post graduate level. They included the subjects of social case work, social group work, community organization, public welfare, social administration, social research, medical information and psychiatric information. These courses were taught as an integrated training programme with adequate emphasis on field work besides the class work and the research project. In 1952, four broad generic sequences of study were evolved, namely, (a) social service policy and programmes; (b) human growth and behaviour; (c) social work methods of social case work, social group work; community organization, social work administration and social work research; and (d) social practice or field work."

indigeneity was embodied in the perspectives and practice of professional social work. This was because professional social workers also saw themselves as part of the larger idea of Gandhian Constructive Work. Gandhiji's concept of Constructive Programme[42] is still very influential, although they are beginning to lose the central position that they once occupied for a very long time. Nonetheless while his ideas are starting to lose shine, his spirit still informs most of social work in India. Needless to say, that this was not the case on the ground as there was a clear absence of an 'indigenous social work knowledge base' and very minuscule effort was made to invest on developing indigenous knowledge. Despite the influence of Gandhian constructive work,[43] as was the case, a major part of the theoretical content of social work education was sourced from western conceptions[44] of professional social work practice. More specifically the American model of social work education was to a great

[42] The note was first published in 1941 by Navajivan Trust. The revised and enlarged edition published in 1945 has 31pages and contains 18 subjects identified by Gandhiji as fundamental to the Constructive Programme. These are (1)Communal Unity, (2)Removal of Untouchability, (3)Prohibition, (4)Khadi, (5)Other Village Industries, (6)Village Sanitation, (7)New or Basic Education, (8)Adult Education, (9)Women, (10)Education in Health and Hygiene, (11)Provincial Languages, (12)National Language (13)Economic Equality, (14)Kisans, (15) Labour, (16)Adivasis, (17)Lepers and (18)Students. His definition of the Constructive programme is "The constructive programme may otherwise and more fittingly be called construction of Poorna Swaraj or complete Independence by Truthful and non-violent means" (M.K.Gandhi (1945) Constructive Programme Its Meaning and Place. p.5)

[43] In direct relation to social work curriculum, a very intense engagement took place to discuss the ideological foundations of social work teaching content in 1967 between Gandhian Constructive Workers and Professional Social workers. A working Group entitled 'Concepts, Contents & Approaches of Professional Social Work & Gandhian Constructive Work' was appointed by the Gandhian Institute of Studies in early 1964. This was an important attempt in the history of social work education to bring together these two groups of social workers. The purpose was to evolve an integrated philosophy of social work for India. The content of the discussions and papers presented was published in Dasgupta, S. (1967), Towards a Philosophy of Social Work in India. New Delhi: Gandhian Institute of Studies, Popular Book Services.

[44] These were mostly American frameworks and methods of intervention

extent replicated in India[45] including the readings. The linkage between the two contexts – American and Indian was stark'.[46]

Attempts at Indigenization in India

Late into the 1960s several attempts were made by practitioners and educators to indigenize professional social work knowledge base, by drawing perspectives[47] and methodological issues[48] for formulating a context specific 'Indian social work'. These efforts were scattered across the country and across varied social work domains. Not many attempts were made by social work academics to consolidate such knowledge base. This was made far more difficult by the complexity and diversity of the

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[45] A.S.Desai (1985) notes in 'The Foundations of Social Work Education in India and Some Issues', that "Dr. J. M. Kumarappa, who became the Director (of TISS) in 1941, visited the U.S.A., after which the generic curriculum shifted to specializations. The social work specializations were all offshoots of the subjects already contained in the first syllabus. Thus, Medical and Psychiatric Social Work was established in 1948 on invitation, by an American social work professional and Family and Child Welfare in 1949 by an American specialist in Child Development. Both were ultimately headed by Indian faculty trained in the U.S.A. The Department of Group Work and Community Organization was established in 1952, headed by an alumnus trained in the U.S.A. With the experience gained in managing the Social Education Organizers' Training Centre at Hyderabad for rural development, which was on the invitation of the Central Government, it was realized that there was no short-cut in the adequate training of social workers. Hence, in 1955, the Institute established the Department of Rural Welfare and a separate Department of Community Organization and Development (for urban areas). In 1959, both of them were merged into the Department of Urban and Rural Community Development."

[46] Please refer to bodhi s.r (2016) Professional Social Work in India: A Critical View from the Periphery in Social Work in India published by adivaani.

[47] Banerjee, G. (1972), Papers in Social Work. An Indian Perspective. TISS Series No.23. Mumbai: Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

[48] Beginning around 1960s a new breed of social work educators began thinking seriously about methodology and methods in social work education. Critiques that social work methods were too individual centric and community intervention models were western in essence motivated educators like M.S. Gore (1965), S.Dasgupta (1968), Armaity Desai (1985), H. Siddique (1987), Murli Desai (2004) and even sociologist like Denzil Saldanha (2008) to alter theoretical frames and deepen theoretical connect to the Indian realities.

Indian reality and the difficulty to arrive at a single universal framework of ideas and practice.[49]

Over the years, there have been three official reviews of social work education conducted by the University Grants Commission.[50] The reports of the first two reviews were submitted in 1965 and 1980[51] respectively. The report of the last is still not available.

Contextual and Theoretical Discrepancies in Contemporary Social Work Education

Social work education in India has its intentions and vision in place but always seemed confused about its identity, vision and mission. For instance, the biggest debate in social work concerns the professional tag that goes with social work. Even among those who have completed their Post Graduate studies in social work, not all wish to identify themselves as professional social workers. There is a big gap among qualified social workers themselves around identity.

While there are some who hold firmly to the 'professionalism arrived at by educational qualification', the argument goes that there are many more individuals who are highly skilled, very engaged and even more efficacious than qualified social workers even though they do not have any professional degree. Further, many structural/community workers are

[49] As far as the Indian context is concerned, there is a growing realization among contemporary social work educators and practitioners alike that there cannot be one overarching 'indigenous social work knowledge base'.

[50] The University Grants Commission is an autonomous Government instituted apex body responsible for education management in India.

[51] The Review Committee on Social Work Education in Indian Universities (University Grants Commission, New Delhi, 1965) which was appointed in March, 1960 submitted its report in June, 1965. The Report consists of 64 pages, with 26 additional pages as appendices and titled 'Social Work Education in Indian Universities'. The Second Review Committee constituted in 1975 submitted its Report in 1980 titled 'Review of Social work Education in India'.

often left out even though their expertise far exceeds those of the professional social workers.[52]

There could be many reasons for the same but two of these, concerns the field of practice and the creation of an educational infrastructure over and above charitable work that is often practiced in India. The first reason relates to social worker's context of work. For those practicing in very organized settings like hospitals, care centers, municipalities, prisons, police stations, etc., the tag of professionalism is imperative. For others outside such settings the professional tag is more a hindrance rather than a boon. The second reason relates to the framing and insertion of an (imported) educational framework coupled with standard and mostly western theoretical content on people's daily practices around charity and welfare in India. This in turn has created a sort of binary between those with a degree and those without one and also contradictions in theoretical content.

Attempts to find reconciliation between these theoretico-structural cleavages have been made, but nothing fundamental has really taken place. To this day, across social work education, western social work formulations are still perceived as superior to other formulations and they are conceived as the proper answers to the ills of Indian society.

One of these attempts to correct these discrepancies was made by the second UGC review committee in 1980 which argued for a positional shift from a remedial focus to a more emancipatory development thrust in social work education. The committee believed that social work education in India should be tailored to respond to the issues of systems and structures and thus the needs of the majority 'suffering' population rather than merely focusing on marginalized groups. The understanding was that it was the Indian social structure that was generating mass poverty and suffering and people were a pawn in this exercise. The focus on individuals, individual

[52] On this point as early as 1967 Nagpaul argued that "As the existing system of education is largely unrelated to Indian conditions, social work education needs a radical change and drastic reconstruction" Nagpaul, H. (1967), Dilemmas of Social Work Education in India. Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.XXVII, No.3 (October).

problems and individual centered solutions, while vital, was not the remedy to the highly complex Indian conditions.

Desai,[53] who was one of the key initiators of the second UGC review committee argued that "professional social work needs to move away from too much dependence on provision of service towards organizing people to promote change, … from institutional to non-institutional programmes, from remedial to those that confront the cause of poverty, from private concerns to public issues, from research with a problem focus to one of action-oriented research ... The profession has made a shift but not significant enough".[54] Asserting this same point she noted in another article 'The Foundations of Social Work Education in India and Some Issues', where she argued, "another issue of importance, to a third world country, is the emphasis in the curriculum either on poverty and social change, or, the remedial and rehabilitative model of social welfare. Unfortunately, our models have been the latter, borrowed as they were from the first world countries".[55]

Contradictions between the 'Conservatives' and the 'Progressives'

There is an interesting debate taking place in India within the social work educator's fraternity, the age-old debate that we observe across the globe between the 'conservative' and the 'progressive'. While the 'progressive' sees the 'conservative' as status quoist, anti-change, individual centric, problem focused, atheoretical and pedestrian in understanding the role of power in social interplay, the 'conservatives' on the other hand sees the 'progressive' as too theoretical, unnecessarily political, critical, disruptive, not concerned with measurable outcome and above all else, too driven by narrow ideology.

Interestingly though, within such a milieu there is not much to count in terms of indigenous knowledge production. There are very less social work

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[53] Desai, A. (1984), Social Action and The Social Work Curriculum. In H. Siddique, Social Work and Social Action: A Developmental Perspective (pp. 65-85). New Delhi: Harnam Publications.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Desai, A. (1985), Foundations of Social Work Education in India and Some Issues. Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.46 (1). p.41-57.

books in India and among those available the writings have tendencies to define, classify, compare and explain, rather than problematise, debate, disturb and transform. A few noteworthy texts that require much thinking and reflections have been written by critical social workers. However, because of the heavy dominance of 'conservatives' in social work education, these texts do not find space either in theoretical content nor reading references. The attempt of conservative social work educators has been to silence and invisibilise these texts in the name of theoretical standard which is often measured by indicators that are fundamentally 'western'. While supposedly 'radical' 'received theories' like those of Lina Dominelli and even Robert Mullaly will be taught to students, text that speaks about the concrete Indian conditions are negated. There is a conscious attempt to invisibilise critical indigenous text. The reasons are not far to seek. It is always easier to speak about others (especially western) that have nothing to do with one's own (Indian) reality and always difficult to speak about one's own context for fear of being exposed, confronted and challenged. In other words, there is an unconscious belief among educators that if you do not speak openly about a 'concrete condition' (for instance caste) then it is not there, and those who do so are unnecessarily raking up non-existent issues. This all-pervasive conception stands antithetical to all that social work attempts to realize. Such is the state of Indian social work and the axiological crisis that most Indian social work educators are faced with.

Most progressive social workers in India are wary of the perils of traditional social work and its role in augmenting and maintaining the status quo. The 'conservative' is always a perfect being, the problem lies 'out there' among the numerously abundant suffering 'other' that constitutes of the 'lazy poor', the 'not so hardworking meritless people', the 'non-deserving reserved category', 'the unfortunate vernacular speaker', and many such 'pitiable creatures.' This thorough lack of insight into the oppressive nature of its theoretical premise, coupled with a lackadaisical attitude towards any form of humane introspection of itself has fueled the status quo. This attitude has led to a near total intellectual impoverishment and has had severe ramifications on knowledge production in social work.

These tensions among the 'conservative school' and the 'progressive school' are found everywhere in India. Initially the debate was identified in the theoretical domain as a struggle between the remedial (individual) and

the development (community) perspectives.[56] However, as this debate progressed, the theoretical tussle is now being framed and articulated as a debate between the 'clinical' (individual focus) and 'discursive' (anti-caste, pro-women, indigenous social work and buddhist[57]) schools.[58]

The 'individual focus' position is theoretically located within an overarching dominant framework couched in a somewhat acritical, ahistorical and non-discursive (common sense) language, fundamentally seeing social work as a profession of clinicians and service providers whose primary role is the 'correction of deviants' augmented deeply by a collective imposition of a somewhat distorted moral duty of charity for those who are in the periphery.

The discourse-oriented school, on the other hand, stress on the structurally oppressive elements embedded in the clinical/individual perspective, the de-contextualized models and strategies of field intervention, the ahistorical nature of clinical analysis and the non-discursive comprehension of Indian social reality. The discursive school resents the appropriation of social work education by those grounded on a clinical/individual view of Indian society and struggles to nudge the premise of social work epistemology towards more emancipatory and liberatory points-of-view.

The Emergence of Organic and Contextual Theory in Social Work

There are many new ideas that have emerged in social work that engages with structure, systems, history and discourse. Noteworthy among them from the perspective of knowledge production are those formulated

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[56] As pointed by the second UGC review committee 1980

[57] My reference to the word 'Buddhist' here is not sourced from the western european conception of Buddhism which was a Christian construct of a very unique framework that constitutes of three intertwined open-ended concepts buddha-dhamma-sangha. My reference in this particular text is to the way this word is understood in India and not the way Western Europeans have constructed the same.

[58] The 'community' perspective seems to have got lost somewhere in the complex alleys of 'liberals who are radicals' world.

around two social categories – dalits[59] and tribes[60]. About the word 'Dalit' i trace its conception to the radical humanist movements called 'Dalit Panthers' that erupted in Maharashtra during the 1970s. Sourced from this movement i use the concept 'Dalit' here to refer to peoples who have asserted and are committed to the following political position: (i) Is upfront against the practice of untouchability (ii) Has courage to assert publicly that untouchability is inhuman and wrong (iii) Rejects the exonym 'harijan' which is seen as an imposition on their being (iv) Reclaims the agency to write and produce one's own knowledge about self, community and society (v) Claims the innate human right to own one's body (vi) Claims the social right to own physical property (vii) Asserts the claim to human freedom and social liberty in society. Further, these assertions historically emerged from peoples of those collectivities in which the most brutal form of untouchability was practiced on the whole community. The concept 'Dalit' was born out of their struggle for emancipation. Thus, the category 'Dalit' specifically refers to those who have taken the above positions within these communities. Such is the power generated by the movement that whole communities are now identified as Dalit even though empirically there are ex-untouchable communities that prefer not to identify with the category produced by the Dalit Panthers. From this point-of-view, the category 'Dalit' is a political position, a perspective, an epistemology and a social philosophy strategically positioned to counter the system of untouchability.

About the word 'tribe', viewed from a pan-India perspective, am using the same to refer to all the small non-caste indigenous communities in India who, i assert, are methodological communities complete with their own ontology, epistemology, logic and axiology. However, the word has a very

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[59] My understanding is based on a number of discussions with my colleague Dr.Shaileshkumar Darokar with who i co-teach a course on Caste Movements in India, also my own students have given so many insights and enriched my own conception further. For a more sublime understanding, please refer to Gopal Guru's 'Understanding the Category Dalit' in Atrophy in Dalit Politics, Intervention 1. pp.63-76.

[60] The concept 'Tribe' is now being debated among those communities identified as such. The category intersects with the Indian State's categorization of certain societies as 'Scheduled Tribe'. The concept 'tribe' being an exonym, not many are aware of this identity and prefer to identify themselves by their community (endonym) name.

complicated history[61] in itself, and in India it is not without controversy. While many communities in North East India have taken the identity of 'tribe' as referring to their communities, the indigenous communities in central India prefer using another exonym called 'Adivasi' and the peoples inhabiting their historical lands of Tripura prefer calling themselves 'indigenous peoples'. My attempt here is not to fix these communities in a singular frame but mostly to try and capture the pan India identity of these small non-caste indigenous communities inhabiting their own historical lands in India that are also recognized by the Indian Constitution.

Viewed from the lens of discourse, both Dalits and Tribes in their historical struggle for emancipation from their differential epistemic positions have given rise to a new social work – Anti-Caste Social Work[62]

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[61] Post 1492, with the rise of Spanish colonialism, the word tribe was insidiously altered to fundamentally refer to non-humans/sub-humans that needed to be civilized. In this colonial project, tribal epistemicide was a key imperative. Colonialist to this very day take pride in having demeaned and destroyed 'tribal' epistemology(s), whilst using the same category – 'tribe', as a mirror image to comprehend their own societies. The reproduction of this colonial imagery continued unabated, and the savagery notions embedded in the concept travelled far and wide. Around the mid-1700s, it entered the hierarchy bound social imagination of the dominant caste populace of Indian society(s) through the british, who began reproducing the mirror narrative of the earlier colonizers. The repercussions of the 1492 conception reverberate to this very day across the socio-political spectrum world-wide.

[62] The first substantive paper that emerged in social work education formulated on a distinct anti-caste social work premise is by A.Ramaiah in 1996 as I had pointed in chapter 1. His paper which is now accepted as a pioneer in asserting the anti-caste episteme. Before this, M.S.Gore, a professional social worker and ex-Director of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai also published his book "The Social Context of an Ideology: Ambedkar's Social and Political Thoughts" in 1993, where he discusses the anti-caste ideas of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar which till then was considered an anathema in social work education. No real impact on social work education was made even after the publication of his book. For more insights on the debates concerning anti-caste social work please see Rao.V & Waghmore.S (2007). Special Issue-Dalits and Development: A Reappraisal, Indian Journal of Social Work Volume 68, (1), Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Also refer to bodhi s.r(2016) "Dalit Social Work: Reading Its Theory from a Tribal Location" in 'Social Work in India'., (Edited) published by adivaani, Kolkata pp.397-414.

and Tribal Social Work.[63] These theoretical frameworks resonate with the need to express, assert and augment their efforts towards liberty and equality. These, I wish to argue, are the social work formulations that are the first genuine attempts of the indigenization and resurrection of social work in India on progressive lines.

Historically, A.Ramaiah (1998)[64] is credited with being the first to provide a theoretical frame for conceiving an anti-caste social work premise arguing for a need to directly engage with the questions of caste in India. Ramaiah noted in his seminal article, that Indian professional social work for ignoring caste and argued that most professional social workers were inherently caste prejudiced. He suggested that Social Workers need to seriously consider de-casting themselves. Social work was not free from caste and could not operate from outside its social structure. Both social work education and social workers were subsumed in caste. He argued that "no social work practice paradigm could contribute meaningfully and make any real dent on the marginalized till the same is first accomplished. Anti-Caste social work was conceived as a theoretical position that fundamentally rejects the structure of graded inequality based on purity/pollution which is intrinsically linked to caste and descent. It proposes a social work practice that challenges and emancipates people

[63] Beginning 2004, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, unveiled a 'Draft National Tribal Policy' for consultation with various stakeholders. On 21 July, 2006 the Ministry released its revised draft 'National Tribal Policy'. While the document details processes related to history, approaches and key development sectors, the identified strategy for engaging with the tribes in all realms was laid down as being 'Tribe Centric'. Following this formulation by the Ministry, The Tata Institute of Social Sciences which was going through a Restructuring of its curriculum, formulated various courses premised on the Ministry's identified strategy and introduced a concentration (that is, set of courses) called Tribe Centered Social Work Practice. Tribe centered social work locates social work intervention as an organic process of working with and through tribes, and accepts the relevance and efficacy of endogenous methodologies as having the capability to explain, protect, preserve and promote tribes. Also see bodhi s.r (2016) 'Tribal Social Work: Reflections on its Philosophical Foundations' in Social Work in India (Edited) published by adivaani, Kolkata. pp.415-429.

[64] A.Ramaiah's article 'The Plight of Dalits: A Challenge to Social Work Profession', was published in the two-volume book on 'Towards a People Centered Development, Part I & II., Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, edited by Narayan, Monteiro and Lingam (1998). pp.124-146.

from this graded system of the 'pure touchable' and the 'polluted untouchable'."[65] Following A.Ramaiah's initial framework, Dalit Social Work[66] (DSW) emerged as a distinct theoretical social work domain. More advance formulation of the same idea has now moved to what is identified as Navayana Social Work.[67].

From a theoretical perspective, DSW resonates theoretico-philosophically with other social work frameworks like Anti-Racist, Black, Feminist, Critical, Radical and Structural Social Work that emerged in varied contexts such as Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom.

Tribal Social Work (TSW) however was a theoretical product of the team in the School of Social work in the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Linked with the TICI that has its own academic journal,[68] the framework of TSW is an epistemological equivalent to decolonial social work rooted to the Indian context. Fundamental to TSW is what is posited as 'perspectives from within' around two conceptions of the nature of social reality – diversity and dialogue.[69]

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65 bodhi s.r (2016) 'Social Work education in India: A Critical View from the Periphery' in Social Work in India (Edited) published by adivaani, kolkata.p.237-238

66 The Indian Journal of Dalit and Tribal Social Work began publishing in the year 2012 and contain a number of articles related to the subject domain of Dalit Social Work. Dalit Social Work is now also a course for Master's students pursuing their M.A in Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action in the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Also see bodhi s.r (2016) Dalit Social Work: Reading its Theory from a Tribal Location' in Social Work in India (Edited) published by adivaani, Kolkata. pp.397-414.

67 I will engage with this idea in greater details in the seventh chapter of this book. Here it suffices to state that the word Navayana means 'New Vehicle', an idea proposed by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar who sourced the same from the deep-rooted conceptions about 2500 year ago in India by Siddhato Gotamo.

