

UNIT 1

SOCIAL CASE WORK

SOCIAL CASE WORK: Historical Development of Social Case Work, Social Case Work, Definitions of Social Case Work, The Focus of Social Case Work Intervention, Purpose of Social Case Work, Objectives of Social Case Work, Nature of Case Work, Characteristics of Social Case Work, Social Case Work Values, Basic Assumptions of Social Case Work, Elements of case work.

1. Historical Development of Social Case Work

- Ancient times – individuals in every society have been helped by others to solve their problems.
- Late 19th and early 20th century – it took professional shape.
- 1869 – Origin of Charity Organization Society in London.
- The main aim of the society was to find out ways and means of helping the poor and needy and thus to organize used ‘volunteers’, called ‘friendly visitors’.
- They visited the homes of the poor for the purpose of assessing their need, for rendering material assistance and for giving them guidance and advice.
- These friendly visitors were subsequently called ‘paid agents’.
- These paid helpers gradually developed systematic procedures in performing their tasks; they collected data, helped them after assessing and also maintained records (personal data, type of help rendered).
- Case work gradually developed into a professional method.
- 1877 – Organized efforts were taken by the American Charity Organization Society in U.S.A., similar to that in London.
- The ‘paid agents’ received training in investigation, diagnosis and treatment for which the New York School of Philanthropy was established towards the end of the 19th century.
- 1895 – End of 19th century in England, a concept called ‘Almoners’ (outside visitors) was introduced. Sir Charles Loch appointed Almoners to help hospitals to serve patients effectively. Almoners were similar to friendly visitors and paid agents.
- 1898 – The first School of Social Work was established in New York.
- 1911 – Case work had emerged in USA as an accepted formal technique.

Since the early social workers handled cases of families in need, they were called caseworkers in USA.

- 1914 – 1917 – The first training programme for casework started at this time, based more on the medical model – Summer training – started by many schools of social work – recognized by professionals.

- 1917 – Mary Richmond wrote her first book called ‘ Social Diagnosis’ which set forth a methodology of helping clients through systematic ways of assessing their problems and handling them. The book also introduced the principle of individualization and client’s right to self-determination.

- Impact of I World War – The First World War made a wide impact on social case work. Psychiatry in this period became more important. The contribution of Freud and his followers influenced the method employed by the caseworkers in dealing with the individuals. CGC movement and treatment, prevention of mental problems and delinquency strengthened the psychological orientation of this approach.

- 1920s - Various definitions of case work under the influence of Freudian theory (internal factors – individual responsible for his problems).Caseworkers realized that more responsibilities should be given to individuals to make decisions of their life. Professionals also began to move into other fields like prisons, schools, etc.

- 1930 – Economic depression – Case workers had to consider the economic factors which were causing distress to clients, leading to emotional distress and breakdown. Focus shifted from individual to modification and manipulation of the client’s environment to enable him to adapt to his situations satisfactorily.

- After World War II, with the problems of morale, leadership, propaganda, separation, communication, etc., social workers found social sciences more useful. There was increase in personal problems on the part of clients due to financial crises.

- 1950s – This was an era of private practice. Professional agencies started growing in this field. Case work started going into the community. Richmond (1922), Hamilton (1951) and Pearlman (1957) also emphasized on the problems of social

functioning.

- 1960s – Lot of importance was given to research and social action. Heredity vs. environment – casework method adopted new techniques and principles.
- Social Case work in India: - American case work had its influence in India, as the first professional social workers who did case work in the Indian setting were trained in the American Schools of Social work.
- 1911 – N.M. Joshi, one of the founders of the Trade Union Movement established an organization called the Social Service League. The League conducted training programs for volunteers, whose services were later utilized for relief work among people suffering from famines, epidemics, floods and other disasters, and also for welfare programs among the poor and the destitute.
- 1936 - The Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work was started in Bombay, the training for social work changed into a full time career oriented, educational program.
- 1946 – Case work figured, both as a theoretical course and also as a method of practice in the academic program.
- Social work as a profession and as an academic program has been enlarged and enriched by new perspective, ideas and theories.

