

# Emerging Role of Social Work in Contemporary Social Environment: Issues and Challenges

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## ARTICLE DETAILS

### Article History

Published Online: 16 Jan 2020

### Keywords

Globalisation, culturalism, Social Environment

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## ABSTRACT

*Although the notion of international social work is not new, it is only in recent times that its central premises have been in focus. Considering diverse ongoing globalisation processes and in regard to the weakening of the national welfare state, social work must tackle the challenge of redefining its role and mission if it is to remain true to its professional commitments. The emergence of new global regions and the globalisation of local social problems make the consolidation of democracy and human rights, the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of solidarity and peace through global cultural integration some of the main concerns of international social work. This paper tried to explore multidimensional aspect of emerging role of social work regarding contemporary social environment and trace the current social -cultural implications, impact of multi-culturalism and applicability of social work pertaining with this ongoing process adhere to changes and upbringing issues and challenges and their concerns with tools of social work and discuss the relevant prominent access through social work.*

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## 1. Introduction

During the last decade of the century, the globalisation wave brought new issue to a nation which was already going through reformative changes in society through social and economic process and action. Concept of free association and concept of global village change the societal consequences that can be seen in society. Cross cultural boundaries are getting permission through globally to materialistic perspective that changed the norms of socio, political, economic consequences. Tools of social work admiral to societal norms to coping management that tend to outcome of many issues and challenges. Globalization has had a profound effect on social work practice, changing service delivery; altering the labour process for professional social workers; creating new social problems for practitioners to address, such as people-trafficking and environmental issues; and producing demands for indigenization, or the development of locality specific forms of theory and practice. This article considers globalization in terms of these issues and the impact of the current scenario of social environment and global concerns on a more closely connected and interdependent world. It also explores the role of the state in these developments and considers the implications of these for social work practice in the 21st century.

## 2. Immerging issues and concerns

At the heart of social work, human rights are a set of interdependent guiding principles having implications for meta-macro (global), macro (whole population), mezzo (at risk), micro (clinical), meta-micro (everyday life), and research interventions to eradicate social malaises and promote well-being. They can be best understood vis-à-vis the UN Human Rights Triptych. This consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, increasingly referred to as customary international law on the centre panel; the guiding principles,

declarations, and conventions following it, on the right panel—like the conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and implementation mechanisms, on the left panel—like the filing of country reports on compliance to conventions, the Universal Periodic Review, thematic and country reports by special rapporteurs, and world conferences. Briefly, this powerful idea, which emerged from the ashes of World War II, emphasizes five crucial notions: human dignity; non-discrimination; civil and political rights; economic, social, and cultural rights; and solidarity rights. Whereas this article emphasizes issues pertaining to the United States, it touches upon other countries as appropriate, calling for a global vision in the hopes that every person, everywhere, will have their human rights realized. Only chosen values endure. The challenge, through open discussion and debate, is the creation of a human rights culture, which is a lived awareness of these principles in one's mind, heart, and body, integrated dragged into our everyday lives. Doing so will require vision, courage, hope, humility, and everlasting love, as the indigenous spiritual leader Crazy Horse reminds us.

## 3. Multiculturalism

This is of the significant issues that pertaining the impact of globalization on contemporary social environment. According to John Long, the most prominent meaning of multiculturalism is economic and political integration coupled with cultural separation. Members of marginalized groups want greater opportunity to participate and enjoy the benefits of economic and political institutions. They argue that they were left out of the economic and political mainstream and want a chance to move into it. However, members of marginalized ethnic groups also want greater opportunity to maintain their unique heritage. (Reisch and Gambrill, 1997. Ours is a cultural -plural nation with diverse ways of living, based on distinct norms and values,

The adoption of the concept of welfare -state and socialist ideology in our constitution places a moral obligation before the policy makers and implementers to teach individual as an equal irrespective of his/her culture , caste ,religion ,sex or creed . In this era of a paradigm shift towards market -oriented approach from state-centred membership.

#### 4. Multiculturalism with emerging new challenges

The execution of social welfare services posses' new challenges not to compromise with the cross-cultural interest and to provide services indiscriminately to people in need without any consideration to factors leading to bias.