68 Their journal is called the 'Journal of the Tribal Intellectual Collective India' available in www.ticijournals.org. This journal is the first of its kind produced collectively by academics from the tribal/adivasi community in India under the Tribal Intellectual Collective India. There have not been such attempts before to bring tribal/adivasi academics in one platform.

69 For a deeper understanding of these concepts please refer to the Edited book – Social Work in India, Tribal and Adivasi Studies Perspectives from within published by adivaani, Kolkata in 2016

Conclusion

I have had a number of opportunities to engage with curriculum formulation in India. One thing that i have observed across discussions and debates about curriculum within social work is the difficulty in identifying areas and fields of intervention. Social work has tendencies towards less political fields of practice rather than those that have politics embedded in the nature of the issue. Nonetheless, there is an understanding emerging across educators, even though there are newer regressive traditionalist formulations arising as on 2019 that social work education must incorporate theoretical conceptualizations and engage more truthfully with fundamental socio-political-economic issues that dictate the social landscape of India.

On this count there have been a number of very important seminars among educators to discuss social work curriculum in India. Only a few however counts as significant and creative. These are: the gathering in 1967 between Gandhian Constructive Workers and Professional Social workers in the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, and the workshop in 1996 in TISS on 'People-Centered Development'. To augment processes related to curriculum, the UGC did set up a social work education cell to deepen and expand social work knowledge. However, needless to state, that even with such attempts there is still a lack of indigenous social work knowledge to this day.

Chapter IV

Theorizing the 'field' in Indian Social Work Education and Practice: Reassembling Conceptions from a Critical Perspective[70]

We are soldiers but we are the battle (field) too...: Anonymous

Enveloped by massive change processes since the late 1960s, characterized by mass upheavals and radical overhauling of structural realities, India is experiencing rapid change in every domain. The predominant overarching framework that once determined the country's lived realities have witnessed contestations within various politico-geographical spaces, and in various other socio-historical spheres there are even violent struggles and revolutionary assertions. Over this period of time, social work education has remained alive to these tumultuous changes and has sometimes even tried responding to each of these contextual realities. In engaging with these realities, it conceived the dynamic context through the notion of a 'field'.

In this chapter i attempt to engage with several questions related to social work's conception of the notion 'field'; what does this category signify within contemporary social work education? What are its constitutive elements? Is there political interplay involved in construction process? Is it possible to conceive this category differently and would this allow the telling of a different story about social work education and practice? Through the process of historicizing, i engage with these questions in ways that are eclectic yet critical, and as an output of the exercise i hope to be

[70] I wrote this note as early as 2008. Over the years i have use this as a teaching material when i engage on the concept of 'field' with my students in the TISS. One of the key reasons i wrote this note was to engage in the debate regarding the identification of the 'Fields of Practice' in social work education. I attempted through this note to rupture and destabilize set notions of what constitutes a 'field' which till that moment was embedded in the worldview of the 'specializations' in social work. I had published this note in an edited book on Social Work in India published by adivaani. I thank the Tribal Intellectual Collective India for allowing the republication of this article.

able to reassemble the meaning of the category '*field*', locating the same in current context.

At the outset it is important that some basic observations be made about social work theorizing. It is seen in contemporary social work education and practice that some of the key recurring overarching discursive themes are conceptions such as *field, theory/action*, and *ethics/values*. While there has been some serious thinking around the domain of *theory/action* and to a certain extent on *ethics/values*, the category *field* has been somewhat left unattended. This is at best because of the dynamic and fluid nature of the reality that the category purports to contextually and temporarily represent and at worst simply because social work educators have not dared to venture into this domain for reasons more political than academic.

A critical cross-sectional peep into what meaning the concept *field* holds at this historical juncture reveals that the same is under a sound theoretical grip of traditional and traditionalist social workers.[71] The concept is conceived in a 'taken for granted manner', couched in a somewhat atheoretical language, very generic in meaning with underlying methodological assumptions that every one already knows what *'field'* connotes. Thus, any act that furthers problematization of the said category is unnecessary and unwarranted. This is the status of the debate pertaining to the category as it stands today within social work education.

In revisiting the concept *field*, i would posit various arguments that would unravel this political interplay of how traditionalist has disallowed any revisiting and reassembling of the concept. I begin by tracing the socio-historical processes that shaped these conceptions and culminate in a reformulation of the category *field* vis. social work education, hoping to enrich Tribal and Adivasi studies in the process.

[71] Traditionalist social workers here refer to those who have held the reigns of social work since its inception in India having relied heavily on Western / American conceptions of social work and those who engages with social change from a commonsensical understanding of society rather than relying on more informed theoretical frameworks.

Understanding the Category *Field*

A category has the power to explain, and within the context of social work practice, it is historically constituted and theoretically arrived at before it is used within the frames of practice and educational programmes. Over time, while some categories often become flattened and lose much of their analytic rigor plus representative ability, some categories go through a heuristic[72] increase and of overall usage. The value of a category is greatly determined by perpetual critical contestations of varied perspectives allowing for new ways of seeing, meaning and interpretation. In social work practice, the purpose of a category is not only to define and unravel a context with precision, but also to facilitate the drawing of clear boundaries that would allow an abstract theoretical delineation for informed action and reflection.

This is very much akin to most categories used in social work education especially while identifying key components of teaching and practice. For any critical social work educator, the category *'field'* constitutes one of the central concepts in the formulation of the overall curriculum framework. Most politico-historical contestations among social workers also happen over intricate elements that constitute the category *field*. Curriculum sub-concepts such as 'fields of practice', 'field work', 'field context', 'field supervision', 'field engagement', 'field action', 'field visits', etc, are formulated, attached with or build upon the category *field*. This central definitive space occupied by the category 'field' in most social work curriculum with direct implications for professional identity is also derived from varied definitions and articulation of how the *field* is conceived, demarcated and positioned to represent the discipline within larger societal context.

Field as Conceptualized in the Social Sciences

Historically, and up to the present, the notion '*field*' remains a highly contentious category across social and humanistic disciplines. Attempts at uncovering conceptions of the notion within each social science discipline are fraught with difficulty. However, for the specific purpose of this

[72] Heuristic increase is positioned to mean 'enabling a person to discover or learn something more about a concept by and for themselves'

chapter, a broader understanding that would hold ground for the social sciences would be adopted.

The subject matter of the social sciences generally concerns society and its constitutive elements: nature, people, organizations, structures and systems. Anthropology constructs the notion *field* as a demarcated physical space outside one's own culture.[73] It studies people from cultures that are totally different, outside of one's own and explores other worlds, where lives unfold according to different understandings of the natural order of things. Anthropologist generally travels to every corner of the globe to conduct their research. The goal of observing while participating is to find ways to enter other peoples' worlds, to learn their language, follow their lifestyle as far as possible for an extended period and allow social interaction to unfold in a natural way while recording such processes.

Sociology perceives the *field* as located within the framework of society and its structure. Any phenomena within the broad confines of society that can be studied empirically are identified as a *field*. This would include self, situation, structure and system. Whether reality is outside of us or within us would depend on theoretical perceptions that conceive reality as either mind independent or mind dependent.

Cultural studies perceive the field as being in a state of perpetual flux located loosely in a circuit of experience that is situated in some order. '*Meaning*', in cultural studies, is generated and constructed within relationships defined by the production and consumption process, and various such meanings are invoked through the notional framework of the universal and the particular.

Within the social sciences, perspectives and ideology are conceived as fundamental. For Marxist theorists,[74] central to their vision of a *field* is the

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[73] Mcgee,R, Jon & Warms, Richard,L. (2008) Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History. McGraw Hill

[74] Engels F, 1884; Brooks. M, 2002; Ian Angus, 2009 Ian Angus (2009). Marxs, Engels and Darwin how darwin's theory of evolution confirmed and extended the most fundamental concepts of Marxism. A Socialist Voice pamphlet. Also see Brooks.M (2002). What is Historical Materialism?- A Study Guide with Questions, extracts and suggested readings. http://www.marxist.com/historical-materialism-study-guide.htm In

foundational assumption that nature, history and living beings fit together to comprise a totality. Since humans emerged from, continue to depend on and are also intrinsically capacitated to transform nature, human history as a science is perceived as incomplete until this foundation is fully comprehended. The idea that nature has a history, that species come into existence, change and disappear through natural processes (as the idea that capitalism isn't eternal, but came into being at a given time and will one day disappear from the earth), is how the dynamic *field* is conceived. According to the Marxian materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of the immediate essentials of life. This is characterized as being twofold. On the one side, the production of the means of existence, of articles of food and clothing, dwellings, and of the tools necessary for that production; and on the other side, the production of human beings themselves through the propagation of the species. The social organization under which the people of a particular historical epoch and a particular country live is determined by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labor on the one hand and of the family on the other. It is on such historical underpinnings that action and reflection take place.

For post structuralist on the other hand, the category *field* refers to a conception of a social space, where there are interactions, transactions and events occurring that are located in a specific historical and local-national -international and relational contexts. This *field* also requires an interrogation of the ways in which previous knowledge about the object under investigation had been generated, by whom, and whose interests were served by those knowledge generation practices.

In the works of Bourdieu, the *field* was to assume an increasingly significant aspect. A *field*, in Bourdieu's conception, is a social arena within which struggles or maneuvers take place over specific resources or stakes and access to them. Fields are defined by the resources which are at stake—cultural goods (life-style), housing, intellectual distinction (education), employment, land, power (politics), social class, prestige or whatever—and

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Defense of Marxism. Engels. F (1884). The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.

http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1884/origin-family/

may be of differing degrees of specificity and concreteness.[75] For him[76] a field is by definition, 'a field of struggles' in which agents' strategies are concerned with the preservation or improvement of their positions with respect to the defining capital of the field. A *field* is a structured system of social positions—occupied either by individuals or institutions—the nature of which defines the situation for their occupants. It is also a system of forces which exist between these positions; a field is structured internally in terms of power relations. Positions stand in relationships of domination, subordination or equivalence (homology) to each other by virtue of the access they afford to the goods or resources (capital) which are at stake in the field. These goods can be principally differentiated into four categories: economic capital, social capital (various kinds of valued relations with significant others), cultural capital (primarily legitimate knowledge of one kind or another) and symbolic capital (prestige and social honor).

In Indian Sociology there are very less debates about the notion *field*. The only available writings surround methodological approaches that are formulated around two views of conceiving Indian reality; the 'field-view' and 'book view'. Jodhka's[77] article 'From Book View to Field View: Social Anthropological Constructions of the Indian Village' brings out varied contestations related to approaches of studying Indian villages. Within the framework of these propositions the 'field view' generally refers to the lived and shared experiences of people from the *field*, which one seeks to comprehend and interpret, and the 'book view' of Indian society is framed around texts developed by indologists – generally sourced from classical Hindu scriptures and colonial ethnography.

For the purpose of this chapter, the Indian debate within social science is interesting on two counts (i) most Indian social scientists assume they already know what the *field* is and (ii) this *field* is generally always outside

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[75] As cited in Jenkins, R. (1992)

[76] P.Bourdieu, (1990). In Other Words, Cambridge, Polity. Also see P.Bourdieu, (1991) Language and Symbolic Power, Cambridge, Polity. Also see Jenkins, R. (1992). Pierre Bourdieu. Routledge and L.D.Wacquant,(1989) 'Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, Sociological Theory, Vol.7

[77] Jodhka.S. (1998). From 'Book-View' to 'Field-View': Social Anthropological: Constructions of the Indian Village', Oxford Development Studies, Vol. 26 (3). Pp. 311-32. 1998.

the researcher and conceived as being contained in some way in the realities of 'the other'.[78]

De-familiarizing the *Field* in Social Work Education and Practice from across Continents

While the main focus of the chapter is on India, it is important to get a glimpse of social work realities across various other regions of the world. The history of social work in the United Kingdom throws interesting insights into how the notion *field* came to be conceptualized in the said country. Based on the assumptions that the risk of social disorder by the year 1601 due to desperation and need were so great as to warrant action by the state, the Elizabethan Poor Law was enacted. The law authorized the raising of taxes to pay for services to those who were poor, needy, and had no family support, assigning them to assistance as follows: the 'impotent poor' (the aged, chronic sick, blind, and mentally ill who needed residential care) were to be accommodated in voluntary almshouses; the 'able-bodied' poor were to be set to work in a workhouse (they were felt to be able to work but were lazy); the 'able-bodied poor' who ran away or 'persistent idlers' who refused to work were to be punished in a 'house of correction'.[79]

The *field* was conceived based on the notion of poverty demarcated around the deserving and non deserving poor. Over the years when social work schools emerged, they were encouraged to emphasize efficiency and

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[78] It comes naturally to most Brahmin social scientists to study and theorise about Dalits and Tribes, never occurring to them why this proclivity. Political theorist Gopal Guru in his article 'How Egalitarian are the Social Sciences in India?', detailed how this process has been so deeply entrenched in the minds of Indian social scientists and so easily accepted by Dalits, Tribes and OBCs in India. Applying the egalitarian principle to Indian social sciences, Guru contested the idea that some are born with a theoretical spoon in their mouth while the vast majority with an empirical pot around their neck. While Guru problematised these processes to a great degree and provided new direction to understanding and doing social sciences in India, the struggle by 'empirical Shudras' to emancipate social sciences from the grip of 'theoretical Brahmins' in India has only recently begun.

[79] Fraser, 1984, in Cree, 2002: 277. Social Work and Society. In M. Davies (Ed.), The Blackwell Companion to Social Work (2nd ed., pp. 277-287). Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell.

standards in an environment of "hard-nosed concerns about cost".[80] While there were contestations to these formulation by radical social workers in the 70s and 80s the concept of a *field* was taken for granted as being out there framed around the idea of poverty. This has remained so to this day. The influential Barclay Report (1982), illustrated the emerging tensions of the 1960s and 1970s but stressed more on roles of social workers and management aspects. However, it must be noted that in the same report there were two minority reports stressing on approaches instead of roles; one advocating a broad community work approach and the other a highly professionalized casework approach.[81]

In the United States of America social work began with the first US settlement house in 1886, modeled on earlier efforts in the UK. They were established with a goal of eliminating the distance between socioeconomic classes by locating housing for the poor in working class neighborhoods. Settlement houses initially provided day nurseries for working mothers, health clinics, and classes in dance, drama, art, and sewing.[82] The notion *field* was framed on similar grounds as those in the United Kingdom.

Over the years, social work became more politicized and, rather than looking down on the poor or assuming that by setting a superior example the problems of the poor would be resolved, they began to focus on the needs and desires of those with whom they were working through advocacy and social change. Jane Addams was quoted to have stated:

> 'We found ourselves spending many hours in efforts to secure support for deserted women, insurance for bewildered widows, damages for injured (machinery) operators, furniture from the clutches of the installment store. The settlement… constantly acts

[80] Elliott, D., & Walton, R. G. (1995). United Kingdom. In T. D. Watts & D. Elliott & N. S. Mayadas (Eds.), International Handbook on Social Work Education (pp. 123- 144). London: Greenwood Press.

[81] Elliott &Walton,1995: 133(ibid)

[82] Van Wormer, K. (2003). Social Welfare: A World View. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth

> between the various institutions of the city and the people for whose benefit these institutions were erected'[83]

It was only in the 1900 that the term 'social workers' was used, supposedly coined by Simon Patten, who disputed with Mary Richmond whether their major role should be social advocacy or the delivery of individual services. Throughout the history of social work in the United States of America there are rare moments when the profession as a whole had reassembled its basic conception of field. There are exceptions in the 1960s and 1970s and even as late as 2000s when many social work educators and practitioners revisited the conception. However there have been no major radical shift and the conception of *field* in America remains very much the same.

In South America, on the other hand, there have been numerous efforts to reconceptualize the *field*. These processes were captured in a 1971 statement from the United Nations on training for social welfare that brought to light the tension between 'struggling within existing systems' and 'working to change them'. The statement reads:

> Social work, and consequently social welfare, must be freed from dependence on imported conceptions and techniques; it must further revolutionary change in social structures and power relationships, rather than limit itself to helping its clienteles to function better with a non-viable social environment.[84]

Between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s, acknowledged as the 'reconceptualization' period, South America stopped searching for answers from Europe and the United States and instead engaged in the discovery

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[83] Jane Addams, 1910, in Van Wormer, 2003: 165)

[84] Resnick, R. P. (1995). South America. In T. D. E. Watts, Doreen; Mayadas, Nazneen S. (Ed.), International Handbook on Social Work Education (pp. 65-86). London: Greenwood Press. Also see Queiro-Tajalli, I. (1995). Argentina. In T. D. E. Watts, Doreen; Mayadas, Nazneen S. (Ed.), International Handbook on Social Work Education (pp. 87-102). London: Greenwood Press.

of its own authentic potential to become a free continent.[85] From this shift, two basic schools of thought emerged: the functionalist and the historical-materialist.[86]

Functionalist social workers built their premise around the notion of the achievement of social equilibrium by attempting to eliminate social problems and dysfunctions, while historical-materialist social workers conceived a struggle against oppression and forces of marginalization as their most fundamental objective. The concept of 'conscientization' as formulated by the educator Paulo Friere became their fundamental theoretical premise. Within these varied contestations the *field* was conceived not as being contained in the poor but as embedded in structure.

Across the globe in Australia, social work intervention was influenced primarily by the USA model till the mid 1960s and thereafter British models became influential.[87] The major *fields* of social work intervention today include ageing, refugees, child protection and domestic violence. While the *field* was taken for granted as being 'out there', there was far more stress on case work especially in the hospital setting and relief for families experiencing distress in the community setting. There have been many interesting writings on Radical Social Work emerging from Australia; however there has not been any fundamental change in its basic conception as is the case with the United Kingdom and United States of America.

If we turn to South Africa which offered its first social work diploma course in 1924 the theoretical trends were quite similar to United Kingdom. However, the 'White Paper for Social Welfare' brought out in 1997 cleared the direction for social work practice in South Africa to a great degree. It wanted the profession to redefine and locate the *fields* of engagement and practice within a context of micro and macro issues that

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[85] Queiro-Tajalli, I. (1995). Agentina. In T.D.E. Watts, Doreen; Mayadas, Nazneen S. (Ed.), International Handbook on Social Work Education (pp. 87-102). London: Greenwood Press.

[86] Resnick, 1995 (ibid)

[87] Phillips, R. and Irwin, J. (2005), 'The Social, Political and Practice Context for Social Work in Australia', Present and Future of Social Work in Asia-Pacific Countries, Korea Association of Social Workers: Seoul

constitute poverty, unemployment, aging, human rights, children's rights, immigration, refugees, HIV/AIDS, illiteracy, trauma resulting from violent crime especially rape, murder, child abuse, sexual assault and etc.

Conception of *field* in India before 1936

I. Context

Social work education in India celebrated its platinum jubilee in the year 2011. Over seventy-five years of its existence, social work has viewed the *field* in various ways. Prior to 1936, when British India held sway, the conception of social work was determined by the social condition existing, created by number of international and national situations. One was related to the great economic depression worldwide that occurred during 1928-1932 whose main impact was a sharp reduction in the sale of raw cotton, jute and ground nuts in the international commodity markets. During this period, prices for Indian exports fell about forty percent. In Mumbai (erstwhile Bombay) the cotton manufacturing industry closed about a quarter of its mills by 1931. On the political front the year 1935 was defined by the passage of the Government of India Act, 1935 in 4 June. This Act provided for: the separation of Burma's administration from India, the creation of Sind, Orissa and the North-West Frontier Province as separate provinces, the establishment of provincial autonomy with ministerial responsibilities, provision for a Federation with division of powers, the retention of separate electorates in accordance with the Communal Award and a demarcation of scheduled areas into excluded and partially excluded. Most of these scheduled areas were those inhabited by Tribal communities.

During this phase, the socio-political context was labile and any activity that seems to qualify as social work, conceived the *field* within the paradigm of welfare; inclusive of structures, services, delivery systems and recipients. This paradigm was very much within the bounded conceptual frame of colonial anthropology under the control and patronage of British imperialism. Colonial anthropology was under the methodological grip of what was commonly known as nineteen century evolutionism which framed society and cultures within a comparative method under a broad conception known as psychic unity (referring to an understanding that all human brains work similarly). Society was supposed to progress though parallel but independent evolutionary stages posited as being from simple

to complex and primitive to civilized. Here the Victorian society was represented as the highest currently extant form of civilization. Anthropologists' understanding of the myriad artifacts they collected or the events they recorded in the field was to a great extent defined by and derived from these theoretical perspectives.[88] It was within such perspectives and frameworks that social work was greatly confined.

II. Social Work Activities

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, a few organizations in India started social work training in order to study social problems and to seek scientific solutions for the same: Servants of India Society, Social Service League in Bombay, etc. The Social Service League of Bombay started a short-term training course in the year 1920 for voluntary workers engaged in social welfare activity. And in 1936 the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work was set up in Bombay.

Over time, the generic curriculum that was emphasized in the pre-independence period (1936-46) developed to deepen practice through the concept of specializations, which include medical and psychiatric social work, family and child welfare, criminology and correctional administration, group work and community organization, and labor welfare and industrial relations. Shaped by priorities established in the United States, the emphasis was on curative social casework, with less attention to needs of social and economic development, or the promotion of prevention services and social action. The *field,* during this period was generally conceived as a context outside of British and various comprador class realities. The passive recipients of welfare (generally the poor Indians) were more specifically identified as being the *field*. In this sense, the *field* was framed so as to constitute the welfare structure, the personnel delivering the welfare services and the recipients of welfare. This was the overarching framework of the conception in which the first social work institute in the country was conceived, formulated and posited.