2. Social Case Work

Social Case Work, a primary method of social work, is concerned with the adjustment and development of individual towards more satisfying human relations. Better family life, improved schools, better housing, more hospitals and medical care facilities, protected economic conditions and better relations between religious groups help the individual in his adjustment and development. But his adjustment and development depend on the use of these resources by him. Sometimes due to certain factors, internal or external, he fails to avail existing facilities. In such situations, social caseworker helps him. Thus, social casework is one to one relationship, which works in helping the individual for his adjustment and development. Every individual reacts differently to his social, economic and physical environments and as such problems of one individual are different from those of another. The practice of casework is a humanistic attempt for helping people who

have difficulty in coping with the problems of daily living. It's one of the direct methods of social work which uses the case-by-case approach for dealing with individuals or families as regards their problems of social functioning. Case work, aims at individualized services in the field of social work in order to help the client to adjust with the environments.

3. Definitions of Social Case Work

Mary Richmond (1915)-“Social Case Work may be defined as the Art of doing different things with different people, co-operating with them to achieve some of their own & society's betterment.”

Mary Richmond (1917)-Social case work is the art of bringing about better adjustments in the social relationship of individual men or women or children.

Mary Richmond (1922)-Social case work means, those processes which develop personality through adjustment consciously affected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment.

Jarrett (1919)-Social case work is “the art of bringing an individual who is in a condition of social disorder into the best possible relation with all parts of his environment.

Taft (1920)-Social case work means “social treatment of a maladjusted individual involving an attempt to understand his personality, behavior and social relationships and to assist him in working out better social and personal adjustment”.

Watson (1922)-Social Case Work is the art of untangling and restructuring the twisted personality in such a manner that the individual can adjust himself to his environment.

Queen (1932)-Social case work is the art “of adjusting personal relationship”.

Lee (1923)-Social case work is the art of changing human attitudes”.

Taylor (1926)-Social case work is a process concerned with the Understanding of individuals as whole personalities and with the adjustments of these to socially healthy lives.

Raynolds (1935)-Social case work is the processes of counseling with a client on a problem which are essentially his own, involving some difficulty in his social relationship.

Raynods (1935)-Social case work is that form of social work which assists the individual which he suggests to relate himself to his family, his natural group , his community.

Klein (1938)-Social case work is a technical method in social work.... A way of adjusting to the client to his personal problems.

Swift (1939)-Social case work is the art of assisting the individual in developing and making use of his personal capacity to deal with problems which he faces in his life.

DeSchweinitz (1939)-Case work means those processes involved in giving service, financial assistance, or personal counsel to individuals by the representatives of social agencies, according to policies established and with consideration of individual need.

Strode (1948)-Social case work is the process of assisting the individual to best possible social adjustment through the use of social case study, social resources and knowledge from relative fields of learning.

Towle (1947)-Social case work is one method....by which certain social services are made available in areas of unmet needs.

Hollis (1954):“Social Case work is the method employed by social workers to help individuals find solution to problems of social adjustment which they are unable to handle in a satisfactory way by their own efforts.”

Hollis (1964):“Case work has always been a psychosocial treatment method. It recognizes both internal psychological and external dysfunction and endeavors to enable the individual to meet his needs more fully and to function more adequately in his social relationship.”

Perlman (1957):“Social Case work is a process used by certain human welfare agencies to help individuals to cope more effectively with their problems in social functioning.”

Safrad: “Social Case Work is a method employed by a social worker to help individual, find a solution of their problem of social adjustment which they are unable to handle in a satisfactory way by their own effort.”

It recognizes the meaning from above definitions that Social case work is a

work performed by a Social Worker with a case or an individual to solve her/his problems and help in that extent that she/he can adjust and develop within the society. It's used by the professional Social Worker. The social work deals with the psycho-socio problem of an individual.

