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Review Article

Social work as an Auxiliary Service to Medical Treatment: A Sociological Appraisal -

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ABSTRACT

Sociology as a comprehensive science studies and analyzes all angles of human life. Human life is also much vulnerable under the conditions of long life span. Different people at various stages of life encounter hardships which need treatments. So, before referring to medicine, it is social work which by being used, can provide the clients with therapies as per need. Social work as a practical branch of social sciences is quite strong and well-rooted more in industrial societies, and less in developing societies. Social work is currently used to find out the ills and weaknesses of people, families, the youth, the elderly people, the widows, those in solitude, and many more who need counseling and advice. That is, their needs are measured materially and non-materially. Such an auxiliary service normalizes the clients, refers the clients to medical services, funds and supports, and if not, the situation of the people with difficulties will be worsened and more complicated. Overall, social work engages people with possible structures to respond life challenges. Social work applies principles and techniques to respond some ends and normalize situations in order to enhance productivity. In modern age, when migration in all types has increased, cultures have changed, and are mixing. Under such circumstances, new expectations have emerged where the whole scenario needs social work services, and in case not, referrals to medications will increase. Method of research used in the present paper is of qualitative type. Similarly, social work while improving outcomes in people's lives, it enhances productivity and development.

Keywords: Auxiliary; Social work; Medical treatment; Modern age; Clients

INTRODUCTION

Social work is a help-providing profession, helping all sorts of people to have almost a normal life. Social work in its new lives concept was first coined in the Western world in the 19th century. Social change, industrialization and increasing urbanization largely changed people's lives, traditions, their needs, aspirations and many more. In this way, many people felt deprived and lagged behind. Social work was used to fill the gap in various respects. Before the 19th century, life was much simpler, life span was short, and majority of the people were rural; social change was not so great. Life expectancy was generally below 40 years. What caused the need to use social work, was social change that is currently widely appearing in modern time. However, when there is a gap between possibilities and expectations, some sort of service; that is social work must be used to fill the gap. Now-a-days social work is widely used to socially and economically help the people in need. Currently, when life expectancy is increasing worldwide, dependency on social work is increasing unprecedentedly. Many aging people with disabilities seek social work services to modify themselves. Such services more happen in the industrial countries rather than the non-industrial countries. Social workers generally try to solve social problems of all sorts [1].

METHOD OF RESEARCH

Methodology used in the present article is of qualitative type. In that, various paradigms have been used to find out facts regarding divorce. Qualitative research usually studies people or areas in their natural settings. In finding facts for the research, the researcher engaged in careful data collection and thoughtful analysis of what was relevant. In the documentary research applied in the present article, printed and written materials were widely regarded. The research was performed as a qualitative library type in which the researcher had to refer to relevant and related sources. In the current research various documents were thoroughly investigated, and the needful inferences were made. The data fed by the investigator in the present article is hopefully reliable. Though literature on divorce is very limited, yet the author tried to investigate many different resources in order to elicit the necessary information to build up the text.

Sociology and social work

Discipline of sociology is systematically highly related with social work and the vice versa. As the human society is ever changing with special reference to the development of industries and technologies, all types of social problems constantly emerge. Such a scenario needs sociology to be applied to investigate the issues emerged, and possibly provides solutions. Solutions are usually provided by the

social workers whom have been previously fed by the sociologists. Sociology, theoretically feeds social workers [2]. Man's place in society is ever subject to change of work place, place of residence, work mission, responsibility etc. All such changes create major and minor social problems that need solutions. Socio-demographically, the elderly people are widely increasing; especially in the developed world. Such people who usually lose many of their potentials, highly need their vacuums to be filled up materially and non-materially. Such feed-backs must be provided by the social workers. Sociologists theoretically and deeply study societies and social ills, and thence prescribe how to rectify the issues found.