[88] Mcgee,R, Jon & Warms, Richard,L. (2008) Anthropological Theory, An Introductory History. McGraw Hill

Conception of *field* in India after 1936

The first school of social work was set up in a very hostile environment. 'Nationalist' uprising against British rule was gaining momentum and increased tensions with trade unions, partly related to the fallout from the great depression were taking place. Clifford Manshardt, an American Protestant missionary, who had graduated in theology from the University of Chicago was appointed its first Director. He came to India in 1925 through the American Marathi mission, a Protestant Christian organization. This organization had decided to undertake work in 'slums' and with that objective founded the Nagpada Neighborhood House in 1926. The agency was formulated on lines of the 'Settlement House' in America. Identifying poverty, gambling, prostitution, beggary, etc as social problems, they were perceived as being caused by the tumultuous changes in social structure especially related to the breaking up of the family and 'community'. Manshardt mooted the idea of developing a school of social work to meet the need for trained manpower to work in such conditions. With financing from the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work was set up.

The programme had three major characteristics– it required bachelor's degree for admission, was of two years duration, and it was called as 'school' much in consonance with the American pattern. Addressing an audience in 1936, Manshardt made a mention of the need for social work as follows: 'As I thought about the matter of training, I became convinced that the standard of social work in India could not be raised appreciably until a permanent school of Social Work was set up to engage in a continuous study of Indian Social problems and to offer training of social work, on a post-graduate basis … The fundamental courses in social case work, child welfare, social statistics, public welfare administration, medical social work, social psychiatry, social legislation, organization of welfare activities, and the history of philanthropy and public welfare are a necessary part of the equipment of all social workers.'

During this period the *field* was conceptualized around the notion of sectors of welfare, inclusive of welfare delivery systems, with thrust on systems, process, people and deliverables carried out by trained

professionals. In 1940, Manshardt[89] himself demarcated the *field* roughly under four major heads: family and child welfare, medical and psychiatric social work, juvenile and adult delinquency and industrial relationships. Social service administration and social research were positioned as important skills and *field* work was seen as learning through direct participation in welfare activities.

Post 1947, the ideas of Gandhiji were dominant. The social work discipline during this time was positioned to play an augmenting role to constructive work emanating from Gandhiji's constructive work programme. In 1949, Jivraj.N.Mehta, the president of the Indian Conference of Social Work,[90] set up in the year 1947 identified the problem of Refugee, Child Welfare, Health Service, Physical Fitness, Environmental Hygiene, Youth Welfare and Community Organization as focus areas. The final recommendations of the conference identified the practice areas as (i) Rural reconstruction and welfare- agriculture and village industries, sanitation, health and housing, village education, village organization, village culture; State and social service which included a small section on 'Harijan Uplift' and recommendations on welfare of tribal people.

It is within such contextual realities that the demarcation of *fields* came to be formulated. The concept of specializations which began in the TISS in 1948 was framed on such premises. It is also important to note that the social work *fields* of specializations were offshoots of the subjects already contained in the initial syllabus. Medical and Psychiatric Social Work was established in 1948 on invitation by an American social work professional. Family and Child Welfare were started in the year 1949 by an American specialist in Child Development. Both were ultimately headed by Indian faculty trained in the U.S.A. The Department of Group Work and Community Organization was established in 1952, headed by an alumnus trained in the U.S.A. Further in 1953, a full-fledged Department of Criminology, Juvenile Delinquency and Correctional Administration were established, headed by an Indian trained in the U.S.A. With the experience

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[89] Clifford Manshardt (1936) The Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work, Ceylon Men, May.pp.11

[90] Indian Conference of Social Work (1949) Recommendations of the Third Annual Session. Also see Mehta, B. (1952). Historical Background of Social Work in India. Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.13 (1). p.1-14.

gained in managing the Social Education Organisers' Training Centre at Hyderabad for rural development, which was on the invitation of the Central Government, in 1955, the Department of Rural Welfare and a separate Department of Community Organisation and Development (for urban areas) was established. In 1959, the two departments engaging with community work were merged into the Department of Urban and Rural Community Development.

Following this the Department of Tribal Welfare was established and short-term programmes were launched to meet the needs of the programmes for tribal welfare started by the Home Ministry of the Government of India. The training of deputed officers from the government commenced in the year 1956. It had a Field Headquarters at Tamia in Madhya Pradesh and field training in forestry, agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperatives and handicrafts as well as social and cultural programmes. Support for this programme was withdrawn in 1966, when the training had to be discontinued for various reasons among which was the difficulty to handle a project at such a great distance plus some degree of lack of belief and support in the process.

The Indian reality during this stage was complex and blurred. Around mid 1960s, people's disillusionment with the overarching development paradigms and its claims to bring about a just social order was witnessed. Saldanha[91] notes that this period saw the rise of non-government organisations either with the ideology of human rights, Freire, Marx or Gandhi. Most groups worked as pressure groups, operating from below, driving processes towards a cumulative change brought about through mass participatory base. Their numbers, widespread character and their inter-linkages gave rise to contemporary social movements, aiming at development with people at the centre.

By 1961, Moorthy had identified six *fields*; Family and Child Welfare, Community Organization, Medical and Psychiatric Social Work, Correctional Administration, Labour Welfare and Personnel Development and Tribal Welfare with Public Welfare Administration and Social

[91] Saldanha.D. (2008). Towards a Conceptualization of Social Action within Social Work: Teaching Social Action as a Dialogue between Theoretical Perspectives and Between Theory and Practice. Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.69 (2), p.111-137.

Research as social work skills.[92] Within Family and Child Welfare the sub fields identified were Marital Counseling, Child Care Institutions and School Social Work. Within Medical and Psychiatric Social Work, the sub fields were the physically ill, disabled persons and mentally depressed. Within Correctional Administration the sub fields were Offenders of all ages and types, within jails and reformatories. Within Labour Welfare and Personnel Development, the sub fields were factories, mines, plantations and such other industrial work places, including trade unions, and in offices of almost every type of organization as well as in labour communities.

Within Community Organization the sub fields were Community centers and group situations. These, in the understanding of the author were supposed to be opportunities that would provide for play, school, clubs, discussion groups, art, society, local self government, committee working, occupational teams, national development projects towards a vision of building a new India. The organization of such healthy communities in rural and urban settings was the chief function of the field of Community Organization whose main practice is Social Group Work. Within Tribal Welfare the sub fields were 'backward tribal groups' who live in remote hills, forest regions and other isolated areas 'needing to be gradually adjusted to a changing social order in India without which they would disintegrate and develop problems of adjustment'.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Ministry of Education had set up its first Review Committee on Social Work Education[93] which came out with a report. An interesting comment was made in the report that gives us a glimpse of how the field was conceived back then: 'Now that the main aims of social reform have been achieved, the task of social worker has taken a different form...he has to look after the needs of children in orphanages, rehabilitate unmarried mothers and save children

[92] This article was the content of a talk given Moorthy.M.V through the All-India Radio, Bombay on 10th February, 1961. Also see Moorthy, M. Vasudeva (1953). Scientific Approach to Field Work IJSW, Vol.14 (2), p.144-159

[93] (UGC, 1965: 7)

from the stigma of illegitimacy... Today the field of social work coalesces more or less with the field of the social workers in the West.'

The *fields* of social work identified in the report were: labour welfare, rural development and community organisation, tribal welfare, medical and psychiatric social work, correctional work, family and child welfare, work with the elderly, welfare of the handicapped, and so on. It is interesting to note that the UGC report was subsequently criticized by various social workers on the role of social work in the field of development. The Association of Schools of Social Work in India (ASSWI) organized a seminar in 1966 on 'Role of Social Work Profession in Rural Reconstruction' where the traditional welfare approach was severely criticized and the need for a developmental perspective was emphasized.[94] Following this the need for reorienting social work education for greater relevance and to widen the scope for social work practice was advocated vigorously through the late 1970s and in the 1980s. Several institutions undertook major review of their curricula and developed new courses with a more developmental focus thrusting on poverty.[95]

During the period 1975–1977 the country experienced a state of Emergency where official democracy was suspended. This gave rise to a large number of political struggles manifest as mass-based movements. Andharia, J.[96] noted that this period also saw 'a critique of social work as being an apolitical enterprise. With the failure of community development programmes to impact the poverty levels or people excluded from health, education, housing, sanitation and infrastructure services, social workers and community organizers were forced to re-examine its excessive emphasis on local development issues'. In the light of this 'some Social Workers began to recast their work to include structural factors that shape local realities that led to Community Organization (CO) teachers redefining and reshaping CO to align with, contribute to and borrow from

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[94] Desai, Murli and Narayan, Lata (1998). Challenges for Social Work Profession- Towards People-Centred Development Vol.59 (1), p.531-558

[95] Desai, 1987

[96] Andharia.J (2007) Reconceptualising Community Organization in India, A Transdisciplinary Perspective. Vol 15, No 1-2 Journal of Community Practice.

literature on diverse forms of organizing – social movements, trade unionism and mass-based people's organization and self-help groups.'

In 1980, the Second Review on Social Work education (UGC) was undertaken. By this time the *fields* in social work had come to be formulated around Industrial Relations and Labour Welfare, Family and Child Welfare, Medical and Psychiatric, Corrections, Rural Development, Community Development (Urban and Rural), Urban Community Development and Tribal Welfare. Desai, A. S.[97] conceived the state of social work education during this period as narrow and proposed the need to broaden curriculum to include agro based professionals, rural engineers and architects, and the need to stretch itself further to include indigenous systems such as those in medicine. Her argument for this shift is interesting. She argued that a 'remedial, rehabilitative model is essentially concerned with the breakup of the existing societal systems—the family and the community—resulting in the problems of the care of the disabled, the abandoned woman and child, the aged, or in caring for the deviants of the system which is feeling the strains of change, that is, the criminal and the delinquent, or, in assisting persons to adjust to an alien environment, e.g. industrial labour, or in utilizing the services such as in medical social work. But these reflect the problems of an urban and industrial society which constitutes only 20 per cent of this country. It by-passes the majority of the rural masses who live in poverty and who are necessarily the major target groups for social work—the landless labourer, the small and marginal farmer, the tribal deprived of his centuries old right on the forest, the women and children suffering from the ravages of malnutrition and deprived of many of the most basic needs for food, medical care and education. Professional social work has shown little involvement with these target groups.'

These questions troubled the few critical social work educators and by 1988 to 1990, there was a major curriculum review undertaken at the national level under the auspices of the UGC. Arguments were put forth that it was imperative to include courses such as social action, social development, policy and planning, social conflict and others that would open up social work to a deeper understanding of social realities and a finer

[97] Armaity. S. Desai, (1985) Desai, A. S. (1985). Foundations of Social Work Education in India and some Issues Vol.46 (1), p.41-57

engagement with structures of society and varied forces that are responsible in marginalization.

The 1990s was a period definitive in many ways for the country. It was during this period that India entered proactively and overtly into what we now know as liberalization, privatization and globalization. This period was also identified as that time when we witnessed the increase in number and activities of Non-Government Organizations and the rise of the Right-Wing sentiments.

India witnessed the demolition of the Babri Masjid, followed by a number of communal riots across the country. This was further made complex by the anti-reservation movements by dominant privileged castes to disallow any further space for deepening representation for varied historically marginalized groups. However, this period also saw the Dalit movements becoming more mainstream, occupying centrality in normative discourse, plus a number of State initiatives were taken to tackle what was perceived as 'the tribal problem'. It is argued that this period was the defining moment for the rise of identity politics, both religious and ethnic, that has changed the political landscape to this very moment.

Social Work during this period operated under an ossified environment dithering on any engagement with political issues while seeing itself only as contributors and service deliverers of the welfare state. There were few exceptions in the forms of initiatives taken during this time, but there was nothing really noteworthy that could be recorded. By the early 2000, social work was going through an interregnum crisis, old ideas and intervention strategies were becoming irrelevant and meaningless and were showing signs of decay while across the country nothing new, in terms of theory and intervention models was being produced. The degree of disconnect between the content of teaching and the reality was at best asymmetrical and at worst disempowering.

It could be argued that the only probable reason why social work education still remained and was to a certain degree receiving applicants for its teaching programmes was probably because it had paid teachers whose permanency of post was untouched by the University Grants Commission and that some State funds were made available for research, training and intervention purposes. This period was characterized by an increased

lethargy in social work education and in direct relation to the notion *field* however, two questions beckoned social work education in the early 2000s. One was around the notion of a theoretical stagnation in the conceptualization of the category *field* and two; in relation to the methodological and processual aspects of the indigenization of social work.

Contemporary Social Work and Conception of *field* in India: From 2006 to 2013

Beginning 2006, an article appeared in the IJSW titled 'Re-imagining Futures: An Agenda for Change', a report of the Director of Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Two reasons why this report is significant; One, for the first time it recognizes a need to re-imagine *fields* of social work in response to changing realities, and two; for the first time in any address within the first school of social work in the country was the category Dalit and Tribal articulated together.

For social work education in India and for many of its educators, reality had not changed much. This can be noted from the curriculum of social work programmes across all the schools offering social work programmes. Even after 71 years, social work programmes remained fundamentally unchanged and held on to the core components formulated in the 1950s with a few inconsequential additions made along the way. No matter how many changes have been brought into social work curriculum across institutes offering social work education in the country, most changes have been non-substantive. There were courses introduced into social work curriculum that were titled as 'Welfare Services for SC/ST and OBCs'. Such course title revealed the deeply paternalistic and extremely condescending attitude of social work educators vis-a-vis marginalized realities.

However, the year 2006 is significant. Recognizing the need to make social work relevant, the TISS began restructuring its programme. What emerged from it has somewhat fundamentally altered social work education and its conception of the *field*. While the old conceptions of the *field* still remain around conceptions in the earlier period with some minor changes made through the years, for the first time in social work history we see the emergence of indigenous formulations in the area of Dalits and Tribes as

teaching content, programme and a *field*. This is important to note because this idea had been for long suppressed and forced into 75 years of invisibility by varied groups that dominate social work education in India.

Currently new distinct *fields* of practiced that has emerged in social work education which includes Dalit and Tribal Social Work, Women Centered Practice and Disability Social Work. While the restructuring trend has not picked up across social work education across the country, efforts towards the same is taking place.

There was the formation of a government backed Network of Social Work Education[98] which is constituted by one senior representative from every social work institute in the country towards reforming social work courses, revision of curricular and updating the same in consonance with contemporary needs.

Social Work and Conception of *field* in India: From 2013 onwards

Currently the conception of field is being contested between progressive and conservative and the process is reverting back and forth. While conservative forces are demanding more professionalization, progressives are seeking the de-professionalization of social work. While some are stressing on individual and clinical practice demanding that social work must formulate its *core* around casework, groupwork and community organizations, others are demanding more engagement with structure, policy and research, arguing for policy practice, social movements, research and rights/welfare practice. The notion *field* is experiencing reconceptualization but its theoretical direction remains blurred.

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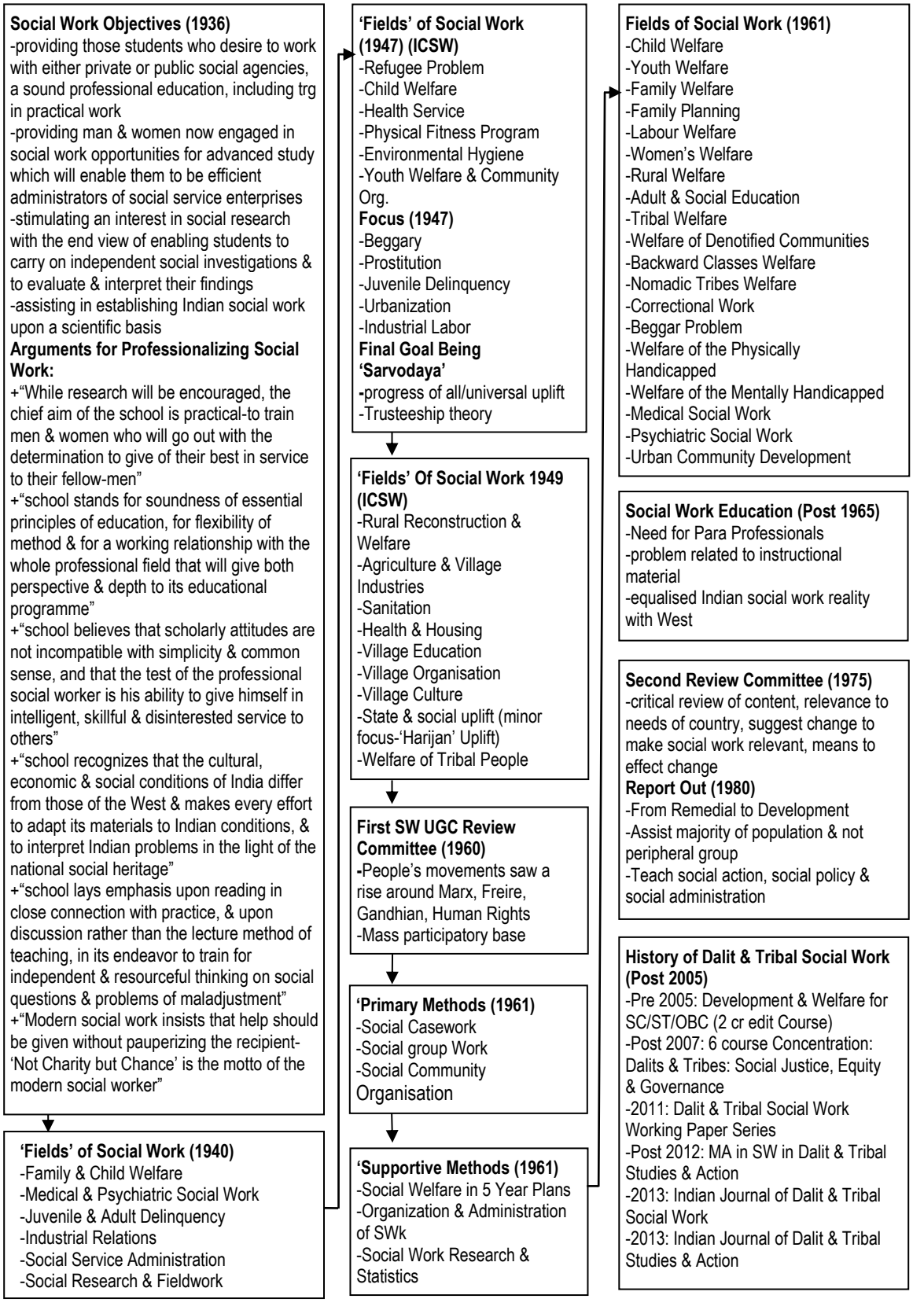
[98] In the Report of the National Network of Social Work Education available at <www.ssw-network.tiss.edu> titled 'National Consultation on National Network of Schools of Social Work for Quality Enhancement of Social Work Education in India, May2-3, 2012' authored by Nadkarni and Desai, snippets of regional discussions were documented. Formulation of a basic core curriculum and standard for social work programmes is being attempted. The one thing that keeps missing is the issues of Dalits and Tribes. Passing reference about structures and structural realities hidden under the jargon of 'culture' and 'social structure', 'multi-culturalism' was made mostly by Eastern region convener, Dr.Nabor Soreng. Most of the other conveners cutting across regions were more concerned about the mushrooming of social work institutes in the country and that students have to pay high fees.

In Diagram 5 titled 'Fields of Social Work Practice in India', a glimpse into varied fields of practice is presented. It begins with showing the initial professional social work objectives, the varied 'fields around the early 1940s, followed by conceptions around the late 1940s. The key moment in social work education was the setting up of the first UGC review committee in the 1960s followed by the re-conception of various fields of practice around the early 1980s.

After the second UGC review in the mid 1970s, many programmes were reformulated leading to the restructuring of curriculum of many schools of social work bringing in new domains of education and practice within social work education.

Diagram 5: Fields of Social Work Practice in India



Conclusion

India is currently being swept by tremendous forces of change and this is being felt within every social work institute. This massive change process is characterized by the emergence of new forces of marginalization and newer forms of discrimination in which the brunt is felt by historically marginalized groups. In response to these changes, critical educators within the profession agree that no matter the situation, any abandoning of the critical edge in social work discipline will lead again, as in the past, into having to rely too heavily on 'end conceptions' borrowed from other non-indigenous knowledge systems which ultimately lead social workers to having to hold loose conceptions of the *context* of work, especially at the structural level, thus making no real dent whatsoever on social reality.

Chapter V

On the Politics of Social Work Curriculum and Pedagogy[99]

In brief, this chapter is a conversation with self about social work education and practice. Equanimous in nature, it attempts to unravel the subject/object experience and analysis of some key fundamental issues that one has been involved in over the years as a social work educator. I have divided the chapter into three parts; (i) laying the context and frame of contemporary contestations in social work education; (ii) social work education- a case study of the TISS restructuring processes and (iii) critical reflections on curriculum, pedagogy and programme frameworks in social work. I attempt to discuss threadbare some of the emerging challenges that confront social work education in the current context and brings to light issues that the discipline should probably concern itself with in the future.