#### 5. Globalisation; conciseness and consequences

Globalisation is not a new phenomenon (Dickens,1992), although it is only within the last two decades that most of the theories of globalisation have been formulated (Albrow, 1997; Oxford, 1995; Delanty,2000; Featherstone, 1990; Jameson, 1998; Robertson,1992; Waters, 1995). For several hundred years, several processes of globalisation have been in force simultaneously; that is, the globalisation of economics, politics, knowledge and culture. Some of these globalisation processes have been more obvious, and thus more widely discussed, than others; for instance, the globalisation of economics. Ever since the onset of industrialisation and the consolidation of capitalism, production and trade have increasingly been globalised. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, Marx and Engels referred in their Communist Manifesto to the globalisation of markets and industry which, in their view, erased national boundaries and gave every nation's production and consumption a cosmopolitan gestalt – a process that would eventually lead to the overall interdependence of all nations (Marx & Engels,1999).As a result of recent changes in communication and information technologies, the globalised media play an increasingly dominant role in our intellectual environment, producing a major part of our symbolic stimuli (Barker, 1999; Castells, 1996: 336). The media act, thus, as the immediate intellectual nurturing centre for the vast majority of humankind. One of the main consequences of the globalisation of mass com-medication is that a variety of transnational popular cultures have emerged. The globalised mass-media environment contributes to the global diffusion of diverse local symbols and ideals creating, not one, but several homogeneous representations and symbol worlds. In other words, the globalisation of the media has led to the creation of a number of local global cultures. Conveying impulses from different parts of the world, the globalisation of media can create the possibility of counteracting eurocentrism or other kinds of ethnocentrism. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the global media's diffusion of local popular cultures does not exclude the tendency among huge global media concerns to monopolise reality. As a result of the globalisation of cultures, aesthetic preferences and values tend to become more and more similar and homogeneous around the globe (Featherstone, 1991; Jameson, 1991; Shields, 1992). Ritzer (1993) discusses the process of the 'McDonald-inaction' of society. In the same way it might be possible to refer to the processes of Ikea-inaction, CNN-inaction, Nike-inaction and Survivor-inaction. The same brand of clothing, the same home furniture, the same culinary taste, the same movies and shows, and the same news, debates and images of reality are found all

across the globe. Internet sites are becoming increasingly like one another; in a short space of time we are now being nourished and nurtured by the same sources of mediating symbols. Another relevant global change with respect to international social work is the emergence of 'mega-cities 'and their corresponding lifestyle. According to Castells (1996: 378–386) mega cities have emerged where impulses from the whole world interact with one another. These cities are centres with a great attraction power, exercising great influence over their surroundings. They establish connections between continents and across large territories. They are globally united with their sister cities and locally severed from their regional and national contexts (Castells, 1996; Sassen,1992). A characteristic of mega-cities is that they arise in different regions of the world and spread global life ideals and ways of thinking to their surroundings. That people actually live in traditional villages and are preoccupied with their everyday concerns is of less interest; what matters here is that their ideals, hopes and dreams are affected by and directed towards the lifestyle of the mega-cities. That is why a Chinese villager would rather wear a Polo Ralph Lauren garment – even though it is a fake – than a local brand of clothing. It must be emphasised, however, that the.

py and a socialist vision of ubiquitous State with overall responsibility for the needs of individuals. And suddenly, the whole scenario has changed, making urgent a redefinition of purpose and action methodologies in contexts whose features threaten, increasingly, to become the denial of the very essence of social work.

#### 6. Reflection vs. Practice

In their daily practice, social workers should question themselves about the objectives of that practice and what they want to achieve with your daily work. These issues are essential not only for the professionals themselves, but also, and primarily, for the profession itself, set in a society, to which it has the responsibility of providing a service, according to the expectations shared by that same society. Extrapolation of the issues that each individual professional arise, will result in a questioning of the purpose of social work and its contribution to the pursuit of broader objectives of society in which it operates. And the truth is that this kind of questioning does not always result evident when it comes to ethical reflection, as this tends to be more oriented to the questioning of the profession specific standards (normative dimension), or the questioning of professionals answers facing specific situations (the pragmatic dimension), and much less to the questioning of the fundamental aims that sustain the profession (teleological dimension). Moreover, it is the everyday professional practice, regardless of the conditions under which arises, that does not always facilitate the reflection on the ethics of the profession. This happens, first, because social workers work in the framework of institutions that have, themselves, codes and regulations, highly formalized, on the conduct and procedures, as necessary for the pursuit of its institutional objectives and these regulations, turn to be, eventually, even more important, in shaping the practices of social workers, than it is the ethical code of the profession. Indeed, by its close ties to the welfare state and its institutions, social work was never totally independent of these institutions, in what concerns shaping its practices and its objectives.