4. The Focus of Social Case Work Intervention

It is clear from above definitions that the focus of social case work is on two points i.e.

- The needs of the person &
- The situation when a person got the problem

William Schwartz takes the viewpoint that "every profession has a particular function to perform in society: it has received a certain job assignment for which it is held accountable." To Schwartz the social work job assignment is to "*mediate the process through which the individual and his society reach out for each other through a mutual need for self-fulfillment.*" The Schwartz mediating model rests on the assumption that the interests of the individual and the interests of society are essentially the same, but that in a complex and changing society the individual's desire to belong as a full and productive member and the society's ability to integrate and enrich its people are sometimes blocked. Social work intervention is directed toward these blockages and toward freeing the "individual's impetus toward health, growth, and belonging; and the organized efforts of society to integrate its parts into a productive and dynamic whole.

In 1958 Werner Boehm published a widely used definition of social work: *Social work seeks to enhance the social functioning of individuals, singularly and in groups, by activities focused upon their social relationships which constitute interaction between man and his environment. These activities can be grouped into three functions: restoration of impaired capacity, provision of individual and social resources, and the prevention of social dysfunction.* These definitions clearly place the focus of social work intervention on the interaction of disequilibrium between man and his environment. In this sense both are consistent with Schwartz's mediating approach, in as much as they consider social work as in some way intervening or mediating between people and their social environment.

Harriett Bartlett writes of a social work focus on social functioning, which she defines as the "relation between the coping activities of people and the demand from the environment." For Bartlett the concept of social functioning does not refer to the functioning of individuals or groups, which she finds characteristic of earlier definitions, but "attention is now directed primarily to what goes on between people and environment through the exchange between them. This dual focus ties them together. Thus person and situation, people and environment, are encompassed in a single concept, which requires that they be constantly reviewed together." William Gordon, with whom Bartlett is in agreement, finds that "the central focus of social work traditionally seems to have been on the person in his life situation complex-a simultaneous dual focus on man and environment.

The focus of social work intervention is on the interaction between humans and their environments. **In Schwartz's terms social workers mediate; in Gordon's terms social workers match something in environment to something in person; and in Bartlett's terms social workers seek to strike a balance between people's coping ability and environmental demand. Social workers may at times direct change strategies toward individuals, may at times direct change strategies toward the environment, and may at times direct change strategies toward the interaction of individual and environment.** But in all cases, these strategies are directed toward changing the nature of the person-situation interaction. Now the question here is that what is a social problem?

Paul B. Horton defines problem as Social problem is a situation which exists anywhere, at anytime and affects any person.

1. This situation creates hurdles in the life of the person. When these hurdles are there.
2. The people became conscious of it and tries to find out the solution.
3. Sometimes the problem is solved by one's own efforts but sometimes he needs external help.

This help is given to him by the social worker through different methods i.e.

1. Case work
2. Group work

3. Community work

5. Purpose of Social Case Work

- Basic purpose is to enable the client to enjoy with some degree of permanence. More satisfying, effective and acceptable experiences in the social situation in which he finds himself.
- Essential task is the facilitation of the social relationship.
- (Witmer) Chief aim is to help them mobilize their capacities for the solution of their problems.
- Help them so that they will be better able to meet future difficulties with a more effectively organized personal strength.
- (Moffett & Hollis) Bring about a better adjustment between individual clients and his situation or environment.
- (Bowers) Better adjustment in the social relationships of the individual and the development of individual personality.
- *In general, the purpose of social case work is to help an individual client to solve his psycho-social problems in such a way so that he finds himself capable of dealing with these problems at present and also may solve in future if such problems arise.*

6. Objectives of Social Case Work

- To make good rapport with the common people.
- To find-out, understand & solve the internal problems of an individual.
- To strengthen ones ego power.
- To prevent problem in social functioning.
- To develop internal resources to enhance social functioning.