A. On Context and Frame

I have often heard social work educators pointing out, and have in many occasions articulated the same myself, that a social work programme by the very nature of its vision, mission and practice must have the intrinsic ability to adapt to changing contextual reality in consonance (or at least as close as possible) to the dynamic changes taking place in the external environment. However, while keeping pace with such dynamic changes and intervening accordingly, social work's vision to achieve welfare and development with social justice remains intrinsically non-negotiable. Fundamental principles such as protection and promotion of human dignity and self worth of every person; equity and equality, non-

[99] I wrote this note to clarify my own thoughts about the dynamics of curriculum formulation in social work in 2011 in relation to a number of questions raised by students about curriculum. Later i lectured on this subject to my new students to give them a glimpse of the structures of social work programmes. There have been three colloquiums of the Center for Social Justice and Governance in TISS, Mumbai and several lectures within TISS and outside that i have delivered related to same subject. I was a consultant for the Royal University of Bhutan in its curriculum formulation for the social work programme and have used this note as a basis to share with colleagues in the RUB to support the formulation of their programme.

hierarchical and non-discrimination of human groups; conscious elimination of systemic discrimination and marginalization of vulnerable groups such as dalits, women and tribes; ensuring universal and equitable access to essential resources, peace and collaborative social relationships; etc., are core to social work struggles and politics. Holding firm to this vision and mission, social workers position themselves in ways that would be meaningful and empowering to peoples, structures and systems they engage with and work through.

Having stated the basis of social work as above, it must be stated, however, that on matters concerning the ability to read reality and position intervention efficaciously, it must be accepted (at least among social work educators), that social work has faltered at every step in its nearly eighty-one long years of existence in India. Unfortunate, when viewed retrospectively, social work programmes have had the tenacious ability of being and remaining anachronistic throughout, and thereby irrelevant and obsolete to many structural contexts that seek its attention. Theoretical formulations conceived as early as those postulated in 1936, in terms of focus and practice areas which got differentiated further in the late 1950s into specializations, such as Family and Child Welfare, Medical and Psychiatric Social work, Criminology and Correctional Administration, Urban and Rural Community Development and a few others, have remained static and unchanging till date.

Perceived from such a stand point, one could argue that either the socio-political or economic environment has remained static for the past eighty-one years and therefore social work specializations as conceptualized in the early 1950s are still very much relevant today, or, Social Work Educators themselves are stuck in the thinking process and literature of the fifties and are resistant to any change of their perspectives and practice domain, while the environment has moved on. In other words, social work educators seem immune and sightless to the changes taking place around them, whether related to new forms or forces of marginalization or new structural discrepancies that have crept into the system leading to a renewed discrimination and the peripheralization of peoples; bounded, conceived and oppressed around varied new social realities and identities.

However, no matter how critical we may be of such processes, we must admit that historical attempts to stay abreast and efficacious have been

made among educators. So we observe that in response to very complex realities of the earlier decades beginning 1940s, the history of social work education tells us that educators have responded by ingenious formulation manifesting two streams of Social Work education made available to Social Work students across India; one is the generic stream, as in the Delhi School of Social Work with few optional courses in key sectors and, two, the specialization stream; as in Loyola College Chennai and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai. While two[100] UGC review committees, one in 1965 and 1985 have made relevant suggestions about vision, mission and subject content of social work training, yet one is left wanting about the Review committee's analysis and understanding of macro/structural Indian reality.

In this regard, the specializations which had a sectoral thrust still remained as they were conceived in the initial days of social work education implemented across Social Work institutes in the country, with the exception of TISS, that went on a super specialization spree as it restructured its programme in 2005-06.

At the TISS, it is important to note that many new conceptions in the form of FOPs are formulated much more around 'perspectives' rather than sectors. The historically dominant 'sector-wise' specializations, was an evolutionary outcome of a particular 'way of conceiving'. This approach relied much more on conceptualising social work education on the twin notions of 'sectoral differentiation' and 'intervention areas', rather than on any informed analysis of social structure, pro-poor ideological leaning or even on systems of oppression and exclusion.

These shifts being made from 'sector' to structure, power and discourse could be because of many reasons. But one that is most obvious is that there is an increased sense of theoretical saturation and methodological poverty about the 'sectoral conception'.

I have often reflected deeply about these processes. Over the years what has become obvious to me as an educator is that these are articulations of an organic need; as in a movement among social work theorists and

[100] While the third review committee set up by the UGC for social work education have taken place. I am yet to get access to its report. Apropos to this inaccessibility i have consciously not quoted the same.

practitioners towards 'ways of seeing' as in 'perspectives' rather than 'domains of doing' as in 'sectors'. I firmly believe that this felt need to shift social work episteme towards the direction of 'perspective' at this juncture in its history is an organic social and theoretical necessity. This is occurring, i opine, as social work educators attempt to rejuvenate, deepen and make efficacious social work education to contemporary socio-political realities and current politico-economic contexts of the Indian conditions. This does not mean however, that one devalues historically conceived and identified social work sectors. The processual shift only indicates that social work education would have to or even begin to encapsulate new areas and fields of practice as we proceed in time and space.

B. On Restructuring of Social work Education: A Case of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences

To get a better understanding of social work curriculum debates and propositions let me attempt to take a look at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), the institute where professional social work education was first offered in India, as represented in Diagram 6 titled History of Social Work Education in TISS. The TISS went through a radical restructuring (both academic and administration) in the year 2005. The outcomes and processes that led to a new formalised restructured system in 2006, were initiated as early as the mid 1990s, picking momentum around 2002 and earnestly pushed forward by 2005. While the restructuring impacted 'research units' much more, than social work teaching departments itself, (whose details are beyond the scope of this paper), few fundamental changes did also take place in the social work academic structure and the social work curriculum. The erstwhile five departments of social work- Urban and Rural Community Development (URCD), Criminology and Correctional Administration (CCA), Family and Child welfare (FCW), Medical and Psychiatric Social Work (MPSW) and Social Welfare Administration (SWA) became 'Centres'.[101] They are the Centre for Community Organisation and Development Practice, Centre for Health and Mental Health, Centre for Disability Studies and Action, Centre for Equity for Women, Children and Families, Centre for Criminology and

[101] TISS (2005). Prospectus of Master's Degree programme 2006-2008, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Justice and the Centre for Social Justice and Governance.[102] Under one overarching social work masters programme, each of these Centres offered 'major concentrations' (a set of six courses- twelve credits) in the third semester, and a set of minor concentrations (a set of four courses-eight credits) in the fourth semester. The major concentrations were called 'Fields of Practice', and the minor concentrations were divided into two types- 'Thematic/Knowledge based concentrations' and 'Skill based concentrations.' The conceptualization of these processes comes from my own understanding and interpretation and is not the official position of the TISS. Having participated actively in the restructuring i have my own views on each of these processes and have stated so.

Within the concentration framework that was initially offered, students were given the choice to choose after a more generic first and second semester, from any of the third semester major 'Fields of Practice' (FOP) concentrations, followed by any two of the minor concentrations in the fourth semester. Those who opted for research dissertation needed to opt only for one of the concentrations in the fourth semester. The experience of this initial framework (also called the 'cafeteria approach') which was laid down based on the recognition of student's capacities for choice and decision making. This framework however produced much skewed results.

[102] TISS (2012). Prospectus of Master's Degree programme 2012-2014, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Diagram 6: History of Social Work Education in TISS

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL WORK AT TISS

2007: Restructured SW Programmes Offered
2005: Restructuring of TISS
2003: FCW, MPSW, URCD Curriculum Review
1988 to 1990: UGC national level curriculum review. Social action, social development, policy & planning and social conflict considered important for inclusion.
1983: Unit for Labour Studies & Unit for Family Studies
1982: Unit for Women's Studies
1981: Unit for Rural Studies
1978: Unit for Social Policy and Social Welfare Administration
1977: Unit for Urban Studies
1970: Unit for Research in the Sociology of Education
1969: Unit for Child and Youth Research
1968: Department of Social Welfare Administration
1967: Separation of M. A in Social Work & PMIR
1959: **Department of Urban & Rural Community Development**
1955: Separate Department of Rural Welfare and Department of Community Organization and Development (for urban areas)
1954: Department of Psychology (terminated 1962) and Department of Tribal Welfare (funding withdrawn in 1966)
1953: Department of Criminology, Juvenile Delinquency & Correctional Administration
1952: Department of Group work and Community Organization
1949: (i) Rural Reconstruction and Welfare - Agriculture and village industries, sanitation, health and housing, village education, village organization, village culture; State and social service which included a small section on 'Harijan Uplift' and recommendations on Welfare of Tribal People (ICSW)
1949: Family and Child Welfare
1948: Medical and Psychiatric Social Work & Community work incorporated in curriculum
1947: Indian Conference of Social Work was set up - identified Refugee problem, Child Welfare, Health Service, Physical Fitness programme, Environmental hygiene, Youth welfare and community organization as the fields of social work practice. The need for a ministry of social welfare, council of social agencies, importance of voluntary agencies, co-ordination of social work, social work training, with *sarvodaya* as a final goal. Focus was on beggary, prostitution, juvenile delinquency and urban, industrial labour.
1940: Courses - Family and Child Welfare; Medical and Psychiatric Social Work; Juvenile and Adult delinquency; Industrial Relationships; Social Service Administration; Social Research and Field work

WHY TISS RESTRUCTURED?

-Social work at TISS was existing for itself, had become non responsive to the changing environment
-Isolated from the external & disengaged within/among itself
-Disconnected to emerging realities, groups & sites of marginalization
-Rigidity of organizational structure, rules and regulations becoming an academic hindrance
-Decrease in innovations & innovative response to dynamic context
-Non usage of Faculty expertise (especially located in research units)
-"Lethargy has set in…" "We are degenerating..." "We have become a big non responsive organization…" "WHY & WHAT ARE WE HERE FOR?"

WHAT HAPPENED DURING TISS RESTRUCTURING

-Discussions & debates among faculty cutting across departments & research units
-External expertise brought in for organization feedback
-Internal and External environment match (The Indian reality – The TISS reality)
-Reformulation of Internal organization structure (Centers instead of Dept. under Broad Thematic Schools)
-New themes sprang up post analysis of external reality
-Faculty moved to new reformulated themes around the notion of TEAMS in Centers

Product of First Phase of Restructuring (2006-2008)

COMMON FIRST YEAR
Foundation Courses + Bridge Courses:
Social Work Practice: Principles & Concepts I (8 credits)
Social work Practice: Principles & Concepts II (4 credits)
History & Ideology of Social Work (2 credits)
Participatory Communication (2 credits)
Quantitative & Qualitative Research (2 credits each)
MAJOR CONCENTRATIONS (12 credits each)
-Community Organization & Devp. Practice
-Family Social Work
-Person with Disabilities & Equalization of Opportunities
-Health & Development
-Criminology & Justice
-Dalits & Tribes: Social Justice, Equity & Governance
MINOR CONCENTRATE (8 credits)
(KNOWLEDGE or THEMATIC CONCENTRATES)
-Rural Development
-Environment & Sustainable Livelihoods
-Urban Development, Unorganized Sector & Livelihood
-Social Work in the field of Mental Health
-Social Policy & Social Welfare Administration
-Child & Youth Development
-Community Health
-Disasters, Impoverishment & Social Vulnerability
-Juvenile Justice & Youth in Conflict
(SKILL BASED CONCENTRATE)
-Management of Non-Profit Organizations
-Developmental Therapeutic Counseling
-Social & Development Planning & Advocacy
-Rehabilitative & Correctional Social Work
-Child & Youth Practice
FIELDWORK
Common First Year & Second Year-Third sem concentration based-I Sem: Concurrent, II Sem: Blocks, III & IV Sem: concurrent or block as decided by concentration

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE MID PHASE TISS 2007-2009

2007-09: Women Centered Social Work and Child and Youth Development. Minor concentration Social Policy course was renamed Social Policy and Planning, Social and Development Planning and Advocacy was dropped.
2008-10: M.A Disability Studies & Action
2009-2011: Merging of the minor, knowledge based/thematic concentrations and the skill based concentrations to offer 12 minor concentrations**:**
Rural Development, Environment and Sustainable Livelihoods, Urban Development: Unorganized Sector and Livelihoods, Social Work in the Field of Mental Health, Social Policy and Planning, Community Health, Disasters, Impoverishment and Social Vulnerability, Juvenile Justice and Youth in Conflict, Developmental/ Therapeutic Counseling, Socio-Legal Rehabilitation Practice, Advanced Practice with Children and Families, Youth and Change, Conflict, Peace and Human Security.
Optional courses: Governance of NPO, Organizational Behavior in NPO, Strategic Management for NPO, Financial Management in NPO, Project Management, Training for Social Work Personnel, Non-formal Education, International Social Work, Spiritual Social Work

WHAT DOES TISS HAVE NOW

In 2012-2014 another restructuring took place and the School of Social Work, TISS (Mumbai) now offers 9+1 Thematic Masters prog.
MA. Social Work in Criminology & Justice
MA. Social Work with Children & Families
MA. Social Work with Community Organization & Devp. Practice
MA. Social Work in Disability Studies & Action
MA. Social Work in Dalit & Tribal Studies & Action
MA. Social Work in Livelihoods & Social Entrepreneurship (*change to Livelihood & Social Innovation in 2014)*
MA. Social Work in Mental Health
MA. Social Work in Public Health
MA. Social Work in Women Centered Practice
MA in SW in Rural Development (Tuljapur Campus)
MA in SW Generic (Guwahati Campus)

16 Credits of Common Courses in First Year:
Social Case Work
Social Group Work
Community Organization
Social Welfare Administration
Quantitative Research
Qualitative Research
History & Perspective of Social Work
Critical Perspective on Social Work: Intro to Social Theories
Compulsory Research
Fieldwork:I Year at School level, II Year at Centre Level

AREAS REMAINING UNRESOLVED

-Is there anything like a 'Core' of Social Work?
-Does context determine practice or does our method determine practice?
-Is all of social work the same: Are there different types of social works or only one social work?
-What is indigenous social work. Do we have an Indian specific social work practice paradigm?
-Are MSWs generic programmes, specializations or separate fields of practice Masters
--Are we Welfare Practitioners, NGO workers, Social Activist, Charity Workers?
-Are we 'Agents of Control' or 'Agents of Change'?
-Should we be upholders of Constitutional Values or toe the lines taken by political parties?
-Do the marginalized have a voice in Social Work Curriculum building or are Social Workers their Voice?

In the first year, out of the six 'Fields of Practice' concentrations, three received twenty students and above, with one FOP receiving nearly fifty plus students, while three FOPs had less than ten students. This was 2007. The second year-2008, saw four FOPs receiving students above ten and two FOPs with less than ten. By 2007-2009 academic years, two new FOPs were added- Women Centred Practice and Child and Youth Development. The FOP concentrate- Disability Studies and Action became a full-fledged Masters programme separate from the main concentration-based social work programme in the academic year 2008-2010.

Throughout this period, that is from 2007-2009 to 2012-2014 the programme structure was constantly being modified and changed around the framework of the concentrations. However, by 2012-2014 a new programme structure under the rubric of 'Social Work Thematic Masters Programme' was introduced. A total of nine, plus one in 2014, thematic Masters in Social Work programme were offered.

It has been nearly eleven years since the restructuring of the social work programmes in TISS took place. However, current debates regarding fundamental issues about curriculum remains. Most of these questions as represented in Table One concern social work vision, mission and its curriculum. In the next section, i reflect on some of the questions that emerged after the TISS restructuring process especially those that concern the curriculum principles. While i will touch upon social work vision and mission, my thrust would be on unravelling some of the positions, perspectives and issues concerning social work curriculum and pedagogy.

C. On Curriculum Principles, Structure/Components and Pedagogy

Before dwelling into curriculum issues, it is important first to capture in a few words about the key stakeholder in the education process. These are the social work students. I have often noticed that there is a peculiarity to the background of students pursuing social work programmes. While the initial period of social work education saw many urban based students filling the seats of social work institutes, the trend is starting to change. Since most social work institutes were located in urban locales, they attracted many more urban-based students. However, in due course of time many more institutes have sprung up especially in semi urban and rural areas. Plus, with the entry of the Indira Gandhi National Open

University offering Bachelors and Masters Programmes in Social Work the field of social work education is wide open and accessible by students across spaces. However, i have observed that while rural students apply for urban and city-based institutes, there are few urban students applying for rural institutes. The general trend as of today is that there is a dominance of rural students in semi-urban and rural based institutes and there is a dominance of urban students in urban based institutes. However much one may desire and try, an effort to admit rural students in urban based institutes does not seem possible. Breaking this barrier is difficult as students from rural areas intersect caste, (English) language competence and region-specific behavioural specificities; traits that urban social work institutes rarely treasure and see as useful. Plus, the attraction towards elite upper caste English speaking students among many urban based social work educators still rules the roost in urban located institutes.

Nonetheless Social Work students, with the exception of a few, generally come with a high degree of commitment to the cause of the oppressed or to other related issues such as environment protection, sustainable livelihoods, development, human rights, etc. While i have observed that there is a general distaste for theory, with a thrust more on practice, they are keen to understand macro structural issues. In a number of occasions students have shared that they find certain courses 'meaningless', especially those with an increased focus on behaviour and pathology. There is however a small portion of students whose interest in cognitive-behavioural issues far outweighs socio-structural issues. In feedback meetings that i have sat where students shared their experience of two years in the last days of their stay in campus, they would give very interesting insights into what they go through in the two years of training. One student gave this feedback to me: 'when i had come to join the programme, there was so much enthusiasm and commitment. Now that i am about to leave i feel dead, exhausted and have lost the meaning as to why i pursued social work studies. I have heard this feedback from many students over the years. I have often interpreted the above feedback as recognition of the student's awareness about one's frustration with a course that gave nothing more than remedial based information and description. 'Remedial work' attacks symptoms and promises nothing more than immediate relief. A student who comes to do a Masters programme in social work wants to be the change, hoping to see and

experience it both at the levels of theory and practice, all this within the value framework that social work profession professes to uphold.

I. On Curriculum Principles

Social work education at its core is 'education for social change'. It stands for peace and collaborative social relationships and works to realize and uphold peoples' dignity, self respect and self worth. Its vision is attaining an equal and non-hierarchical society where people are ensured universal and equitable access to essential resources. It challenges any form of discrimination and consciously work to eliminate systemic marginalization.

Distinct from other academic programmes, social work education is generally envisioned around three fundamental premises that take into consideration its vision of society and its commitment and methods to realize the same. Thrusting on 'education for change' towards realization of its ideals, its first premise is generally formulated around an 'education that deepens its stated values' in its varied stakeholders which includes educators, students, trainees and practitioners. The second premise is conceptualized around an 'education for service and conscientized livelihood' for those who take up the programme and will in the future become social work practitioners, and finally, the third premise is conceived around an 'education that capacitates its trainees for knowledge production' for the overall good of society as it progresses in time and space.

II. On Curriculum Structure / Component

Drawing upon the above premises, let me first begin to critically reflect separately upon each of the components of the social work curriculum. I begin by looking at fieldwork, followed by Group Labs, Rural Practicum, Methods and last but not the least, the time table. Since each of these reflections are my personal views on each component, they are kind of disconnected. However, they are linked to the overarching social work programme framework in every way.

(i)Fieldwork: On many occasions i have had to explain to my colleagues from the social sciences the difference between the fieldwork' that is practiced in social work education as compared to the concept of fieldwork as practiced in the social science. I opine that the fieldwork that

we practice in social work is very different from fieldwork as generally understood in the social sciences. While the description of these differences in detail is outside the scope of this chapter, i would however like to touch upon some salient features. In social work education, field work constitutes one symbiotic half of the teaching-learning process, the other component being caste/class room teaching. It is conceived as a space in society and ecology where the agent (social worker) would consciously and actively participate in the process of change towards realisation of social work ideals. The idea that through this process, the change agent would be capacitated to produce new knowledge about reality is but one objective of fieldwork. While this is generally the case for the social sciences, the same does not hold true for social work education. Other objectives such as actively mobilising people for change, engaging peoples struggles for better access to state resources, assisting peoples in welfare practice, intervening in situations where people need support whether psychological or social, strengthening peoples' livelihoods, etc constitute the many other aims of social work fieldwork. Further the demands of praxis in field work, opens up opportunities to both student and educator to deepen their own understanding of social reality and also clarify the role of the 'change agent' in the process of continuous engagement.

The social work programmes at the Master's-level are generally divided into four semesters over a period of two years. In this context i strongly believe that each of the semesters within the two-year Master's programme of social work has their own content thrust and concomitant pedagogical processes. In an earlier article[103] i had reflected deeply on processes related to social work supervision and other components of field work engagement. Through my personal experience i consider it important to unravel and state the premises in which field work could probably be formulated:

1. First Semester: Period of unlearning,

2. Second Semester: Period of contextual deepening,

[103] Please see chapter 4 and 7 for a better understanding of my conceptions of field work

3. Third Semester: Period of intense engagement with self in context towards producing practice-based output.

4. Fourth Semester: Period of intense engagement with self in context towards expansive conceptual insights and ability to theorize

On the structuring and location of fieldwork within the curriculum i believe that the debates about fieldwork in social work education has been framed and will probably be so for a longer period of time, about how it is organised rather than why we do it. That fieldwork in social work is fundamental is agreed by most educators. This is so because in social work education the thrust is on epistemological reconstruction and being immersed in the context is one of the ways in which a learner can be nudged to become both knowledgeable about the 'social' and use such knowledge through direct engagement to empower people as a 'practitioner'. To take away the component of fieldwork from social work education is to turn social work education into any other social science education. However, having stated the above let me turn to the persistent and perennial debates in social work education about fieldwork. Should fieldwork be organised through a concurrent process with class teaching? or should fieldwork be located as a block of not less than thirty days per semester either before or after some amount of teaching has been committed?