## 7. Modernity and New Social Movements

*To give salience to social movements in connection with social change and modernity is to give salience to the notion of process.*

The term "movement" is so close conceptually to the notion of change that the following theoretical possibilities are suggested: either social movements constitute modernity, or they at least make a very large contribution to its appearance. Everman suggests the first possibility when he states, "Modernity connotes movement." Elsewhere Touraine has expressed a similar view: modern society is the first type of society to reproduce itself, and new social movements are the decisive force in this process. To speak of "new" social movements is to imply a category of "old" social movements. Those who write in this tradition appear to conceive of old movements as those that were distinctively associated with the class systems of industrial capitalism, for example, liberalism and the workers' movements. New movements are those that are less class-based, including the women's movement, various ethnic movements, the ecology movement, the peace movement, and the anti-state movement. Conceptually, the distinction creates a few problems. Some of the "new" movements, for example, the women's movement and the peace movement, have very long histories. Also, it is possible to identify various kinds of movements, such as popular uprisings in Rome and religious movements in medieval times and the Reformation, that are older than those identified as "old." This suggests that the distinction between old and new as currently discussed is limited mainly to the distinction between classical industrial capitalism and contemporary industrial (or post-industrial) society. Be that as it may, the old social movements are commonly seen as representing the struggle for power and control over the organization of living conditions; thus they are perceived as being essentially economic in character.

These movements were commonly regarded as threats to the capitalist system. Ten Bruck (1981) has argued, for example, that much of Durkheim's sociology reflects an anxiety about the consequences of these kinds of movements and is an effort to find various kinds of social arrangements that could incorporate them into a newly formed society. Although offshoots of these old movements can still be found in various advanced countries, writers making use of the new-social-movement framework consider the old type of social movement to be no longer threatening. Accordingly, as Berger noted in discussion at the conference, "the proletariat has lost its role as privileged actor and subject of historical change." Much of this loss of force (and threat) has been attributed to long periods of increased prosperity, the nullification of many of the impulses of the workers' movement by the policies of the welfare state, and the incorporation of these movements into political parties and the state.

For Touraine modernity means the development of a system of production and distribution of cultural goods that threatens the current cultural self-definition of many actors. These actors anticipate personal and social progress through an increased sense of their own subjectivity, but this subjectivity is threatened because culture is currently being

industrially produced and distributed. Subjectivity manifests itself in two ways: as a force of opposition to domination and in the recognition of other individuals as unique people with whom personal relationships can be formed. Thus, the new social movements are fighting for "cultural creativity and autonomy and the capacity to act on all aspects of human experience.

Basic principles of social work

### A. Human rights and human dignity.

1. Respecting the right to self-determination.
2. Promoting right to participation.
3. Teaching each individual as a whole.
4. Identification and development of potential.

### B. Social justice

- Recognizing diversity.
- Equal distribution of resources.
- Challenging unjust policies, practices, and other evils in society.
- Standing against negative discrimination.

Identifying ethical dilemmas in social work practice and making recommendation to address the same.

## 8. Social Work and Primacy of Values

What is urgently required is the precise analysis of the circumstances which have a great effect on the social work. In this system need is considered as a normal part of social life and that welfare provision is a normal and primary function of the modern industrial society. Welfare services are provided for the population as a whole such as public services like, roads, schools, public health and so on. In this system social welfare is not just for the poor and needy, but it is for all the citizens. In a society where a great number of social goods are based on universality, one can talk about institutional welfare service. Individuals in such a society will experience that they have access to large number of social rights which are formulated as legal rights. This is what we have to follow and we have to think over. We are there only for the good that has to be there. In a broader sense, in an institutional welfare involves stronger commitments on behalf of the state.

However, these rights of the citizens are not legally claimable rather they are moral rights based on social contract. This concept also is associated with the redistributive function of welfare, in the sense that public welfare provision aims to redistribute the resources to the disadvantaged sections of the society. Social welfare service in the ancient time in Sweden is regarded as the prototype of institutional social welfare. It has developed the moral right of employment and housing condition to the legal rights like, right to work and right to have a decent housing standard. This form of social welfare is followed in all countries. We have to make the commitment in that perspective only

## 9. Conclusion

Social work as profession of the most recent times has not developed in isolation. It has developed its body of knowledge by pulling various ideas from different relevant disciplines. 'The basic concepts of social work' in the sense we use in this unit,

deals with the fundamental knowledge about some of the important concepts which are incorporated/included in the study and practice of social work profession. The meaning of social work is so complex and dynamic that it is almost impossible to give a universally accepted meaning. It has been graded by different individuals in various ways on the basis of understanding of different individuals in the society. Social work plays a vital role in contemporary social environment through its philosophy and approaches with psycho social analysis at individual level and resource mobilization and resource

utilization at community level by these attributes it adheres to society pivot a better circumstance.

We have to go deep inside the sea of social work and one thing that we don't have to forget is the sense of dedication that one has to show in field of social work. The dedication for working towards the human well-being should never be lost in the mid-way. We don't have to get disturbed with any obstruction be it any sort of western thinking or any other. We have the calibre and we will work for it.

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