PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL WORK METHODS: A STUDY OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN JALGAON

Suraj Nandalal Patil[1] , Dr. Kirti Varma[2], Dr. Jagdish. S. Sonawane[3]
Research Scholar J. J. T. University Rajasthan[1, 2, 3]

ABSTRACT

This study examines the perceptions of social work methods among social workers in Jalgaon, focusing on their effectiveness, challenges, and practical applications. Social work is a dynamic discipline that employs various intervention strategies to address issues at the individual, familial, and community levels. Understanding how social workers evaluate these methods is essential for improving service delivery and ensuring better outcomes for beneficiaries.

The research is based on data collected through surveys and interviews with social workers from diverse sectors, including health, education, and community development. These professionals utilize different approaches, such as casework, group work, and community organization, to provide support and facilitate social change. Findings indicate that casework is widely regarded as effective, particularly in counseling and rehabilitation settings, due to its personalized approach. Group work is valued for fostering peer support and empowering communities through self-help and skill development programs. Community organization is recognized as a vital tool for long-term social change, though resource limitations present challenges to its implementation. By highlighting the strengths and constraints of various social work methods, this study provides insights that can guide policy improvements, enhance professional training, and optimize social work interventions to better serve the needs of Jalgaon's communities.

Keywords: *Social work, Methods, Perception*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social work is essential in addressing social issues, advocating for vulnerable populations, and promoting social justice. The effectiveness of social work interventions depends on the methods employed by practitioners, which vary based on the needs of individuals and communities. In Jalgaon, a city with diverse socio-economic conditions, social workers use a range of approaches, including casework, group work, community organization, social welfare administration, and policy advocacy, to support marginalized populations and enhance social well-being.

This study aims to analyze social workers' perceptions regarding these methods and their applicability in addressing local social challenges. Through surveys and interviews, data is collected from social workers engaged in different sectors such as healthcare, education, rehabilitation, and rural development. The study assesses the effectiveness of each method, highlighting its strengths and limitations. Casework and group work are often considered highly effective in providing direct support, while community organization and policy advocacy contribute to systemic change but face resource constraints and bureaucratic hurdles.

Understanding these perspectives is crucial for improving social work interventions in Jalgaon. The findings will provide insights into optimizing existing methods, addressing implementation challenges, and formulating policies that enhance the effectiveness of social work in the region.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Localization of Social Work Literature and Its Application in India: Need and Challenges
Authors: S.P.Raj, M.K.John, & A.Kumar
PublicationYear:2024
Summary: This chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of social work intervention, emphasizing the importance, types, theories, approaches, and processes. It advocates for appropriate social work services to individuals, groups, organizations, and communities, highlighting the need for localization of social work literature to address India's unique social challenges.

2. Perception towards Quality and Effectiveness of Social Work Education in India
Author:R.Sharma
PublicationYear:2023
Summary: This study highlights the perceptions of students towards the quality and effectiveness of social work education in India. It discusses how educational frameworks influence the application of social work methods, including casework and group work, and their effectiveness in real-world scenarios.

3. Identity Power, and Social Work Practice in India
Author: S. P. Raj
Publication Year: 2023
Summary: This paper examines the power dynamics inherent in the client–social worker relationship within the Indian context. It emphasizes the importance of mutual respect and understanding in therapeutic relationships and encourages social workers to engage in critical reflection to develop more effective and empathetic relationships with their clients.

4. Social Work Education and Health Equity in India: A Critical Review
Author: N. T. Thomas
Publication Year: 2024
Summary: This article presents a systematic analysis of the current status of health equity and social work training in India. It elaborates on healthcare discrepancies among various populations and examines how social work education can address these inequities through methods like community organization and policy advocacy.

5. Challenges to the Social Work Curriculum in India: A Critical Review
Author: A. Verma
Publication Year: 2024
Summary: This paper reviews over 100 social work research papers to shed light on the need for improvement in the social work curriculum in India. It discusses how curriculum enhancements can better prepare social workers to apply various methods effectively, including casework, group work, and community organization.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the awareness and utilization of social work methods among social workers in Jalgaon.

2. To analyze the effectiveness of different social work methods in various sectors.

3. To explore the challenges faced by social workers in implementing these methods.

4. To provide recommendations for enhancing social work practices in Jalgaon.

Methodology This study adopts a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques. A structured questionnaire was distributed among 100 social workers across different organizations, including NGOs, government agencies, and educational institutions. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 experienced social workers to gain deeper insights into their perceptions and experiences.