On this matter i would opine after some reflections that the structure of how we organise fieldwork should be conceived as per the demands of the field and the context. There are some fields of practice in social work education that require concurrent placement, as in two days or three days per week augmented by class room teaching in the remaining days of the week. This acts as a very responsive way in which the student can engage in informed praxis. However, there are some fields of practice that require intense and continuous engagement with the field without which the student would find great difficulty in making any sense of the field or make any meaning of the engagement. Such placements requiring continuous and longer duration of practice are generally those that relates to structure and structural issues. I would disagree in this context with those who argue that one-system-fits-all and that all social work fieldwork must be organised in only one particular way.

(ii) Group Labs: Group laboratory in social work education is an interesting addition to social work curriculum. The main objectives of lab sessions with students, organised in the initial stages of the programme, are related to facilitating reflexive, egalitarian and participatory group processes within and among students, while arming them with skills that could come in handy during field work engagement. The group labs at face value seem noble. But like many other components in the curriculum, there are problems that are somewhat generated by ideological tussles between the remedialist and structural perspectives. Having had the opportunity to experience the Group laboratory within social work curriculum, both as a trainee and trainer over a period of six years, i feel that it is imperative to revisit some of the group lab exercises organised during the lab sessions with students and the pedagogy that is used. The increased psychologising of social work education by remedialist, posing lab sessions purely on remedialist lines, thereby labelling and subjecting social work education to individual centricism is a matter of concern. This is so because such processes are most likely to subject the social work discipline and the profession to increased depoliticization which defeats the very vision and mission of social work's liberatory and pro change agendas.

(iii) Rural Practicum: Rural Practicum is one of the most innovative formulations made by social work educators that over the years have been mainstreamed in social work education. The thrust given to the notion 'rural' within social work programmes has challenged and altered the very urban centric conception and character of social work teaching. Rural Practicum has various facets especially pertaining to pedagogy, location and content. While there are debates and discussion about what should constitute rural practicum and how should rural practicum be located within the larger social work programme, the incorporation of the rural practicum in social work curriculum has served an important purpose - that of deepening social work education around the notion of the 'rural'.

Over the years, having accepted the tremendous richness added and importance of the rural practicum component, i have engaged myself in clarifying certain content and pedagogical issues that would sharpen the practicum process. In trying to clarify these processes i have had to confront certain issues of pedagogy and context, such as- how does one organize a practicum within a perspective, what role is envisioned for the community (generally Dalit and Tribe) in the training of social work

personnel, what are the theoretical and practical components of the Rural Practicum, what pedagogy is most suited for the engagement in Rural Practicum and what are the field assignments that will strengthen the process, insert rigor and strengthen seriousness of purpose in students.

(iv) Methods: In the context of social work practice, methods are constituted by frameworks and technical rules which lay down the procedures for how one should proceed with analysis and intervention. As procedural rules, they tell social workers what to do and what not to do if they want their intervention to make any significant 'impact'. Methods lay down the procedures for comprehending an issue, for designing an intervention strategy and the process of applying the same. Also, for clarifying the way and nature of receiving feedback, of monitoring change and of the application of newer strategies. While the above framework is not difficult to comprehend and may even seem harmless, viewed critically, one tends to question the source, ideological position and epistemic premises in which 'methods' are formulated and constructed both theoretically, and as part of a 'skill set' in the arena of practice.

The historicity of social work methods reveals its deep American roots - this now being common knowledge among social work educators in India. In this context, a question often heard in many social work discussions relates to, 'the diagnostic thrust of the methods developed in America and eastern Europe and later imported to India - how relevant, how efficacious, and how practical?' This question has never been so real as much as it is today with the kind of realities that we experience in India. It is not difficult to see that in a method one does not only import a way of 'doing' but also a way of looking, a perspective, a world view. The western perception of the marginalized, exploited and the discriminated is at best paternalistic and if scrutinized thoroughly, are delimiting and greatly disempowering. With such an approach, one may question its ability to empower the 'marginalized populace' of the 'third world'. What we do, our behaviour and our interventions greatly depend on how we view and see the world. The dichotomy of how someone 'sees' and what one 'does' is only for the purpose of analyses; one cannot separate these two during the course of practice. In this context the time has come to give serious thought to redefining social work methods and incorporate perspectives beyond the delimiting diagnostic schools.

(v) Time Table: The 'Time Table' of any programme is the mediating tool between the overarching macro curriculum frame, the courses and its content and the micro pedagogical processes. The curriculum's aims and objectives are realized and manifested in courses and pedagogy, but throughout, the process is guided, laid down and mediated by the structure of a time table. My personal experience tells me that efficacy of a programme is greatly dependent on the structure of a time table.

However, the time table is often considered the most apolitical mandatory activity in social work curriculum formation. It is an opinion most carries, that the same is best confined to the wisdom of the administrative section rather than being made a responsibility of a Teaching faculty. However, having been fortunate enough to avail the opportunity to be the convener of a committee that structures the time table of a social work programme and also a social work concentration over a period of seven years, i have now come to see that the time table is far more than what it seems to be. From these experiences, i have gained insights into minute processes that have simply demolished every single notion i held prior to taking up the responsibility. I now opine that a time table in Social Work Programmes is definitely not 'merely an innocent activity' devoid of any political nuances. In reality, it is a conscious political project complete with, and fuelled from all corners by perspective tussles, ideological tensions, preposterous stakeholder demands and above all, subtle political agendas.

What do we see when we look at the time table of a Social Work Programme? Is it the allocation of systematized time for teaching, properly organized schedules, well laid out structures of learning, a proper location of individual courses and above all, a physical tangible output of curriculum principles? I have often found myself wondering on many occasions, why is there so much tension manifested through debates around the location of specific courses in a semester; especially Methods courses, like Casework, Groupwork, Community Organization and Social Action. Should Casework be taught first or should it be Social Action? While there are educators who are bent on introducing Social Work through Casework teaching, other educators would prefer Social Action while others still would prefer Community Organization. I have now come to see that the time table is the best mirror of the perspective and holding ideologies (dominant) of a programme at a period in time. It reveals the dominating perspective from the location of courses, faculty perception

about 'social work' as a profession and it reflects the political position of the programme in context. Notwithstanding the fact that normal social work educator's physical demands of early morning classes, long distance of travel, weekend teachings, etc which are purely logistical, the location of courses in the overall semester is where political agendas are situated and thus unravelled.

III. On Pedagogical Frameworks

When it comes to any discussion on pedagogy in social work education, there arises a natural political tension between educators who subscribe to the remedial school and those who are positioned around the structural school. Epistemologically, while the remedial school perceives its task to be intervention at the individual level (located within a functionalist episteme), the structural school sees its task as intervention at the systemic level mostly focussing on system and structure, manifest through collective action and policy practice (located within a structural/conflict episteme). While there is an agreement at some levels that no matter what the context and contestations between these two contending perspectives, a social work curriculum at its core must reflect a sound analysis of contemporary reality. However, when it comes to pedagogy, the case is that the more dominant manifest perspective generally takes over the teaching-learning process.

External, yet connected to pedagogy, it is interesting to note that if the perspective thrust of social work in a particular period in time is remedial, the likelihood that courses stressing on cognition, affect and behaviour would occupy more space in teaching content. Thus, courses such as Human Growth and Behaviour, Life span and life cycle approach, Casework and even Group Work would take centre stage. In such a framework these courses are conceived as the core content of the social work programme. Added to this would follow a whole gamut of behavioural manipulation strategies which includes 'Group Labs', Institutional visits, training, etc.

However, if the thrust of the programme, on the other hand is structural, the likelihood that content related to democracy, development, justice, equality, culture, identity would make up the core of the teaching content. Courses such as those discussing Caste, Class, Gender, Ethnicity, State,

Market, Democracy and Development in India, Political Theory, Polity, Governance and Public Policy, Modern Indian History, Political Economy, Globalization, Anti-oppressive Social Work, etc are likely to take centre stage especially in the first year of the programme.

Thus, it could be argued that the principle that governs curriculum formulation in social work is greatly dependent on a 'holding dominant perspective'. This perspective also manifests itself in a vision statement of a programme and in course content, generally represented by name of courses.

Most of the above issues discussed, finally manifest in pedagogy. While an overarching pedagogical framework is generally agreed upon, as in the way we frame and teach methods, or fieldwork and even other social work courses, nonetheless, one cannot miss the point that even after pedagogical frame is laid down, what finally matters is- who teaches rather than what is taught. Within this context i would like to reflect upon three pedagogical principles which i personally consider important for social work education to take note off.

1. Pedagogy formulated on conceiving knowledge acquisition as a truth-seeking life process:

Among many social work educators, social work is envisioned as an educational process and a means towards personal growth, social consciousness, and acquiring deep sense of empathy for others, self fulfilment, deepening sensitivity to other realities and cultures with a willingness and natural proclivity to act for the good of others. The life of every individual is characterized by a process of constant change directed towards self-realization, that in the process, acquires a socio-political taste imbued with profound love for the world and for fellow beings, intense faith in them and an endogenous feeling to do 'good' to all beings; humans or non-humans. Seen from within this framework, social work education is time spent to connect and deepen such values in oneself while in constant relation with others within a social work programme.

2. Pedagogy formulated on conceiving knowledge acquisition as a power acquiring process:

There are other educators within social work education who perceive the

knowledge acquisition process as an act of gaining more power for self and for community or in other words, acts that leads to an equal distribution of power among communities. In the context in which our education is offered, there are peoples whose communities have been subjected to historical marginalization and thus excluded from the process of power. More power to the marginalised then becomes a pedagogical premise. It is not without substance that a person as great as Babasaheb Dr.B.R.Ambedkar made a call to education as the primary basis for reclaiming power in a hierarchical society such as those we find in India. His famous "Educate, Agitate, Organise" conceived education of the excluded as the key means by which change in power relations could take place. Among many social work educators whose perspectives are structural as compared to those who adhere to a functionalist perspective, define their engagement much in consonance with the above slogan of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar. Knowledge imparted within this pedagogical framework is more critical, structural and progressive.

3. Pedagogy formulated on conceiving knowledge acquisition as a livelihood mobility process:

Another way in which social work education is conceived relies on seeing social work as a process towards acquiring the ability to guarantee livelihood among its trainees and students within the framework of a profession. While seeming apolitical for its thrust on individual growth, the perspective does contribute tremendously to the growth of self and the profession. However, there is tendency among educators to lean too heavily on social work only being a profession and thereby ending up depoliticizing social hierarchies.

Conclusion

Social Work curriculum and pedagogy, in my opinion are fundamental in social work education. It is innovations in curriculum and pedagogy that makes social work programmes stay abreast with changing times and challenges faced in difficult political environments. That there is a need for more reflection on curriculum and pedagogy is something that many educators do not disagree. However, from what is available in terms of social work literature, it is clear that not much work is going on in this domain.

Current demands on social work education for innovative and newer ways of formulating social work content are being felt across social work institutes. This has become much more pertinent in the light of the introduction of Distance Social Work programmes by IGNOU and the recent emergence of the Social Work Education Network (SWEN) under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. However, while there have been attempts to reformulate and thus rejuvenate social work education, making it relevant to context, yet the discipline is yet to seriously re-imagine itself under these new historical circumstances.

Chapter VI

Some Thoughts on Navayana Social Work

The secret of Zen is just two words: not always so…Anonymous

Social work education and social work educators in India are confronted by an extremely chaotic and a politically charged complex social reality. The Indian populace has distinct traits marked around caste, language, region, ethnic and religious lines. The country has more than two thousand ethnic groups with many more sub-groups spread out along caste and non-caste (tribal) realities. 'There are 4693 communities, which include several thousands of endogamous groups, speak in 325 functioning languages and write in 25 different scripts'.[104] Its population of 1,210,854,977 (2011), is characterized by a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious environment which is heavily skewed by rural habitats over urban agglomerations. This kind of an extremely untidy concrete condition poses a big challenge to social workers who find it very difficult to comprehend and intervene, thus making theorization an uphill task.

Further the political economic conditions currently encapsulating the Indian context are such that we are in that juncture of social work history when theoretical clarity, depth and width, plus a more grounded axiological understanding are being felt to be an urgent necessity.

This chapter, in many ways is posited to respond to these emerging complexities, attempting to provide theoretical insights about social reality through the gaze of navayana social work. However, i wish to seek pardon from the reader that since the ideas expressed in this chapter is very new, am myself in the process of clarifying and deepening both its theory and practice.

Nonetheless, while operating consciously on such a shortcoming, what i will try to do is lay down these still rudimentary but equanimous reflections of mine around five specific domains. The first is an attempt to unravel the fundamental theoretical premise of navayana social work. The second

[104] Ramachandran, R. (2008, June 6), Genetic Landscape. Frontline Magazine, p. 90.

will discuss how perspective building could take place within the framework. This will be followed by some thoughts on the positionality of navayana social work within the various schools of social work. The fourth engages with my understanding of curriculum and pedagogical principles within this framework and at the end i will think out loud the learning/educating process of teaching 'skills' in the navayana framework.

How to look at Reality the Navayana Way

Navayana ways of seeing and thinking is very different both in the process of perceiving and 'acts of knowing'. The 'text' in the navayana framework is not written within the framework of 'meaning making' and requires a counter-intuitive approach to engaging with the same. I thus caution the reader not to expect to immediately 'understand' the text. My attempt in this first section is to slowly go 'beyond meaning' and derive perspectives and principles from such a locale. This is difficult since language itself, being formulated on binary principles, are not outside the meaning making process. However, from a 'beyond binary' perspective when dualities are eventually resolved into a unity, a 'text' within such a locale becomes merely an indicator. They must not be taken as 'given' and absolute.

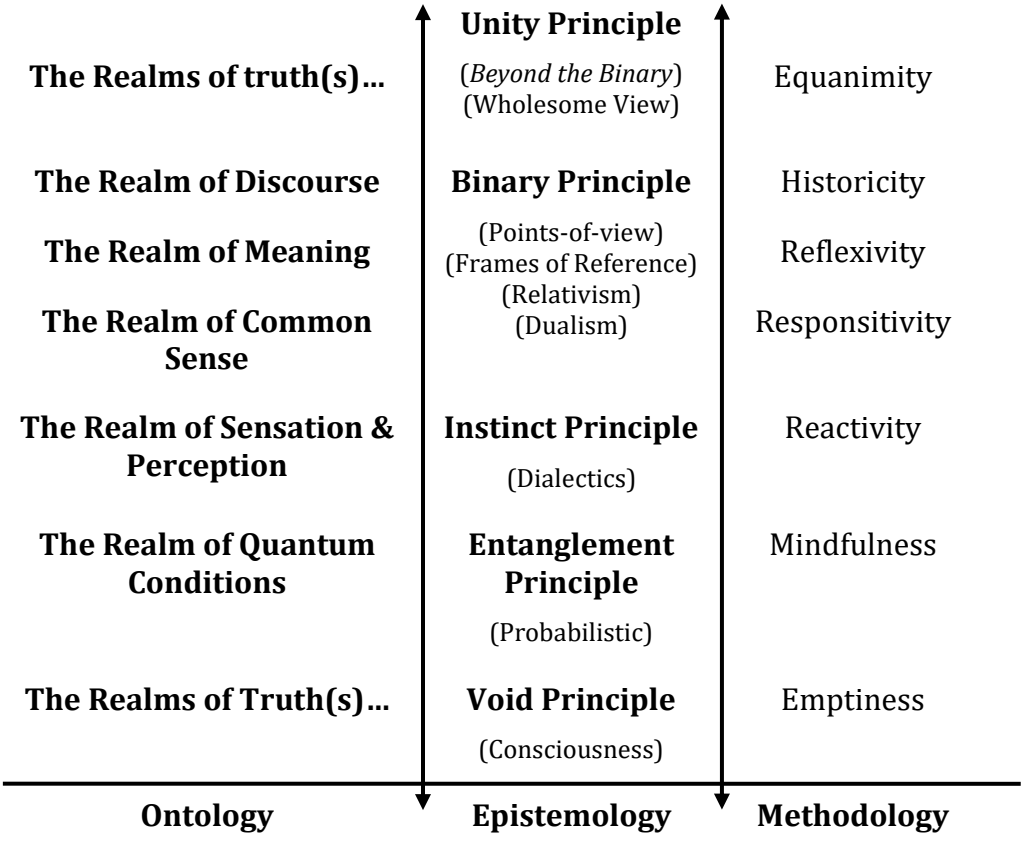
At the core of Navayana ways of looking lays aesthetics/ethics. Aesthetics and ethics in this framework are one. They are two separate conceptual entities only when viewed and experienced from a location that is fundamentally dualistic. Beyond dualism they reverberate as a unified pulsating wholesome experience. The navayana way of looking stems from the subtle truths much beyond the dualistic mind and constitutes a more wholesome, holistic way of experiencing the self in the social world.

There are multiple ways of engaging and representing reality, both apparent and the underlying, from a navayana perspective. Based on my own experience, i will attempt to provide a glimpse of how i personally imagine such a reality through a self-explanatory framework, as shown in Diagram 7. I have titled this framework as 'The Seven Navayana Realms'.

I use the word *realm* here to signify the fluidity of movement from one realm to another. These realms are not water tight compartments of lived experience or realities and there are no rigid lines separating one realm from another. I have used the same in the diagram for ease in meaning

making with the simple intention of initiating the reader into an alternative way of looking. The number *seven* within the seven realms are also merely for the sake of simplicity in representation. There are, at least in my conception, countless realms which cannot be boxed in the way i have done. Following this brief simplistic representation of the seven navayana realms, i will then attempt to discuss a more complex level of the 'navayana way of looking within to see without'.

Diagram 7. The Seven Navayana Realms



In brief, just as a short explanatory note to the propositions about the seven navayana realms, the realm of quantum conditions constitutes of the realm of dark energy, dark matter and atomic matter. The realm of sensation and perception constitutes of our five sense organs and sense experience. The realm of common sense constitutes of thought, words, cognition and concepts. The realm of meaning constitutes of purpose and categories. The realm of discourse constitutes of theory, the cosmological arguments and the source of power. The realms of truth(s)… which lies beyond discourse and quantum conditions constitutes the axiological

realm and a reality experienced 'as it is'. Each of these realms have their concomitant epistemological and methodological processes.

In the next part of this section i will attempt to unravel a navayana conception of perspective building. By perspective building i mean a way to provide a framework full of open-ended spaces for showing the way towards deepening insights into the realms of reality. I will try to conceive such a perspective as emanating from 'beyond the binary' framework.

It will be difficult to comprehend, especially for those whose knowledge pursuit is grounded fundamentally in 'search after meaning'. But such is the perspectives emanating from the 'unity beyond the binary' that the usage and even the symbolic presentation of such a locale is both counter intuitive and beyond the bounded vessel of rationality. From my personal experience, an engagement in the deepening of perspectives (especially with my students) is a process. Thus, it is important to take time and reflect deeply on what i present below. As one gaze into what is presented, it is important to engage in satipatthana,[105] that is, to turn one's gaze within oneself and to equanimously[106] observe how it engages your imagination in the domain of 'perspective' or ways of seeing the world. It is important to note (at least from my point-of-view) that no perspective is perfect nor a 'given'. We must be wary when one's mind convinces the 'self' that the perspective that one currently has is perfect, a given and is complete. Insights from those people who have gone through deep experience in the said domain, points to the process that when one's perspective has become

[105] Satipatthana is a pali word that refers to 'turning your gaze within' or 'self-introspection', a practice that often requires tremendous effort, concentration and mindfulness. This is not an easy task in the light of the fact that most of our human senses are positioned to the see, touch, taste, hear and smell the external world rather than the multiple processes going on within the bounded self.

[106] Equanimity is a human capacity beyond reactivity, responsitivity, reflexivity and historicity. While at the level of sensations and sense data we are capable of 'reaction', at the level of shared sensation or common sense we are capable of 'responding', beyond common sense and in the level of abstract concepts, categories and meanings we are capable of being 'reflexive', the pursuit of 'that' which is beyond meaning requires another human capacity that is possible but needs to be cultivated. It is to this realm that equanimity is possible… For those who have experienced the crisis or 'cracking' up of the mind, they will know what equanimity is….

more holistic, wholesome, and one is able to see things in the 'round', one will have arrived at a point of knowing. None however can see this except the 'seeking-knowing self'.

As i have asserted above, the navayana way of engaging with text is very different and those who are looking at making immediate meaning with the presented text will find it 'meaningless'. This is because the textual representation attempts to break the principle of binary conception.