7. Nature of Case Work

- ✓ Relationship arise out of shared & emotionally charged situation.
- ✓ Relationship contains elements of acceptance, expectation, support & stimulation.
- ✓ Client & case worker are interdependent.
- ✓ Case work relationship may have several therapeutic values.
- ✓ Improvement of condition.

- ✓ More adjustment within the society.
- ✓ Development of personality.
- ✓ Capacity building.
- ✓ Relationship needs outside help.
- ✓ Case worker too has relationship reactions and part of one's professional skills in their management.

8. Characteristics of Social Case Work

- It is a method of social work, seeks to help individuals in a systematic way based on knowledge of human behaviour and various tested approaches.
 - Consumers of these services are individuals and their families.
 - CWer's knowledge, expertise and available material resources are used to inject strength in the person.
 - Person to person relationship, face to face, interpersonal transaction.
 - Deals with the adjustment of the individual towards more satisfying human relations, CWer helps the total individual, i.e., with every aspect of his life (psychological and environmental - social & physical factors).
 - CWer provides assistance to every individual in accordance to his problem and need.
 - Problems differ from individuals to individuals.
 - Process used by certain human welfare agencies to help individuals cope more effectively with their problems in social functioning.
 - SCW involves the following ingredients:
 1. *Social Agencies*: offering specialized services.
 2. *Application*: client applies for agency's assistance.
 3. *Continuing service*: agency's service remains continuous until solution.
 4. *End of the process*: when client no longer requires agency's assistance; when client develops effectiveness in coping with his problem and resolves the problem.
- * **"A PERSON with a PROBLEM comes to a PLACE where social worker helps him through a well-defined PROCESS."** – Helen Harris Perlman.
- PERSON: man, woman, child, and aged, anyone with social emotional living.
 - PROBLEM: arise from some need /obstacle /accumulation of frustrations or

maladjustments which threaten the adequacy of the person's living situation or the effectiveness of his efforts to deal with it.

- PLACE: social service agency, social welfare department.
- PROCESS: progressive transaction between caseworker and client.

9. Social Case Work Values

Social casework values have roots in the democratic social system. They are:

1. Every man has inherent worth and dignity.
2. Every individual has the right to self-determination.
3. Every individual is the primary concern of society, has potential for and the right to growth.
4. Every individual, in turn, has to contribute to the society's development by assuming his social responsibility.
5. The individual and society in which one lives are interdependent.
6. Basic human needs have to be met by services which are not dependent upon in accord either to moral behaviour or to race, nationality, caste, etc.

10. Basic Assumptions of Social Case Work

Man is a bio-psycho-social being who is in constant interaction with his environment.

All problems in social functioning are psycho-social in nature and most are interpersonal as well.

Within certain limits, man can be understood and helped.

Man can grow and change limited only by his inherent capacities and potentials.

Every person is unique as well as similar to others.

11. Elements of case work

- 1) Purpose & concern for the Client system

A purpose to find-out internal problems & try to solve it and a concern to make good rapport, feel one's feelings and aims at individualized service.

- 2) Expectation at three level

-Expectation of the case worker from the client, how the case worker feels about the client's ability & what extend client support anybody.

-Expectation of the client from the Case worker.

-Positive result in the period of interaction.

3) Accuracy of Empathy and clear communication

- Think positively in others point of view.

- What extent you are sympathetic.

- Ability to perceive & communicate accurately & feel.

- Case worker should be sensitive to express feelings towards client by voice, posture and good communication.

4) Non Possessive warmth

Give respect, acceptance, liking, caring and concern for the client in a non-dominating way.

5) Genuineness and acceptance

Case worker must be practical in nature. He must be a person of genuineness being real, honest in their approach and never go beyond her/his limit.

6) Authority

Case worker must have a capacity to handle any situation, being resourceful and helpful, having knowledge, attitude, experience and a position to identify and solve internal problem of client.