

**Social Group Work
&
Historical Development
of
Group Work**

SWRK 4010

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SOCIAL GROUP WORK
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- **UNIT - I: Understanding Concepts of Social Group Work**
- Classification of Groups; Primary & Secondary Group; Formal & Informal
- Social Group Work
- Characteristics of Social Group Work
- Historical Development of Social Group Work

- **Social group work is a method of social work** which develops the ability of individuals through group activities. It is a different way of helping individuals through group based activities and enhancing - **knowledge, understanding and skill.**
- Social group work is concerned with the social development of individuals. Practice of group work requires a deep knowledge about how humans interact in groups.
- **Definition**
- “Social group work is a psycho-social process which is concerned no less than with developing leadership ability and cooperation than with building on the interests of the group for a social purpose.” (*Hamilton – 1949*).

- “Social group work is a method through which individuals in groups in social agency settings are helped by worker who guides their interaction in programme activities so that they may relate themselves to others and experience growth opportunities in accordance with their needs and capacities.” (*Trecker – 1955*).
- “Social group work is a method of social work, which helps individuals **to enhance their social functioning** through purposeful group experiences and to cope more effectively with their personal, group and community problems.” (*Konopka-1963*)
- Social Group Work is used for the purpose of reducing or eliminating roadblocks to social interaction and accomplishing desirable social goals (*Skidmore – 1988*)

Characteristics of Group Work:

- Group work makes *use of multiple relationships and a multi-person process* (worker to member, worker to group, member to member and member to group)
- The group is an *instrument for meeting basic needs and strengthening human capacities*. It promotes identification of participants with one another and provides freedom to relate as and when the client is ready for it.
- A unique characteristic of group work is its *use of programme media* such as play, discussion, arts and crafts, music, dance, drama, role play, outings and parties which facilitate mastery of skills and serve as a vehicle for fostering human relationships.

- Programme activities offer scope for *utilisation of non-verbal communication*, a particularly valuable tool for clients who cannot articulate their needs and problems.
- Membership in the group, *exposure to its influences, participation in its activities and acquisition of a role* and status within it can have potent effects for individuals.
- Group work is practiced by group itself
- Based on humanitarian philosophy:
- It gives aspiration to help each other:
- It develops human personality:

Objectives of Group Work

- Group work helps to achieve the overall objectives of social work through its own specific objectives which are:
- to assist individuals in their maturation;
- provide supplemental emotional and social nourishment;
- promote democratic participation and citizenship; and
- remedy individual and social disorganisation or maladjustment through group intervention strategies.

Purpose of Social Work with Groups

- In 1964 the Committee on Practice of the Group Work Section of the National Association of Social Workers proposed that group work was applicable for the following purposes:
- corrective/treatment;
- prevention;
- normal social growth and development;
- personal enhancement; and
- citizenship indoctrination (Training, Teaching Education) .

Historical Developments in America, USA

Social group work began as 'group work' with its own unique history and heroes.

It was not part of the **mainstream of professional social work.**

The ideological roots of social group work were in the self-help and informal recreational organisations, such as YMCA, YWCA, settlement house in U.S.A. and democratic ideas that all should share in the benefits of society by following the Industrial Revolution.

Social group work was also influenced by progressive education as it developed in Europe and stressed the use modern and liberal techniques in group learning.

Era of Development of Social Group Work

Pre-1930s: **Social group work and group psychotherapy** have primarily developed along parallel paths. Where the roots of contemporary group psychotherapy were often traced to the group education *classes of tuberculosis patients* conducted by Joseph Pratt in 1906, the exact birth of social group work cannot be easily identified.

There numerous philosophical and theoretical influences occurred in the development of social group work. Chief amongst these influences are as:-

- the ethics of **Judeo-Christian religions**
- the settlement house movement's charitable and humanitarian efforts
- Contribution of John Dewey (1910)
- Contribution of sociological theories about the nature of the relationship between man and society,
- the democratic ethic articulated by early social philosophers
- the psychoanalytic theories of Otto Rank and Sigmund Freud.

- In 1930- The **first course in group work** was **offered** by the *Western Reserve University in the U.S.A.* in the early 1930s.
- **In 1935 Grace Coyle**, as the Chairman of the newly established *section of social group work* of the *National Conference of Social Work*, began to clarify that group work was a method within social work education.

- **In the 1940s**, with the great efforts of -Grace Coyle, Clara Kaiser, Wilber Newsletter, G. Wilson and Helen Phillips, group work became fully established within the profession of social work and began to be taught in many more schools in the USA.
- **In 1940 American Association of Group Workers** was established, which brought out regularly a professional publications called “The Group” and Several new text-books had been published about the Group Work.

- By the early 1950s: Group Work method was introduced in most schools of social work throughout the U.S.A., Great Britain, Canada and other parts of the world.
- Social group work now wrested or Captured itself from the field of social psychology and also distinguished its methodology from group psychotherapy.
- It developed a refined and sophisticated set of techniques as the **National Association of Social Workers** and the Council of Social Work Education produced new documents and publications in group work. Gisella Konopka, and William Schwartz were the new group work writers.

- In the late **1960s, Ruth Smalley's published** new text book **"Theory for Social Work Practice"** ***which emphasised on the practice of Social group Work.***
- Further, Social group work as a method being utilised in new innovations such as the laboratory method, sensitivity training, encounter groups and many movements like transactional analysis, gestalt therapy.

Historical Developments in India

India has a long history of social work and social welfare. There is evidence of the **group approach being used in charity, imparting religious education through the oral tradition, mobilising the people for the freedom struggle against the British, social reform and, more recently, in typically indigenous welfare strategies such as the Sarvodaya and Bhoodan movements.**

The history of group work as a method of social work practice can be seen only in the context of social work education in India.

Social Group work began with the foundation of the first School of Social Work in 1936, viz, the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work.

In 1947-48 the second school of Social Work was established in Delhi and started teaching group work as a primary method of Social Work.

In 1950 : *University of Baroda*, started the Baroda School of Social Sciences which had strongly emphasised on group work.

- In 1960: The [Association of Schools of Social Work](#) in India, jointly with Technical Cooperation Mission (U.S.A) laid down minimum standards for group work which was the great step in growth of Group Work Practice.
- Throughout India in schools of social work, group work found a place in Social Work Education.
- The theoretical framework and its practice model was mainly American and until recently, few attempts were made to indigenize it.

- Group work which could have played a significant role in some of the major social development programmes & in Area.

- ✓ Self Help group
- ✓ Health and Sanitation
- ✓ Education and Training

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Thank You