For example, if one was to attempt writing a text from a navayana way, it would probably read as follows:

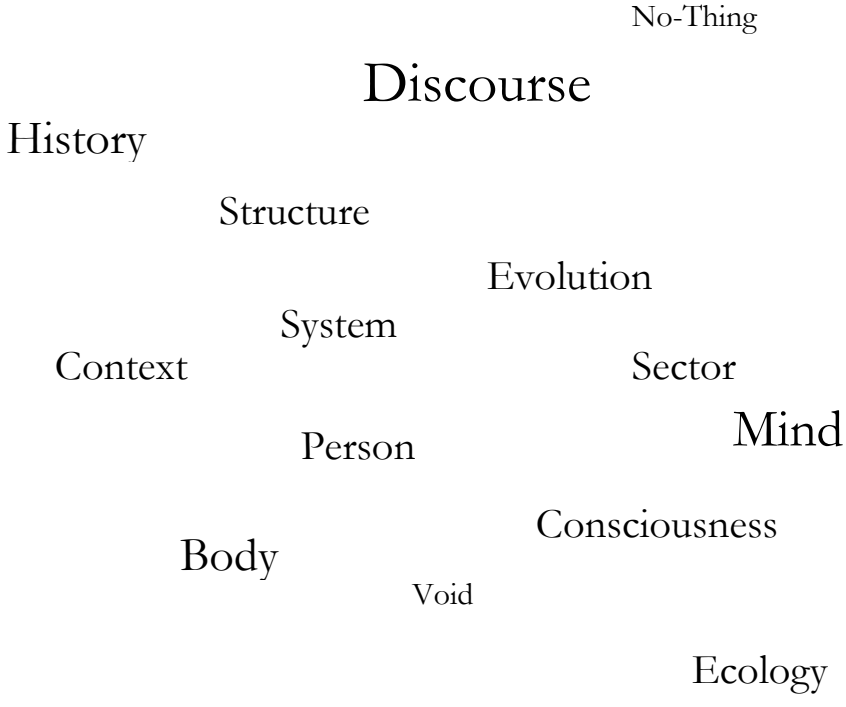
...the text is always wrong…the text is not the reality…some say there is nothing outside the text…the world is a creation of the mind…the mind works on binary principles…the mind plays a beautiful dualistic meaning making game with and through words…reality itself is a creation of such a mind…beyond the binary lies the reality… there is so much more reality(s) beyond text…

Any reader viewing the syntax above from a binary lens would find such a text perplexing. But when viewed from 'beyond the binary' it might probably point to underlying realities that are not immediately apparent.

There is another way of representing the text from a navayana perspective, in a way i am more familiar with and a technique i have often used with my students in the learning/educating process. I have also shared the same in training workshops that i conducted for other social work institutes. I will share the same just as an exercise in navayana ways of seeing and thinking. I have titled the representation as 'From a place beyond the binary: looking *Within* to seeing *without*'.

The reading of the same is positioned in ways directly connected to the representation of the seventh navayana realm, with its concomitant epistemology(s) and methodology(s) as shown in picturization below. My intention is to gently enter the space in which all dualities are processually resolved into a unity and begin to look at the social reality from the lens that such a location avails.

From a place beyond the binary: looking *Within* to see *without*[107]…



Navayana Social Work: Theoretical Location

It is important that i begin by locating the idea of Navayana Social Work within current existing frames of social work. This will facilitate the understanding of its positionality in the multiplicity of ideas. I will thus improve on the earlier framework that I have developed in Diagram 2 that shows the different social work practices that prevails in India. The list, as

[107] Since language itself is constructed on binary principles and have proclivity to set the rules of thinking and meaning making for the reader as represented in Diagram above, I have used a different way - a navayana way to present the same idea. While I would have preferred to leave the fluid conceptual representation as it is and open it for the reader to make their own connection(s) and meaning(s) of the set of interconnected and interdependent concepts/epistemologies, it suffices to say that I have arrived at these concepts/epistemologies after some deep reflection and have thus located them accordingly. However, there is no fix rule of why they have been positioned in specific locations. As you can see, the intention is to move beyond the construction and production of a structure of meaning that is fixed, stable, universal and ahistorical. Instead, an attempt is made to transcend the binary and enter the domain of the fluid, the unstable, the diverse, the historical, the discursive, the void… power is everywhere…oh its agency…where is the subject…turn the gaze inwards… real but not there…you don't even exist, how can you die…

i have stated is not exhaustive and many more can be positioned within the frame.

As one can observe, most of the schools of thought in social work are located around the 'individual', 'community' or 'structure'. They identify these domains as their areas of focus thereby positioning their intervention as such. While one school focuses on 'problems', the other focuses on the 'class structure', some on 'consciousness' and few more schools on 'meaning'. As i have asserted in the introduction, in India the struggle against caste, patriarchy and class is at the core of perspective and practice among social workers who focus their intervention on structure. Among Indian social workers focusing on community, for some, their interest lies in reforming society and reconstructing a new society, while for others within the community school, they thrust their practice on culture, diversity, dialogue.

Further each school is premised on varied formulations. While some premise their social work on anti-caste and anti-patriarchy, others take a position for change and equality, for raising consciousness and on anti-oppression. Each position has its own perspective, born out of the way they conceived social reality.

In such a framework, where does one place Navayana Social Work? From my understanding the navayana perspective does include all of the schools of thought as it is not pitch against any of these, not because it is for or against but because it operates on a totally different realm as shown in Diagram 8 below.

Diagram 8: Locating Navayana Social Work

<table>
<tr><td>Unity Realm</td><td>Focus on Unity Beyond the Binary</td><td colspan="4">navayana buddhist social work
{seekers of truth…(s)}
{Harmonious Wholesome Perspective}</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Binary Realm</td><td>Focus on Structure</td><td>Radical Social Work
(Raisers of consciousness)
{Anti Oppression Perspective}</td><td>Structural Social Work
[Pro Equality]
{Pro Change Perspective}</td><td>Women Centered Social Work
{Anti Patriarchy}
{Pro Women Perspective}</td><td>Dalit Social Work
{Anti Untouchability}
{Perspective from below}</td></tr>
<tr><td>Focus on Community</td><td colspan="2">Tribal Social Work
{Diversity - Dialogue}
{Perspective from within}</td><td colspan="2">Gandhian Social Work
{Reform - Reconstruct}
{Perspective from above}</td></tr>
<tr><td>Focus on Individual</td><td colspan="2">Interactionist Social Work
(Seekers after meaning)
{Systems Perspective}</td><td colspan="2">Traditional Social Work
(Fixers)
{Status quo Perspective}</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="5">Note: Howe's labels for each grouping are given in parentheses ( ) and Mullaly's label for Structural Social Work is given in square brackets [ ]. The author's formulations are given in curly brackets { }.</td></tr>
</table>

While navayana is concern about the 'individual', the 'community' and the 'structure', it is also interested and concern with experiences. That is to argue that all the other schools of thought in social work focuses fundamentally on binary frames. Navayana on the other hand goes beyond the binary and begins to unravel a social work emanating from such a locale.

For navayana social work the goal and path is the pursuit of truth. In a sense, one could identify such social workers as seekers of truth or 'truth seekers', which transcends the dialectics of meaning that is fundamental to the 'seekers after meaning'. Some people make the mistake of thinking that 'truth seekers' are nihilist who leave society and live the life of 'hermits'. But actually, it is the other way round. 'Truth Seekers' from a navayana Perspective are soaked and grounded in the day to day struggle in society.

It is difficult to understand the conceptions of perspectives in navayana social work. This is because the idea per se cannot be contained or defined by word. Words are too limited to capture the 'meaning' of what it signifies. The idea itself is beyond meaning. It has entered the realms of 'truth', for whatever 'truth' (plural) might mean. It is not an idea that is easily comprehensible by mere sensation, definitely not by common sense, probably and only probably, by theoretical and discourse. Yet even discourse is not close enough. This difficulty is simply because words must die for a non-binary reality to emerge and for the self to begin to experience being from such a locale. This is the best that i can say about the possibility

of getting a peep into such a reality, since it is beyond the rational and no more operates within the dialectical binary mind.

I have noted the perspective as 'harmonious wholesome perspective'. The word 'harmonious wholesome' is closely related to other words like total, cyclic, holistic, perfect, proper and overarching.

Within the navayana framework there is a fundamental shift away from seeing the 'mind' as the fundamental bases of life, or the most stable premise of a self that perceives, experiences, understands and know the world. This shift happens because there is a turning away of the gaze from the perceived external observable reality to the reality experienced within the bounded physical body.

When one begins engaging satipatthana, it is posited that once this gaze is turned away from the 'without' towards the 'within', the sublime four states or 'subtle truths' that begins to unravel are Upekkha,[108] Mudita,[109] Karuna[110] and Metta[111]. The person who has worked deeply into clarifying these processes is a 'tathaghata' or 'truth seeker', and the theorist par excellence who has unraveled these processes deeply is Siddhatto Gotamo. He lived and shared his teachings ('teaching' is too rigid a word, 'pointing to the path' is better), arrived at through his own humanly attempts and experience with the hoipolloi of current day Nepal and North India about

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[108] Upekkha here is translated as equanimous, looking within to look without. It is beyond the 'reactive', the 'responsive', the 'reflexive', which are ways of seeing and reflecting that are grounded fundamentally in a binary conception of social reality. Upekkha refers to the observer that arises within self that is detached from the mind, can observe it and not fall prey to its diktat. Upekkha is a method, a capacity and a state of being.

[109] Mudita is happiness experienced in the body with the dilution of binary conceptions and the experience of the initial unity beyond the binary. It is not pleasure that is often derived from the assuaging the five sense organs, but happiness arising from the harmonious relationship of the melting binaries.

[110] Karuna is used here to refer to compassion, a state deeper than empathy and sympathy that arises as a way of experiencing and seeing the social world.

[111] Metta is used to refer to loving kindness emanating from a state of 'samma'. Samma is often translated as harmonious. This is the locale of deeper levels of the state of unity that is becoming free from binary mind centric experience.

2500 years ago. He pointed this path to many who in turn have, over the years, further expanded and deepen the same across the world.

The word Navayana on the other hand, which means the 'New Vehicle' was posited by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar in 1956 when together with half a million people embraced the framework as formulated by Siddhatto Gotamo. As a matter of history, the framework of Gotamo was destroyed and banished from the land of its birth for nearly 2000 plus odd years. Dr.B.R.Ambedkar brought back to the consciousness of people this framework that had experienced a near complete annihilation. While re-embracing it, he historicized the content, contextualized the practice and cleansed it from theoretical distortions that were inserted by vested interest to fundamentally destroy the same.[112] It is to this cleansed framework that the word 'Navayana' is referred to in this section.

This then is the probable location of navayana social work as a school of thought in social work. It is an idea, a perspective, a philosophy and also a practice.

The Guiding principles of the navayana learning/educating process in the Indian Context

Over the years, as i engaged more intensely and deeply with the learning/educating process in social work education, i did gain some interesting insights into curriculum building, pedagogical practices and the learning/educating process. There is an important methodological interjection that needs to be made here regarding social work training. One thing about social work education that stands out amongst the social and applied sciences and a process that i personally value, is the innovative curriculum, which thrust on many organic dimensions of learning rather than merely lectures, reading, research and thinking. The component of an engaged fieldwork, rather than a data-collection oriented fieldwork, which embedded in social work education is in my opinion the most fundamental pedagogical strategy of the learning/educating process in social work.

[112] More readings on the subject can be made on the numerous writings of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar himself and of the writings of Laxmi Narasu, and Iyothee Thass.

These multiple very enriching ways of learning, embodied in the social work curriculum are processes that i have engaged deeply with and learnt from. However, the insights gained have also come about from responsibilities entrusted on me to develop the curriculum of a Concentration and later a Masters in Art in Social Work in Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action in the Institute that i teach. The demands made on me to ground theoretical content to the Indian context, the pedagogy to be used for the learning/thinking/action community and the curriculum to be framed to set the tone and sight of the learning/educating process on the path of knowledge pushed me into spaces that required a multi-pronged approach to curriculum building. But even though the task was multiple, the curriculum building process also demanded that i articulate a succinct and cohesive framework of the learning/educating process under the framework of Master's programme.

In the light of this i will attempt to recollect and bring together some of my thoughts that acted like an epistemological guide post while in the process of engaging in the above task. The axiological intention is posited at two levels. One is to share these insights with the social work sorority, and the other is to provide a peep into the overarching perspectives and ideas that informs the formulation and content of my ideas. Laced throughout the following text are certain 'guide post' that ran across my thinking process while writing this section.

Over the years, as one engages more deeply with the learning and teaching process in social work education, i have begun to think seriously about guiding principles in the learning/educating process. The opportunity to unravel and understand these guiding principles also came to me when i had to develop the Concentration and later Masters in Art in Social Work in Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action. Below i will attempt to share my insights on these dynamic guidelines, more so as a means to provide a way to understand the Navayana learning/educating process. These principles arose as and when i attempted to produce teaching content located fundamentally in a Navayana perspective. Many have also come about from detailed intellectual discussions with my own students and in deeper reflections with some of my colleagues and the Navayana community.

I strongly believe, and this is rooted in the Indian context, that it is a historical responsibility for social work educators to fundamentally alter

the learner from a 'Recipient of Knowledge' to a 'Producer of Knowledge'. The danger with social work education is that it is trapped in received theories that indirectly accept a position of 'recipient' rather than a 'producer'. This is at times projected through our students. I hold firm to the argument that social work theories are cornered and invisibilised by western theory. Such processes began as early as 1492, when the Western European colonial project kick-started. These Western theories beginning in the 1600s that have now become universal have also absorbed social work education in India as part of its territorializing project. If one is not aware of this larger colonizing project, one reproduces such processes through students. Interestingly engaging in western theories gives one a sense of philosophical sophistication and superiority, but only a few can see how western theory indirectly ties one to the rules of knowledge production that presupposes the superiority of the western european mind/gaze over all others.

These processes of invisibilization are difficult to decipher for one who is not looking deeply enough. How does one counter this? My position on this is that we must deepen the learner's ways and the learning process itself around the principle of engaging with reality from 'context' to 'theory' rather than from 'theory' to 'context'. Here both the teacher and the taught are to be fundamentally rooted in decolonial thinking and equanimous engagement. A challenge to such a project is to turn the very framework that perceives non-Western Europeans as recipients of their knowledge to producers of knowledge.

This however does not mean that we must reject everything Western; instead, we should learn its 'language' and expand the conceptual repertoire of both teacher and taught. In the process we refine reflexive thinking skills across contextual, language and knowledge domains. The only process we must be awake to is the epistemological tussles that 'must' take place against what Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) identifies as 'western' being equated to 'universal' and the non-Western as 'particulars'.[113]

[113] The indigenous people's scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith makes a critical point on this stating "The globalization of knowledge and Western culture constantly reaffirms the West's view of itself as the centre of legitimate knowledge, the arbiter of what counts as knowledge and the source of 'civilized' 'universal' knowledge, available to all and not really 'owned' by

In addition to the above, i also strongly hold on to the principle that all social knowledge is historical, bound by body, space-time and context. Any claim that social knowledge can be ahistorical and (uni)versal is a myth. Thus, in my point-of-view, thinking historically is fundamental to knowledge and a very important process especially in India. I see engagements grounded on such premises as part of what i believe is fundamental in social work education, that is, the attempts at epistemological reconstruction.

Further, i have come to realize through the years as a educator that very less learning takes place among students till such time that the learner take ownership of her/his own learning process. Once the learning process has begun it is important to posit the same on a path that is fundamentally rooted in a search for justice, civility, democratic participation, anti-oppression and social inclusion, gaining in the process self-respect, dignity and freedom of mind for both teacher and taught.

Finally, i also believe that no matter what pedagogical practices are operationalised within both the learning/educating process, we must always employ a pedagogy that heals…Now this is something which only the excluded and oppressed understand. Healing however requires everyone to participate.

These ideas above that i have recollected based on my experience can be stated as curriculum and pedagogical principles. They are definitely not exhaustive but constitutes of a few ideas that came about as and when i engaged with the multiple context(s). These principles are as follows:

- First Principle: From a 'Recipient of Knowledge' to a 'Producer of Knowledge'. We can also perceive the learner as a 'Co-Producer of Knowledge'.

- Second Principle: Deepening the learner's process of learning from context to theory.

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anyone, that is, until non-Western scholars make claims to it. When claims like that are made history is revised (again) so that the story of civilization remains the story of the West." From her book "Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples" published by Zed Books Ltd., p.63.

- Third Principle: Both teacher and taught fundamentally rooted in decolonial thinking and equanimous engagement.

- Fourth Principle: Expand language and conceptual repertoire of both teacher and taught and refine reflexive thinking skills.

- Fifth Principle: Nothing is ahistorical and given, we always need to historicise and engage in historical thinking

- Sixth Principle: The learner takes ownership of their own learning process

- Seventh Principle: Informed and equanimous action in process

- Eighth Principle: Grounded in valuing civility, democratic participation, justice and social inclusion

- Ninth Principle: Always towards self-respect, dignity and freedom of mind

- Tenth Principle: Epistemological reconstruction as fundamental in the learning process. This is a means to becoming a wholesome being

- Eleventh Principle: Towards an education and a pedagogy that heals…

Teaching Social Work 'Skills': The Navayana Way…

Over the years i have been reflecting on the subject of transmitting skills in social work practice. In these reflections i have been confronted with many fundamental questions such as how do we conceive the idea of skill? Is skill outside of perspective? Can skills be taught? If it can be taught, then how does one approach the learning/educating process of 'skills' in social work? What is the suitable pedagogy to use to transmit skills to a learning/educating community?

In attempting to engage with these questions, my initial thought on the subject is that skills in social work include many dimensions and aspects of the learning/educating process. However, at its very core lies the

conception that every act of doing is fundamentally embedded in the perspective of the doer and vice versa - every perspective embodies the act. The perspective and the act of doing are in unity. The binaries are merely conceptual and even real but not actual.

However, from a social workers perspective, the concept of 'skill' in the most fundamental domain of self and being, envelopes a much larger conceptual frame. I have presented the same in Diagram 9 titled 'Teaching the Overarching Framework of Social Work Skills – The Navayana Way'. The idea of 'social work skills' in the way i have positioned it, constitutes of five interrelated domains: (i) a concept driven/centric processes in perspective building (ii) an understanding and knowledge of varied theoretical approaches to practice (iii) the identification and refining of core practice skills (iv) capacity for knowledge production skills and (v) direct field-based intervention skills. This whole framework however is fundamentally grounded on ethics and aesthetics, conceived as core in social work.

Diagram 9: Teaching the Overarching Framework of Social Work Skills- The Navayana Way

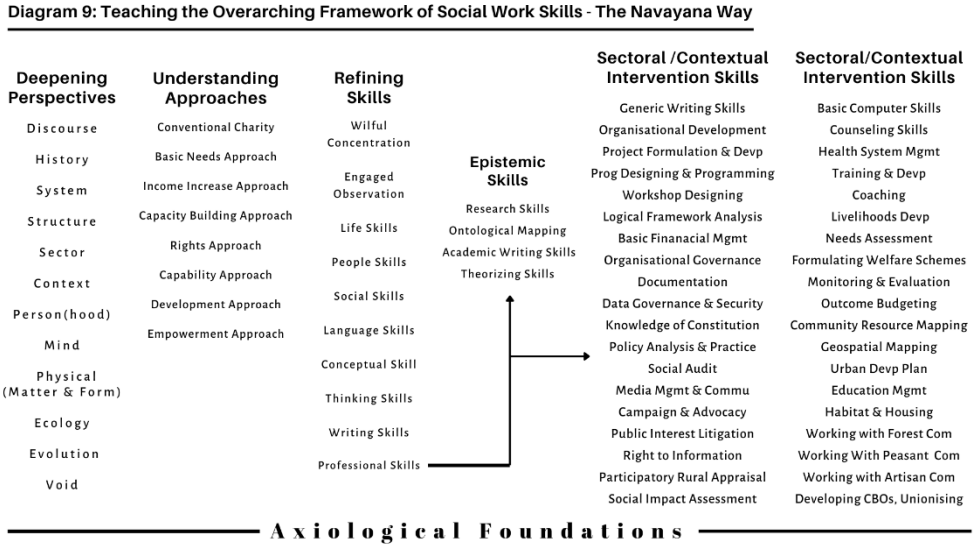
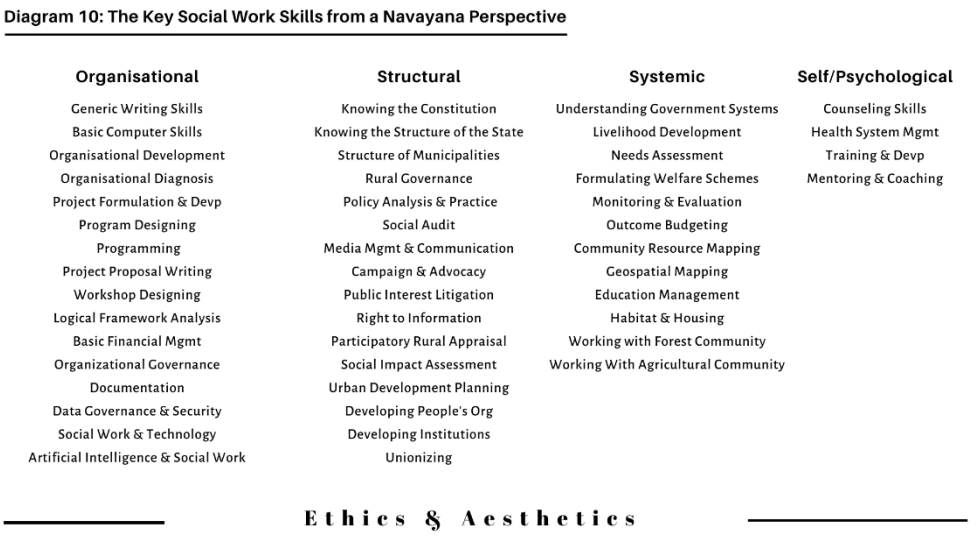


Diagram 10 titled 'Key Social Work Skills from a Navayana Perspective' is an extension and deepening of the skill sets or expertise required for direct field practice. It covers skillsets needed while working at the organizational, structural, systemic levels and also in the domain of the individual/self.