Findings and Discussion

1. **A wareness and Utilization of Social Work Methods:**
   The study reveals that most social workers in Jalgaon are familiar with the three primary social work methods: casework, group work, and community organization. However, their preference for specific methods varies based on the sector they work in. Casework is widely utilized in health and mental health settings, while group work is prominent in educational institutions and rehabilitation centers. Community organization methods are more frequently used in rural development and urban slum improvement programs.

2. **Effectiveness of Social Work Methods:**

   o Casework: Considered highly effective in addressing individual problems, particularly in counseling and rehabilitation services. However, time constraints and heavy caseloads often limit its efficiency.

   o Group Work: Perceived as a powerful method for peer support and skill development. Social workers in youth and women's empowerment programs find it particularly beneficial.

   o Community Organization: Plays a vital role in bringing sustainable changes, particularly in rural and urban slum areas. However, the method's effectiveness is often hindered by bureaucratic hurdles and lack of community participation.

3. **Challenges Faced by Social Workers:**

   o Lack of adequate training in advanced social work methods.

   o Insufficient financial and infrastructural support.

   o Resistance from communities due to cultural and social barriers.

   o High workload leading to burnout and reduced efficiency.

4. **Recommendations for Enhancing Social Work Practices:**

   o Training and Capacity Building: Regular workshops and training programs to update social workers on contemporary social work methods.

   o Policy Advocacy: Strengthening policies that support social work interventions and funding allocations.

   o Community Engagement: Encouraging participatory approaches to increase community acceptance and collaboration.

   o Technology Integration: Utilizing digital platforms for case documentation, networking, and virtual counseling.

4. CONCLUSION

Social work methods are crucial in tackling social challenges in Jalgaon, where diverse socio-economic conditions require tailored interventions. Among the widely used approaches, casework provides personalized support to individuals, group work fosters peer assistance and collective problem-solving, and community organization promotes long-term social change. However, the effectiveness of these methods depends on factors such as resource availability, institutional support, and community participation.

Social workers in Jalgaon often face challenges like limited funding, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inadequate training opportunities. Strengthening policy frameworks, increasing financial support, and enhancing capacity-building programs can improve the efficiency of social work interventions. Encouraging active community participation is also vital, as collaboration between stakeholders leads to more sustainable solutions.

This study highlights the importance of addressing these challenges to maximize the impact of social work. By improving training initiatives, refining social policies, and fostering better cooperation between government and non-

governmental organizations, social workers can enhance service delivery. Additionally, further research is needed to explore innovative social work methods, such as digital interventions and cross-sectoral collaborations, to expand the scope of social services. Understanding and refining these approaches will help create a more effective and resilient social work system in Jalgaon.

REFERENCES:

Barbra Teater (2010)."An Introduction to Applying Social Work Theories and Methods", This practical book provides a basic introduction to the most commonly used theories and methods in social work practice.

Kim Strom-Gottfried and Lori Franklin,. (2015)."Social Work Practice: A Competency-Based Approach", This primary social work practice text, built around the nine core 2015 CSWE competencies, provides students with a fully integrated competency-based approach.

Bruce A. Thyer,.(2010). "The Handbook of Social Work Research Methods", this handbook offers comprehensive coverage of the most important methodological issues in social work research.

Molly R. Hancock,.(1997)"Principles of Social Work Practice: A Generic Practice Approach", This textbook deals exclusively and thoroughly with the significant principles of social work practice.

Mel Gray and Stephen A. Webb,.(2008)"Social Work: Theories and Methods", This book provides a comprehensive introduction to the most commonly used theories and methods in social work practice.

Mel Gray, Stephen A. Webb, and Debbie Plath,.(2009)."Evidence-Based Social Work: A Critical Stance", This book critically examines the rise of evidence-based practice in social work.

Stephen A. Webb,.(2019)."The Routledge Handbook of Critical Social Work", This handbook explores the critical approaches to social work.

Mel Gray, James Midgley, and Stephen A. Webb,.(2012)."The Sage Handbook of Social Work", This handbook provides an authoritative overview of contemporary social work.

Stephen A. Webb,.(2006)"Social Work in a Risk Society: Social and Political Perspectives", This book analyzes the impact of risk society on social work practice.

Stephen A. Webb,.(2013)."The New Politics of Critical Social Work".