However, specific genders, social classes, ethnic, cultural and racial groups face their own problems, and if not solved, they will change/transform to larger problems. Task of sociology is that, people must be enabled to grasp the relations between themselves and the way in which their society operates [3]. Such relations could be brought about simply by the social workers, and the surveys by the sociologists. Such activities and studies need to be strengthened and improved in the changing world of the current time.

Family and social work

Family institution occupies a central position in social work theory and practice across the entire sectors of social work. Family as a changing unit faces multiple problems. So, social work policies and practices can reflect quite a deep understanding of the contradictions and complexities which characterize family life as well as the relationships between the family and the state. The three family, household and kinship structures need to be differentiated and clarified. In the developed world, family faces more challenges than the family in developing countries. That is why they invest more on social work in order to create a better order and relationship within the families. Such cross-cultural and sociological approaches are used by social work in order to bring about healthy relations within the families.

Family is a group of people directly linked by kin connection, where the adult members take responsibility for caring for children [4]. But, the families that do not have children are more vulnerable with regard to spending their extra time. Such a situation turns out to be contradictory and problematic, needing social work solution [5]. Family as a practical institution has living arrangements mainly focused on upbringing of children. The religious, intellectual and moral characteristics are transferred through the family institution; from one generation to another [6]. In case of Family breakdown, many values are not transferred, and because of that, children face problems in their lives. Such a vicious circle of poverty may continue



to the next generation too. So, it is social work discipline that may short cut and bring about reforms within the deformed children with misbehavior [7].

Family violence vs social work

Family while being the heart of affection, it is at the same time, the epicenter of violence. Family may be the center of violence, insecurity, injury, killing and political attacks throughout all societies in the world. Since 1960s, there has been an explosion of public and academic interest in violence against women, especially domestic violence. Violence usually starts when men seek to control women [8].

Both masculinity and power of male sexuality are socially oppressive, and that is where violence starts in the family [9]. In a significant minority of relationships, only the woman is violent. This is an area currently under investigation. However, a large part of sociological and feminist literature on families is currently focused on violence within the family [10].

Social work has been recognized as a discipline highly helping families to change relations and become normal non-violent families. In industrial countries where women have reached more human rights, simultaneously they are facing increasing family violence leading to divorce and family breakdown. Because of that, governments are increasingly training and employing social workers in order to prevent such family issues. Family violence not only affects the present families, it also affects the families of the next generations too.

Childhood vs social work

Until about last decade not much sociological investigations had been done on children neither by the classical sociologists nor by the North American sociologists [11]. Later children were found in the context of family, the community and educational studies. That is why earlier more child-labor existed in all societies. So, since late twentieth century, a revolution happened in the life conditions of children; schooling was more encouraged, child-labor was discouraged, progressive health care steps were taken toward the health of children, especially in the developing world. But, surprisingly, the increasing family violence negatively influenced the children; in the course of which many children adopted different ways of life-left school, joined child-labor, used drugs, became criminals and the like. Many jails are at present filled with grown-ups who were the victims of family violence and divorce before. Much of what we understand about childhood is rooted in psychological ideas about child development, adolescence and socialization, often described in a positivist language [12].

Development of social work much helped and solved the childhood's problems. However, many countries had legislation on children's rights and responsibilities. UNESCO and UNICEF too, played determining roles in favor of children to have better lives and protection. The laws highly impacted the lives of children in developing countries.

Youth vs social work

Definition of youth is quite complicated and different from a country to another. It overall starts after childhood as a fixed period in the life-span. In the Western world, it begins with the start of puberty. But, there is a question when does puberty start? Because of improvements in diet and living conditions, puberty

has lowered for several years [13]. For females, it may be from the onset of menstruation [14]. Marking the end of the stage of youth is quite problematic in almost all countries. Finding independence, job, income, marriage and the like, are all problematic, according to cultures and norms of the societies. All the youth all over the world encounter problems at this stage of life which could be helped by the services of social workers. The person who leaves home to get married, or have a child at the age of 16 ceases to see him or herself as a youth. At the same time, a student in his/her twenties who is still financially dependent on a parent may feel powerless and the dependency may continue for a much longer period of time [15]. The youth constituting a large portion of population in developing countries are very problematic in Asia, Africa and South America as far as employment, of such people are concerned [16]. They have to migrate to other countries with growing economies which is not an easy job at present. Therefore, while the youth are creative in the North, they may be troublesome in the South.