Diagram 10: Key Social Work Skills from a Navayana perspectives



Building perspective requires an engagement with a learner's experience around conceptual unraveling and theoretical de-layering. As awareness about perspective begins to take place, clarity about social work models and approaches to field engagement becomes important. This requires the learner to begin refining certain skills both within the self and with the professional self. In the social work profession, there is now an increase demand from trained professionals for expertise in knowledge production and direct field intervention.

From my point-of-view the basic skills required in social work practice are generally divided into three components. The first constitutes of life skills, people's skills and social skills. The second constitutes of language skills, conceptualization skills, thinking skills and writing skills. The third and the most fundamental is what are contained in *satipatthana*, engaged observation, 'deep self-introspection' or 'willful concentration'. These are noted down under the theme – Refining Practice. These, in my opinion are the bedrock of the skill-sets that social workers should possess. Another two skill-sets – knowledge production and direct field intervention are more in the professional domain of practice. All the above stated domains are interdependent. Each feed into the other and each enrich and deepen the other.

The first domain of professional skills which can also be identified as advanced skills concerns knowledge production. In fieldwork training,

research is one of the many ways in which a being attempts to deepen and widen one's insights into the world that is fundamentally relative. Gaining expertise and being at ease with ways of producing knowledges is imperative in social work.

Further, the social work profession also requires intervention skills. This stems from various sectors in social reality that as social workers we engage in. These are the sectors of health, housing, food security, education, livelihoods, water, etc. These are major areas of social work intervention and each demands their own sets of skills. While there are some generic skills such as writing, documentation and even computer skill, each sector requires some degree of expertise cutting across a range of skill-sets.

Conclusion

When viewed from beyond the binary, the teaching learning process is both wholesome and holistic. It is neither the search for definitions nor the pursuit of more information; instead, it becomes the search for deeper truths and the realization and practice of aesthetics. Growth from this perspective is not measured in financial terms, nor in status but in how humane one is as a being in a binary dualistic world.

Navayana in this sense is a healing process, but a healing process gained through knowledge and insights rather than through more information and a higher status. This learning process is centered within and without the self in society and not out of it. The gains made are for everybody and not for a few.

Chapter VII

De-familiarizing Content and Pedagogical Processes in Fieldwork Supervision [114]

"The teacher and the taught together create the teaching"
Anonymous

In brief, within social work education, field work constitutes one symbiotic half of the teaching-learning process, the other component being class room instruction. The demands of action and reflection in field work, opens up opportunities to both supervisee and supervisor to deepen their understanding of social reality and also clarify the role of the 'change agent'. This chapter focuses on knowledge frameworks, pedagogical processes and constitutive content of fieldwork supervision during the first and second semester of a Master's program in social work.

My attempt is to critically engage with issues concerning social work perspectives, methodological premises, ethical issues, pedagogical congruency and emancipatory content within the supervisee-supervisor relationship.

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[114] This article was first published as a training note of the National Association of Dalit and Tribal Social Workers in 2005. Later i had reworked this note in 2012 and use it for lectures on the subject. This note was written to basically clarify my own thought process while engaging with my field work students. As a pedagogical tool i would ask them to read this paper at the end of their first and second semester fieldwork to get clarity on the processes that i have engaged in. Since 2005 i have been lecturing on this issue from a skill perspective and also taken two workshops on supervisory skills for fieldwork supervisors. In retrospect i feel that some of the issues i discussed are not as sophisticated or very relevant now. But for this book, i have left the training note as it is with some minor improvement in resource and analysis. Over the years i have had many more insights on the same issues and developed different techniques and strategies of field supervision. I have also moved away from being too dependent on western social work theory and have tried to formulate a more context specific and context relevant social work as posited in the previous chapter.

Fieldwork Engagement in Social Work Education

A number of social work educators from various schools of social work in India have through the years attempted to clarify the fieldwork component in social work education. Singh (1985)[115] while attempting to define field work in social work education stated:

> "Field work in social work is carried out in and through social welfare agencies and communities, where the student learns skills and tests out knowledge according to an educational plan. The whole programme is student and field-specific. Field work training is supervised practice of social work under the guidance of a trained social work educator, or field personnel. It has been defined as an educationally sponsored attachment of social work students to an institution, agency, or a section of community, in which they are helped to extend their knowledge and understanding, and experience the impact of human needs. Such an experience is deliberately arranged on a whole or part-time basis".

Little (1949)[116] laid down nine broad educational objectives of fieldwork engagement articulating what a social work program should equip students with; from providing students with field work experiences of working with people in simple and complex situations to awareness of the use of social work records as a means of providing continuity of services and a basis for research. Sytz (1949)[117] further posits that to achieve such educational objectives, schools of social work in India should place as much emphasis on structuring field work curriculum as on theoretical contents as part of

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115 Singh R.R.(Ed.) (1985). Field Work in Social Work Education- A Perspective for Human Service Professions, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi

116 Cited in Desai, M. M (1975) Student Recording in Field Work Supervision. Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.35 (4), p.345-352

117 ibid

social work education. As early as 1953, Moorthy[118] while arguing for a scientific approach to field work proposed that "field work is intended to give the student (i) first hand acquaintance of social and personal situations or problems of which he reads; (ii) to inculcate in him the ability to apply techniques developed in each social work area for the solution of the said situations and (iii) to give him experience of the use of routine procedures relating to recording and administration which is incidental to the second". Moorthy also introduced different dimensions in fieldwork training that are important for assisting students to learn. He referred to seven sets of circumstances in which a problem is set, or with which a problem is closely knit or tangled. Matthew (1975)[119] posits that "the process of professional education in social work consists of the acquisition of knowledge and skills, values and attitudes appropriate for social work. Class room courses as well as field work instruction are designed and operated in such a way as to facilitate this educational process".

R.R.Singh,[120] published an edited volume titled "Field Work in Social Work Education- A Perspective for Human Service Professions" which detailed fieldwork supervision and micro supervisory processes within Indian social work education. Singh listed specific goals and assignments to be completed for a first and second term which includes observational processes and tools of assessment, understanding and knowledge to programme formulation and implementation. Subhedar (2001)[121] in his book *Fieldwork Training in*

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[118] Moorthy, M. (1953). Scientific Approach to Field Work, Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.14 (2), p.144-159. 27. Also see Moorthy, M.V & Rao, S.N. (1970). Field Work in Social Work. Andhra University, Andhra

[119] Mathew, G. (1975) Educational and Helping Aspects of Field Work Supervision. Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.35 (4), 1975, p.325-333. Also see Mathew,G. (1992). An Introduction to Social Casework. Mumbai: Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

[120] Singh R.R.(Ed.) (1985). Field Work in Social Work Education- A Perspective for Human Service Professions, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi

[121] Subhedar I.S. (2001) Fieldwork Training in Social Work. (Pg. 196) Rawat Publication. Jaipur

Social Work also adds a creative dimension to field training in the form of fieldwork through films. Subhedar argues that "students can learn much faster ways to present their ideas, views, opinions, etc., by observing the effective characterizations in the film".

The Emergence of a Critical Social Work Episteme from varied Context in the World

In India, as i have stated in the earlier chapters, efforts to insert liberatory and emancipatory elements into Indian social work education, are now visible in some spaces and are being articulated in the public domain. We see the emergence of two organic perspectives that are located within a critical Indian episteme; Dalit Social Work[122] and Tribal Social Work Practice.[123] The above formulations that have arisen from context, point to the emanation of critical organic social work content and theory in Indian social work education.

In other parts of the world as i have pointed out in chapter 3, we also observe the rise of aboriginal social work, indigenous social work, and decolonial social work. In the western world, there are a number of theories within the critical school. An idea that has somewhat caught the attention of many social work educators across the globe is 'anti-oppressive practice'[124]. This is generally understood as an umbrella

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[122] Ramaiah, A. (1998). and bodhi.s.r. (2011,)

[123] bodhi.s.r. (2011,). Also see Akhup, A. (2009). Interface between State, Voluntary Organisation and Tribes: A Perspective towards Tribe-Centered Social Work Practice. Indian Journal of Social Work, 70(4), 507-615.

[124] Dalrymple and Burke (1995) describe the practice of working from an Anti-Oppressive framework as constituting of personal self-knowledge; knowledge and an understanding of the majority social systems; knowledge and understanding of different groups and cultures; knowledge of how to challenge and confront issues on a personal and structural level; awareness of the need to be 'research minded' (Everitt et. al., 1992); commitment to action and change. (p. 18) and contend that these six points, together with an understanding of power and oppression, contribute to the development of anti-oppressive practice in Carolyn Campbell (2003) Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. http://aosw.socialwork.dal.ca/index.html.

term that encompasses a variety of practice approaches including, but not limited to, radical, structural, feminist, anti-racist, critical, and liberatory frameworks. It represents the current nomenclature for a range of western theories and practices that embrace a social justice perspective.[125] Most of the western social workers who premise their practice within an anti-oppressive position share a few basic characteristics, 'they are strongly critical of the oppressive nature of the dominant discourse; they are theoretically incisive in analyzing 'oppression' and see social work fundamentally as an activity of professionally trained people towards social transformation.'

Critical Pedagogy in First Year Fieldwork supervision: The Concept and Frame

A. Reassembling Content and Pedagogical Processes

We find a number of articles within Indian social work education articulating aims, objectives and processes related to field work supervision. While some articles lay the framework of various fieldwork components in social work training, discuss educational objectives and helping aspects of supervision such as those of Kapoor, 1961; Maurya, 1962; Khinduka, 1963; Bannerjee, 1972; Thangavelu, 1975,[126] few such as Khinduka, 1962; Mehta, 1975; Desai, 1975 deal with micro processes related to identifying fieldwork tasks, the importance of recordings and goals of individual and group

[125] ibid

[126] See Bannerjee, G.R (1972). Some Aspects of Field Work Supervision. In Papers on Social Work: an Indian perspective. 270-284. Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay. Also see Maurya,M.R. (1962) Field work Training in Social Work. Indian Journal of Social Work. Vol 23(1) April; 9-14; Thangavelu,R. (1975). Field work Supervision: Its Place in Social Work Education. Indian Journal of Social Work. Vol. 35(4) Jan; 359-366; Kapoor,J.M (1961) The Role of Field work in modern social work education. Indian Journal of Social Work Vol.22 (2), p.113-120, September and Khinduka,S.K. (1963) The role of supervision in social work education. Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.24(3), Oct; 169-180

conferences.[127] It must be noted that while very few social work educators have dwelt deeply into curriculum and pedagogical processes, attempts to articulate the same is now being made.

Across the world, critical social workers as noted by Campbell (2003)[128] have noted down these principles as constituting of (i) a comprehensive conception of the role and responsibility of educators, (ii) promoting critical analysis, (iii) supporting student engagement in learning, (iv) nurturing relationships and establishing community, (v) using experience as a pedagogical base, (vi) facilitating practice and classroom discussions, (vii) working with affect in the classroom.

In the Indian context, i have been part of a group drafting the objectives of critical field work training in Indian social work education. The aim here is to accommodate and work towards increasing the capacity of students to (i) develop skills and methodologies of working in partnership with communities, groups and individuals where there are differences in power in relation to caste, ethnicity, class, gender, age, ability and other differences in status, (ii) develop the ability to recognize and value the expertise/experience of individuals, families, groups and communities of Dalits, Tribes, Women, Aged and the Differently Abled, (iii) develop an awareness of structural processes of social exclusion, discrimination, social disadvantage, prejudices and differing forms of oppression, (iv) develop insights into the role of structure in constructing identities and self, and to identify and clarify

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[127] Khinduka,S.K (1962) Group Supervision of social work students. Indian Journal of Social Work Vol.23 (1), p.105-114, April. Also see Mehta, V. D. (1975) Integrated Methods Approach- a Challenge Possibility in Field Work Instruction. Indian Journal of Social Work Vol.35 (4), 1975, p.335-34; Desai, M. M. (1975) Student Recording in Field Work Supervision. Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol.35 (4), p.345-352 and D'Souza, P (1978) Field Instruction in Social Work Education: a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of the Doctorate of Philosophy. Bombay: TISS.

[128] ibid

one's own value premise in such contexts, (v) develop strategies that challenge oppression, discrimination, exclusion, disadvantage and other forms of inequality/injustice based on caste, ethnic, class, gender and ability, (vi) evidence in practice the ability to listen, respect and promote the views and needs of the oppressed within the context of engagement, either through social movements, social action, development organizations, service organizations or government departments and (vii) in the process of engagement, clarify one's role in/within the context as a change agent and strengthen commitment to the cause of the oppressed.

Within such a framework and directly in relation to the first-year fieldwork supervision in a Masters in Social Work programme i will engage in greater details of the process of supervision. While each of the semesters within the two-year Master's programme of social work have their own content, thrust and concomitant pedagogical processes, i propose to perceive, identify and formulate such a learning trajectory as follows:

1. First Semester is identified as the Period of Unlearning,

2. Second Semester as the Period of Contextual Deepening,

B. First Semester Fieldwork Supervision

For students, the first semester is a period of extremely high expectations. Students bring a spirit of enquiry and a thirst to know that spans across a range of fields of enquiry and practice, from psychology to politics and even religion and philosophy. There is also an eagerness to know about fieldwork component. Once in fieldwork, they encounter problems of language, inability to make sense of theory vis-à-vis field context and the incongruity between field reality, practice and theory. Many students are pressured by the learning context to display intelligence, sensitivity and commitment.

First semester fieldwork is a challenge to the supervisor-supervisee circle, not only to clarify basic processes in social work training but

to provide some direction to students while anchoring them in their engagement process. It is in such a context that the author would prefer to identify the first semester as a period of critical field engagement aimed at ***unlearning***.

The Period of Unlearning: Processes in Supervision

I. Change in pedagogy

Most students take methodologies of learning for granted and make the mistake of using the same pedagogical method learnt during schooling and bachelor studies (graduation) to learn in the social work programme. While during schooling and graduation most teaching, especially in India, was didactic, fieldwork demands that students learn through experiential engagement. This needs to be stressed and awareness about learning other methods of learning be made conscious for the learner.

Introduction to linear and circular processes of observing and analysis, together with the ability to formulate both linear and circular questions are important. Students should also be introduced to the process of problematization of concepts, issues and situations. This would help them refine their questioning process. It is also necessary to assist students in the art of paraphrasing and reframing feelings, thought, behaviors and even issues/situations. This strengthens their ability to arrive, see and make meaning of their experience and the experiences of the people they work with. Most of the students in the first semester are in search of meaning and making meaning becomes fundamental to the fieldwork process.

Supervisory Content and Process

- Banking concept of education vs. Problem posing education/ critical learning
- Learning how to learn - Didactic Classroom Teaching vs. Experiential Field based learning: Subjecting banking concept of

education to de-emphasis and highlighting different methodologies of learning.

- Introduction to the notion and theoretical frame of dialogue
- Role of Active Listening in dialogue
- Clarifying Linear Analysis
- Attempting a conscious Circular Analysis: Reflexive process
- Assisting students to formulate and ask questions
- Facilitating processes towards problematization and argument formulation
- Questioning the learnt method and process of learning
- The politics of 'meaning': The art of Reframing and paraphrasing
- Introduce the process of unraveling what lies beyond problem focused analysis

II. Working towards a new value orientation in the Student

In India, a country such which is characterized by high degree of diversity, reality could present itself in very complex ways, especially when it comes to intersectionalities of caste, religion, ethnicity, language and gender. In India diversity is perceived as a strength and accepted as good in itself. But, it is not beyond one's imagination to perceive and comprehend that this perceived celebrated 'strength' has produced a system that has touched the nadir point when it comes to legitimized oppression. The product manifested in the form of the caste system, where such diversity, coupled with legitimized inequality has become, in its most diabolic sense- lethal.

It is extremely helpful while working on the issue of value orientation with students to encourage them to take positions in social work. Some students prefer not too as they see social work as an apolitical activity while others have proclivity to do so. In this regard the biggest challenge faced by the supervisor is in clarifying the line that separates the professional from the personal. I have come to regard the personal-professional dichotomy as only important in the initial phase of learning. The same holds no ground for structural workers.

The earlier one can transcend this binary demarcation, the clearer the structure becomes and the more efficacious the practice in structure. However, the capability to see things holistically takes time. It is a long-drawn process which begins with the highly analytical act of 'essentializing' which entails the identification of key constitutive elements of a social category, be it identity, context or sector, that one is engaging with in the field.

Other important issues that are existential in nature but of great value when it comes to clarifying the value base of students are conceptual engagement with categories such as responsibility, freedom, power, loneliness and guilt, posit in the form of questions to think and ponder about. It opens many doors for students in the process of learning. They experience these situations very frequently in the field.

Further, clarifying the understanding of concepts such as equality, justice, liberty, dignity, harmony, good, bad, beauty help strengthen the ethical and fundamental base of the students. It is also important to introduce through problematization certain foundational principles such as self determination, acceptance, non-judgmentality, etc in order to help students arrive at their own understanding and meanings about the same. Since most social work principles stems from 'beyond the binary', they are not easy to understand when viewed from a binary location. This engagement is purely theoretical and requires both reading and intellectual discussions.

Supervisory Content and Process

- Clarifying the personal-professional dichotomy in social work
- Problematising existential categories such as responsibility, freedom, guilt, loneliness, power and finiteness
- Working at the base of value construction by revisiting notions of fraternity, equality, justice, liberty, harmony, and dignity
- Introducing basic principles that guides engagement - problematising the notion of acceptance, non-judgmental attitude, controlled emotional involvement, purposeful

expression of feelings, uniqueness of self, individualization, self-determination and confidentiality

III. Praxis

Social work has often relied heavily on this learning technique made popular and refined by Paulo Freire. While there have been far more sophisticated techniques develop by Indian theoreticians themselves, like those of Siddhato Gotamo and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar who focuses on body, sensation and history, yet there is a greater reference to Freire when one uses the word 'praxis'. With the publication of his celebrated book 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed', the term praxis has become an integral technique and has definitively enriched social work training. For Freire, both supervisee and supervisor are 'learner-teacher' and 'teacher-learner' respectively. Both bring with them an ability to teach and to learn. In the process of action and reflection as an ongoing dynamic movement, (with an explicit acceptance that there can be 'no final action' or 'no final reflection), the supervisor and supervisee, deepens their understanding and knowledge of their own self and the world. Deeper insights into the process of action-reflection is unraveled cognitively as 'auto reflection' processes constituting of a forward movement from 'thought-word-action' to 'action-word-thought' further leading to awareness, action and organization. In connection to the 'cultural circle' formulation of Freire, it is important to note that because both the supervisor and supervisee are said to have based their understanding on the basis of their own investigative reasoning through dialogue and not on imposition or blind acceptance of the word of either one, both the supervisor and supervisee gain deeper knowledge.

It is useful to also engage with the notion of 'observing' as a logical extension of the action-reflection process, although the same seems out of place in relation to the Freirian conception. Using 'cultural circle' and praxis as epistemological premises, it is useful to also demonstrate to supervisee the difference between linear and circular processes of questioning, although one would have preferred

discussing 'logic' instead. Most students come with backgrounds that have no introduction to philosophy and the usage of logic formulation, be it inductive or deductive. This also helps them write different types of fieldwork recordings and clarifies the minute processes of recordings identified as being linear or circular. Linear in this context refers to the unraveling of reality premised on the question Why and circular, referring to questions of Where, When, What, How and Why.

Supervisory Content and Process

- Introducing the culture circle constituting of 'teacher-learner' and 'learner-teacher'
- Acting-reflecting-acting-reflecting as a process
- Auto reflection- from thought-word-action, to action-word-thought
- Awareness-organization-action
- Introducing the concept of Observing (acting-reflecting-observing) as a process
- Awareness-of-process and reflection-witnessing of self
- Linear questioning and circular questioning
- Capturing Linear, Curvi-linear and Circular field work recordings

IV. Deepening students understanding of structure and processes of oppression through critical thinking

Clarifying the boundary and minute differences between traditional social work theory, critical social work theory and those theoretical perspectives located in spaces beyond the binary provides supervisee with an initial basic frame to learn to perceive how to read theory and where to locate oneself while in the process of analysis. It is essential to introduce to supervisee the notion of critical thinking expounded as being the capacity to understand a situation located in history, ability to collect reliant information, substantiate one's arguments, see and differentiate between right and wrong in a given situation and the capacity to make valid conclusions about a situation and one's

position. Furthering this process, the supervisee should be introduced to the act of problematising. One could pose questions such as: What is problematising? How does one go about the process of problematising? When are you problematising? Is critique, problematising? This is done not only to facilitate the supervisee's ability to identify limits of theoretical conception or identify the notional boundaries of a concept but to lead the supervisee to contest various 'received notions' and pre conceived notion (prejudices) that are taken as given.

Before acting in society, we need to have the ability to analyze society. As social workers we have too often been accused of being opinionated and having a flimsy, impressionistic understanding of social reality. Our ability of understanding the *social* in social work is at best mediocre. This is more so because we often simplify our very complex Indian reality by easily comprehensible and encompassing categories such as class, gender or religion. We often fall trap to the process of seeking to capture the essence of social reality in a single word only ending up in an unconscious over simplification and exclusion of other realities.

The concrete Indian condition is determined by complex factors such as geography, region, language, race, caste, class and gender. In such a context it is important that social work educators/supervisor have the capacity to understand the historical and regional context, identify and locate overarching realities (such as caste), identify the objects of inquiry, open up various lines of inquiry and engage the supervisee reflexively. As social work educators, we do not have the luxury of being naïve about society, and any act to the contrary is fueled by the obvious dangers of abandoning the critical edge which our profession so demands.

For the Indian context while I refer heavily to Dr.B.R. Ambedkar's conception of historical oppression, religious social exclusion and violent domination, i have also found Marion Young's conceptualization of oppression very sophisticated. For many social

work students in India, the ideas of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar are very hard to digest so to dilute the regid resistance Marion Young may be used. For Young (1992)[129] Oppression means not simply its traditional connotation of "the exercise of tyranny by a ruling group" but also its new left designation of the disadvantage and injustice some people suffer not because a tyrannical power intends to keep them down, but because of the everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society. It "refers to systemic and structural phenomena that are not necessarily the result of the intention of a tyrant but are in fact part of the basic fabrics of a society, not a function of a few people's choice or policies… Oppression refers to structural phenomena that immobilize or reduce a group…To be in a social group is to share with others a way of life that defines a person's identity and by which other people identify him or her". She identifies five faces/dimensions of Oppression: (i) Exploitation, (ii) Marginalization (iii) Powerlessness (iv) Cultural Imperialism and (v) Violence.

Supervisory Content and Process

- Introducing and positing critical theory (conflict theory) against traditional theory (order theory)
- Introduction to the conception of critical thinking
- Clarifying ideological lenses: Problematising students preconceived conception of social reality
- Challenging and creating awareness about stereotypes and prejudices- deconstructing and deepening students' understanding of 'oppression'.

V. Introducing Social Work Methods

What are methods? What are the constitutive elements of a method? How does one arrive at a method? What is the difference between methodology and method? What is a premise? How does one identify an object of inquiry? How does one select a unit of analysis? What is

[129] Young.I.M (1992). www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/young.pdf

intervention? Is there a way of intervening in a context? These and many more questions are critical in facilitating a supervisee's comprehension of a 'method' and to finally make meaning with the same. Not agreeing in totality with the school of thought that posits 'received methods' as core to Indian social work practice, i instead suggests engagement on 'methods' by clarifying ontological epistemological issues that are fundamental to arrive at a comprehensive formulation of a 'method'.

In India, to this day, the generally accepted systematized procedures or methods that are taught to students at the Masters level are identified as casework, group work, community organization, social action and social research together with social welfare administration. These are coupled with detailed descriptions of 'techniques' in the form of tools or instruments (questioning, clarification, information giving,…) used within a method and social work 'skills' in the form of an ability to use a systematized body of knowledge or procedure (casework, group work,…) effectively in intervention (recording, supervision, evaluation…). In my opinion, a 'method' should have an organic base rooted in the realities of its context.[130] Rather than introducing the concept of the 'method' directly, it is important that one begins with epistemic issues linked to structural realities rather than leap into didactic teaching of the well packaged bookish western definitions and content. Facilitating the formulation of a systematic and orderly procedure to evolve from analysis of the organic context opens up avenues for students to get insights into why a method is needed and therefore meaningful.

The concept of 'change agent' is central to field work engagement, linked closely to the purposeful and conscious use of self while in field work. However, it is detrimental to hasten the process of imposing the 'change agent' notion on supervisee. No amount of

[130] I had put down my thoughts in a paper bodhi.s.r (2011, a). "Critical Reflections on Approaches to Methods in Indian Social Work Education", in Jharkhand Journal of Development and Management Studies, Vol.9, No.4 (October-December, 2011)

theoretical explanation will help clarify the concept. It is the supervisee herself/himself who must slowly unravel its meaning in practice using the supervisor as a stable reflecting mirror. Within the same frame, one needs to also facilitate discussion on categories such as subjectivity, objectivity and reactive, responsive, reflexive (which i have noted in Diagram 7) even though any emphasis on the same is contradictory and antithetical to the process of dialogue and a dialogical relationship. The notion of empathy i believe also falls within the same realm.

Supervisory Content and Process

- Clarifying 'premise', 'objects of inquiry', 'unit of analysis', 'line of inquiry', 'methodology', 'method'
- Clarifying ontological epistemological premises and theories of perception- realist, idealist, intuitionist
- Introducing the 'change agent' concept
- The purposeful and conscious use of self
- The process of receptivity, subjectivity and objectivity in relation to self
- Introducing empathy as a process
- Relating basic social work principles to self within dynamic social reality
- Clarification of methods, techniques and skills emanating from context

VI. Introduction to the process of work- identification

In social work training one often encounters the problem of facilitating supervisee to be able to identify 'work' in the 'field'. Previously discussed was the 'social' in social work. But what is 'work' in social work? And what is 'field' in field work? Unfortunately, these questions are greatly determined by the kind of field work 'agency' or system that the student is placed in. Pertaining to the former, work differs from one setting to the other.

The notion, nature and content of *work* vary between a government setting, non government setting and community setting. Within this framework, at a personal level, i would conceive that any act which emanates from a conscious and purposeful use of self directed towards ameliorative and structural change within a context could qualify as work. Further, because we perceive ourselves as a profession, these conscious acts formalized within the framework of 'professional service' are quantified by financial remuneration.

Connected to the concept of work, in-depth clarification about the notion of 'field' in field work becomes imperative. I have detailed this in chapter four. From within social work education in India, the 'field' has been viewed primarily from three perspectives: (i) generic, (ii) specialization and (iii) interdisciplinary concentrations or fields of practice. The first formulation perceives the 'field' as a generic 'context', simply understood as a demarcated space characterized by a dynamic confluence of time, place and person that is experienced in the here and now. This conception of *field* is generally conceived by those schools of social work offering a generic M.S.W programme. The second formulation perceives the *field* as a context demarcated by/ into sectors (Medical and Psychiatric Social Work, Family and Child Welfare, Personnel Management and Industrial Relations, Urban and Rural Community Development). This kind of conception is witness among those schools offering a M.S.W programme with specializations.

The most recent formulation perceives the 'field' as a context (Community Organization and Development Practice, Children and Families) demarcated by sectors (Mental Health, Public Health, Criminology and Justice, Livelihood and Entrepreneurship) whose meaning, interpretation and experience depends greatly on socio-politico-historical locations and standpoint epistemic premises (Dalit Social Work, Tribal Social Work, Women Centered Practice). The M.A in Social Work programme offered by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences currently interwoven under the broad category of 'thematic programmes', formulates the 'field' in the form of

interdisciplinary concentrations or 'fields/sites of practice' that circumscribes context, sectors and positionality around identities.

Over the course of a century, the Indian context has been characterized by myriad manifestations of a modern social life marred by increasing structural discrepancy. Such are the structural realities of the field, that sometimes even a contract with the State is positioned directly against community, especially poor communities. At times, when one is struggling for the rights of the marginalized (which is *work* in social work), one is also paradoxically breaking the law or so it seems. However, theoretically informed action is something we cannot tease and run away from. It is useless to only take pride in remaining in opposition without making any dent on the structures that excludes and oppress. We must carry on the historical momentum towards change, clearly in a direction that liberates and emancipates the oppressed. In this connection we must be able to identify work (change) that demands process, and work (changes) that require immediate cause-effect action bearing immediate outcome.

Connected to the above it is helpful to dialogue with supervisee on positionality and the reality unraveling processes especially (as an initial technique) by positing the problem focus and strength focus dichotomy as understood and applied in social work practice. How does one's positionality change what we perceive and experience is a pertinent question to engage with.

Supervisory Content and Process

- Helping to identify *work*: structures and levels of work (self, agency, client/community, policy, system) and *fields* of practice
- The 'here and now' perspective and comprehending the change process. Change the only constant
- Process orientation and Cause-Effect orientation
- Positionality and the unraveling of social situations- Problem perspective and the strength perspective

The first semester is responsible for determining whether a student feels part of, or alienated from the two-year social work programme. The role of the supervisor in this regard is critical. Students joining the social work programme bring with them a high degree of enthusiasm, a deep sense of concern, a commitment to learn and a willingness to engage. As a supervisor i have often felt myself wanting on two counts. One, to provide a stable macro theoretical structure located within a critical anti hegemonic position that is organically located and contextually relevant to the Indian reality, and two, the ability to anchor them emotionally while at the same time opening my own self up to them in order to deepen our relationship in learning. The challenge is to accommodate their search and quest, to motivate them and at every possible juncture to model behavior that is at the same time critical yet accepting of their life experiences, whatever their caste, class, creed and gender. Starting from where they are rather than from where i am has always been the key for striking and consolidating the initial rapport developed, that in the process goes on to establishing a strong, reliable and trusting relationship premised on the spirit of dialogic enquiry. However, this also calls to question the role of supervisee. In several occasions i have unfortunately been simply unable to connect with them and at times felt utterly helpless. I find myself making analogies ranging from the intellectually sophisticated to the almost nonsensically mundane. I once stated to a supervisee whose interest levels were far beyond my ability to connect, about a statement supposedly made by a Zen master, "It is great injustice not to dialogue with a student who is willing to learn, but it is an utter waste of time to even try to dialogue with one who is not yet ready to learn".

C. Second Semester Fieldwork Supervision

Key reflections on my experience of the second semester have led me to an understanding that the second semester as a whole is a period of intense conflict and confusion for students. Reasons such as a sense of incongruousness; feeling out of place vis-à-vis social

work profession, mismatch between initial expectations and what the programme offers, a sense of being overwhelmed and helpless in relation to social reality and change, theoretically dry and intellectually non stimulating, difficulty in adapting to new situations and different pedagogical processes and an overall pressure to locate oneself within a large group of students from varied cultural backgrounds. There are personal issues as well, such as career choices; students wonder if they are cut out for the social work (referring to content being taught), family expectations, financial needs, having to make new friends and overall adapting to a new environment with different sets of rules, regulation, culture and lifestyles.

The second semester fieldwork is therefore a challenge to the supervisor-supervisee circle, not only to deepen understanding and make meaning but to also bring in new perspectives and an overall intellectually stimulating engagement. It is in such a context that the second semester can be identified as a period of critical theoretical engagement aimed at **contextual deepening**.

The Period of Contextual Deepening: Processes in Supervision

I. Philosophy, Methodology and Method

I have often felt myself cornered by friends from the discipline of philosophy on questions relating to the epistemic premise of social work methods. Do we locate our methods on an empiricist episteme or constructivist episteme, or are we 'eclectic', if such a foundation is epistemologically permissible? For those among us who comes from a navayana framework it is much easier to engage students around premise that are frame around binary principles and 'beyond the binary' principles. What is the premise of a method such as Casework, Group work, Community Organization or Social Action? Methods cannot exist without an epistemic base and any act that negates the same is to fall trap to a conservative project that negates theory in order to promote the status quo principle. Also important within this debate are the questions of ontological positioning that

concerns categories or categorization that captures and represents the identity of those we work with, within the context of action and reflection. This demands that we take a good look at our social reality and concomitant notions that subsumes it, for our final engagement is with such a reality, not outside of it. Our methods are an organic product of our reality. In our hurry to 'do' we have actually borrowed formulations that are incongruous to our reality and problems. The tag of being a profession that has stayed afloat and survived depending on 'received theories' is a truth we cannot deny. While engaging in the 'dialogue circle' (supervisee-supervisor circle) i have felt it important to engage on ontological and epistemological issues. This helps clarify many 'vague' and even invisible areas in social work especially related to the organic reality and its relationship with perspectives and methods.

Following this, another core content that needs to be expounded concerns schools of thoughts in social work or various ideological positions as presented in Diagram 8. Based on these perspectives' deeper discussion with supervisee on various perspectives prevailing in Indian Social Work helps clarify ideological locations without being theoretically parochial. The aim is to generate awareness about every single position rather than try convincing supervisee about the superiority one single position. However, an anti oppressive epistemological standpoint steadies the process of theoretical unraveling within the 'dialogue circle'.

Supervisory Content and Process

- Introduction to the philosophy of critical social work methodology: the ontology-epistemology-axiology axis (category-method-value)
- Social reality as an outflow of the self (idealist) versus existing social reality independent of self (realist) - the realist and anti-realist perception debate
- Practical engagement with and through systems, structures, communities, groups and individuals

- Reframing, practicing and refining one's purposeful interaction in structural work, working through community, working through groups and working with individuals
- The applications of social work research and process-oriented organizing / social work administration
- Introducing Schools of thought in Indian Social Work- clarifying and locating dialogue within varied ideological position.

II. Society and Self - Restructuring and Reorganizing Organic Structures

The dialogue circle which constitutes of the supervisor-supervisee relationship is a safe boundary where restructuring and reorganizing of organic structures can take place. With social reality and society as the standpoint and the self as a mirror of that reality, one could bring congruency and symmetry between belief structures within self and structures operating in the outside reality. There is often great resistance to this process; however, reflecting on social work's vision and mission is imperative. We are a pro poor people-centered profession whose singular mission is to struggle for the oppressed, with the oppressed and through the oppressed by promoting and protecting their dignity, rights and liberty in the forward movement towards achieving social justice and equality. To me there is no social work outside this frame. Any subversion, diversion or revision of the profession's vision and mission is an act of hypocrisy and betrayal of the ideals of the profession. We are against caste, against patriarchy, against the dominance of one class by the other, against exclusion of disabled, against the discrimination of children, aged, minorities, sexualities., etc. Every single thought, word and deed of a social worker must be measured by its ability to achieve justice, equality and freedom for the socially excluded and oppressed. The emergence of the new farmes of anaylysis in social work as presented in Diagram 8 has given the profession a wide framework to analyse and clarify both our politics and our change agent role.

Another very important factor in the dialogue circle of supervisor/supervisee that should never be compromised is the reading, comprehending and understanding of the Constitution of India. Detail discussion of the same is essential.

Supervisory Content and Process

- Strengthening and deepening restructured perspective positions
- Challenging, confronting and restructuring oppressive social structures such as caste, patriarchy, class, age, ableism, sexism within the cultural circle
- The importance of critical analysis, linear and atomistic thinking and the possibility of circular and inter-relational thinking
- Clarifying the political domain and structures of power in society: The Indian Constitution and its frame

III. Clarifying Methodologies of Methods (skills)

Clarification of methodology in method formulation permits the problematization of what we sometimes take for granted 'as given'. There is a need to look at the various facets and premises of a method in totality (i.e., together as a related set) even after the same is formulated. How is each method related to the other when conceive holistically? What is the relation between casework, groupwork, community organization and social action, etc?

The first way of seeing is located around the identification of clear lines of demarcation between one method and the other in definition that are somewhat placed in different permutations and combinations depending on the unit of intervention, with an inherent belief that one single method can do without the others at any given point in time. In the second ways of seeing the methods are located horizontally in a spectrum next to each other within a specified context responding to situations as it presents. The third ways of seeing is where community becomes the context and community organization becomes the primary method, subsuming other

methods like casework, group work, etc., within its framework. The fourth way of seeing is where intervention are formulated as context so demands rather than giving precedence to pre formulated method to respond to context.[131] To bring symmetry between these ways of approaching methods is the challenge for educators but imperative for the learning process.

Further in this context, discussion about various aspects related to the thinking (cognitive) process, doing (action) process and being (here and now) is important. How one builds each of these aspects and the demands thereof to deepen and strengthen 'knowing' allows supervisee-supervisor a less bumpy movement towards clarifying social work's key element- the purposeful and conscious use of self in relationship. This is a time-consuming process. However, even a short excursion to this domain of engagement as an introductory process is helpful. The same should be strengthened in the second year of training.

I have also found it extremely useful to introduce to students the concept of social work skills as detailed in Diagram 9 and 10. Over the years i have actually begun teaching this framework as the introductory framework to field engagement. Students begins to expand their ways of looking encapsulating a larger reality beyond themselves and changing their perspective on practice. The component on understanding social work approaches to field engagement has also been very meaningful to students.

Supervisory Content and Process

- From clarifying the methodological foundations of social work methods to identification of the methods perspective

[131] I have also reflected on these processes in another article. bodhi.s.r (2011). "Critical Reflections on Approaches to Methods in Indian Social Work Education", in Jharkhand Journal of Development and Management Studies, Vol.9, No.4 (October-December, 2011)

- Identification of varied perspectives or points-of-view within methods as detailed in chapter four
- The skill-based approach through as detailed in Diagram 9
- Identifying specific skills in relation to context, issues in communities, structures and systems and giving students field-based assignments like conducting a small sample size research, write a project proposal, etc.
- Identifying techniques and formulation of strategies
- Understanding various social work approaches used in the field
- Delineating between Thinking, Doing and Being
- The Purposeful and conscious use of self in relationships

IV. Attitudinal Change

Student social workers are new agents of change. The program envisions them as agents of change rather than as agents of control. How social work students perceive themselves currently and how they perceive themselves in the future depends on how clear they are about the concept of 'change agent'. The 'change agent' concept is a processual realization and it is in the process of becoming, that clarity is arrived at. As a notion, it is theoretically attractive but also painfully elusive. It is because of this that we must have tremendous patience while building a forward momentum towards arriving at the 'change agent' in ourselves and in our trainees. At the core of the change agent lies the unraveling of both ethics and aesthetics. While the same must be taken into the second year of field training, introduction of the concept in the first year begins the deepening of self in the said realm.

In conclusion to first year fieldwork, it is important to not lose sight, stay awake and even remind ourselves at every point in time, (so that we do not blind ourselves by pressures of the multi faceted, multiple tasks demanded from us), to the single fact that what finally drives any process in critical social work is a personal conviction and commitment to the cause of the oppressed, without which we have

no reason to exist. In the context of personal goals, value orientation of personal conviction and commitment to pro-poor perspectives is important.

Supervisory Content and Process

- The use of self as an 'agent of change'
- The ability of self to determine change- its course, dynamic outcome and process
- Focus on process while not undermining input - output oriented work - Holistic learning vs. Tasked centered learning
- In the context of personal goals - value orientation in the context of personal conviction and commitment to pro-poor perspectives
- Introduction to the concept of aesthetics and ethics

Conclusion

The supervisor-supervisee engagement in social work training is an essential educational activity. The gains from the relationship are for both supervisee and supervisor. Students joining the social work programme bring with them a tremendous sense of commitment and a will to learn. The role of the supervisor is to tap this potential in students and to engage with them towards deepening their understanding of complex Indian reality while strengthening their commitment towards working for structural change.

Supervision has always been an experience that is both emotionally and intellectually exhilarating. At the culmination of one year of critical fieldwork training, supervisees should be able at threshold level, to understand how to make use of existing and potential networks to challenge and confront discrimination and social exclusion based on caste, class, gender, religion, ability and tribe. They should be able to comprehend and understand the importance and impact that personal values, principles and ideological lenses can have on practice. They should also be able to identify skill sets

required to work within and with organizations, together with the balance of influence, power and resources of organizations - while working with and through people. It is also important to deepen their understanding and apply and observe the use of various methods of challenging through practice, discrimination, exclusion and social disadvantage. Finally, they should be able to apply theoretical knowledge of social justice to practice with discriminated identities and groups which include dalits, tribes, women, poor, children, elderly, differently-able and religious minorities.

Within the current Indian context, the need for a structurally conscious training in social work education is imperative. For social work education in India to become efficacious, it needs to reposition its perspective and theoretical base, and incorporate methodologies that are congruent to the Indian reality. The formulation must however accept a great degree of social diversity and complex political heterogeneity that the Indian reality presents.

Fieldwork supervision in such a context is a challenging task. It should stay theoretically abreast and in symmetry with the latest theoretical formulations in other disciplines within the sciences, social sciences and humanities and have the inert capability to economic processes and macro structural change.

THE NAVAYANA SERIES

This Second Edition is an improvement and a refinement of the first, plus an inclusion of a new chapter. Most of the content in this edition are academic lectures delivered to students of the Master of Arts in Social Work. Written over twenty years, these lectures are spread across varied theoretical domains. They include reflections on the history of social work education, proposal for a new social work theory for the Indian context, an attempt at historicizing social work education, a theoretical engagement with the ontology of the 'field' in social work practice, the problematization of the social work curriculum, some insights on the process of fieldwork supervision, and a critical ontological engagement with the idea of navayana social work. Most of these reflections are contextual. There is no particular line of epistemological enquiry sans the fact that each of the domains engaged with were attempts to theorize social work curriculum and pedagogy at various points in time and in response to specific curriculum needs.

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