Caring vs social welfare

One of the main connections of social work is its relationship with caring in general. Getting care to live better was propagated and got on the agenda since 1970s. Social work especially in the West gave high priority to the health of the elderly people in particular. Social work discipline started sending providers to take care of the aging and disabled people in the families. They are empowered and strengthened by the care provided by social work institution. Current families with few children have to depend on social workers to receive the care services necessary. Similarly, as many younger people work in distant locations, their services to the older members of the family decline. So, such services are usually carried out by subsidiary agents [17].

Affect and reciprocity as important determinants of informal helping play a good part when the care provider feels a debt of gratitude towards [18]. Duty and obligation are also closely linked to the idea of reciprocity, and are rooted in societal and kinship norms. Both care-givers and the recipients need their caring needs to be met first and foremost in the family [19].

In developing countries where social work is not much developed, caring for the disabled or ill parents who live with them is carried out by children and young people. Many developing countries in which aging people are widely increasing, need social workers and care-givers to attend and serve people in need of care. Studies show that interrelated factors such as class, income and housing play a determining part in care and caring for the disabled and ill members of the family. They can easily purchase such services [20].

Social work in developing countries

Increasing number of developing countries are identified as poor or poverty-stricken. Many of them have been trying to reduce their poverty through national or international plans [21]. There is a linkage between growth, poverty and inequality. To eliminate poverty, micro and macro attempts need to be done [22]. Poverty is a complex problem affecting both developing and developed countries with no solutions for the near future. However, pro-poor policies on the well-being of the marginalized populations are needed to decline poverty within the nations of the developing world. One of the ways to do so, is through practice of social work in a professional way with strong financial supports.

Generally speaking, developing countries face challenges in their attempts to implement pro-poor policies as they are subject to complex



economic reforms in Africa, Asia and Latin America [23]. From the time immemorial, social work has been concerned with improvement of the well-being of the poor [24]. Rapid population growth, poverty and hunger, poor health and lack of access to resources and services including the means of knowledge and technology, all increase social vulnerability. Other factors such as lack of access to information and knowledge, and shortage of public awareness leads to poverty. Social work has a responsibility to uprise the principle of social justice by challenging discrimination on all levels, including discrimination based on one's social and economic status. Social work as a helping profession has not well developed in the developing world as it has been in the developed world with positive results.

CONCLUSION

Sociology highly feeds social work. Sociologists investigate social problems and abnormalities within individuals and groups in the society. They transfer such issues to social workers for remedy and recovery. Due to fast social change, social classes, cultural and racial groups facing problems in different dimensions need to solve their problems through social work industry. So, social work profession needs to enhance at the same rate that social change increases. Overall, relations could be normalized through the help of social work. Family as the epicenter of violence is highly dependent on social work for counseling and problem-solving. If social work is not applied, violence in family will raise and lead to further violence, more divorces, more deviations etc. In industrial countries, where there is more family violence, there are more social workers. But, in developing countries where family violence usually stems from poverty, it often continues inside the family, dumps indoors, and most often leads to divorce. Many jails are currently filled with grown-ups who were victims of family violence before; those who were not well socialized in their childhood and early adolescence. Social work is of great help to the youth in finding job and income. Similarly, social work tries to lower or eliminate poverty within families in developing countries, but the quality and quantity of social workers is not as satisfactory. However, in principle, social work intends to uprise social justice by challenging discrimination on all levels. Social work tries to lower social vulnerability in various dimensions, but it cannot do so in developing countries because of low-budget and lack of investment.

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