VALUES AND ETHICS OF SOCIAL WORK

Abstract

Values and Ethics are inseparable. This chapter tries to explain the ethics in social work. It tries to mention that as PR actioners we need to be cautious about our values. How it is rendered to the clients. The integrity in how we are competent to render service is aligned with the social worker in a Global scenario. Effective social work is practised through justice, professionalism and integrity. As social work deals in problem-solving strategies, it is necessary that justice is done in a full manner. The skills and competency levels of the workers are given full value. Utmost care for ethical standards and values is important.

Keywords: Confidentiality, Ethics, Values, Self determination and Professionalism

Author

Dr Christina. R
Associate Professor
Department of P G Studies in Social Works
St. Claret College,
Bangalore.
christina@claretcollege.edu.in

I. INTRODUCTION

Values and principles play an important part in social work. The intention of social work is to be cautious in rendering service to the needy. Ethical issues in being a social worker are to be justifiable as that involves being transparent in their approach towards society. This chapter mainly talks about the truthfulness and integrity of how social workers approach society. Values are governing principles and they help us in deciding what is to be done. Being service minded is an approach to helping the needy and facilitating them on giving awareness about the schemes is an added value mentioned in this chapter.

1. **Social values:** Professional Values refer to the origin of the field. The value of Social Work should rise up to self-interest. The primary goal to help others remain a predominant one and others remain secondary. The values of social work are related to an empowerment perspective, where all who are troubled work together for a change. Human relationship is a major factor and it is the most preferred need for a smooth trailing of helping individuals. An individual desire for a change would value human relations. Today's need for enduring a devised change is that most individuals must repair their relationships. This relationship would promote, restore and enhance the relations. need to mend the relationships. Families project the society and society is reflected as a community.

2. **Ethics:** The NASW Code of ethics (2008) may address allegations of unethical behaviour of members. Familiarity with the code becomes an obligation with ethical decision-making.

3. **Core areas in social work ethics and the right to self-determination :** Choosing alternatives or the right decision in the code of ethics helps social workers should take reasonable steps to resolve issues. They should take minimum steps to reduce conflicts. The tools of Social Work help more in seeking consequences. This would stop future complications. NASW Code of ethics helps in being truthful while providing diagnosis and treatment. The extent should be in the rehabilitative process as well. The alternative services provided in helping clients should be free from conflicts and be in process of helping them to have a new lease of life.

   - **Confidentiality:** Discharging a duty in seeking confidentiality remains a transformation for social workers. Social Workers should follow the principles of social work and maintain Confidentiality. The intention is to say that social workers maintain the confidentiality of the service seekers as this would make the client build in a belief system of the client. The practice of social work consists of certain values such as the dignity of every person. Commitment to the goal of humanity both emotional and materialistic well-being. The trust would grow in a client when he understands that his information's intact and not shared with anyone.

   - **Supervision in social work:** Social Work provides supervision as that clarifies what limitations would arise and supervision helps in smooth treatment procedures.
     For an organisation, supervision meditates the description of help/services provided in a total situation.

   - **Professionalism:** The code clearly warns social workers not to involve in fraudulent acts or malpractice. It does not allow for any inappropriateness in approach.

Maintaining professionalism becomes very clear in truthfully expressing accurate language, clear communication, appropriate procedures, regulations and Ethical Practice.

- **Communication in social work:** Communication in social work is totality because social workers need to communicate to the clients about what the treatment is to be, who is to be involved and the treatment to be offered. It also would state how to communicate so that there are no bias remains. The social worker becomes very diplomatic so as not to offend the client or his attendees. Communication is a vector for treating multiple systems. It is to articulate a smooth functioning and also may remain a participatory factor for families, and others involved. Communication also paves way for confidentiality. This is a major need for social Work as a social worker needs to maintain confidentiality. Confidentiality in Ethics remains an important code, and social workers adhere to this code of conduct.

- **Decision Making in social work:** Social Workers must be Ethical in taking a decision. Social Work practice involves many ethical models. Monitor, evaluate and document are important factors in decision making. Legal Process, advocacy facilitates the social worker in his decisions making process. The principle of autonomy, the freedom to decide, what to serve the client, and advocacy. Fidelity remains an important factor in decision-making.

- **Documentation in social work:** When social workers talk about supervision and treatment procedures it needs to be documented. As documentation helps in future reference, research is more sought after if it is documented. The final decision needs a correct process then documentation is very important. Provisional competence helps social workers in proving themselves in all areas, and applying knowledge, skills and values.

4. **Values in Social Work**

   - Service
   - Social Justice
   - Dignity and worth of a person.

5. **Service in Social Work:** Service is a predominant factor because service in an age-old need to help clients to live a decent life. The whole motive of social work moves towards service. All values are directed towards service.

   - **Social work revolves itself around the following aspects**

     ➢ Service
     ➢ Social justice
     ➢ Dignity and worth of the person
     ➢ Importance of human relationships
     ➢ Integrity
     ➢ Competence

We can say that these are the core values of social work. These principles set forth ideals to all social work aspirants must follow: By getting acknowledged the social work values and practical ethics students can learn how to end discrimination and poverty. Social work focuses on the welfare of the people. These values would change the needs of all people. Social work is profoundly rooted in the hearts of the people. Values facilitate the decisions in recognising what is worthy and valuable.

- **Standards for Social Work Practice**
  - ➢ **Ethics and values:** Social workers providing services or through electronic media should ensure professional competence and uphold the values of the profession. As we live in a digitalized world social workers should ensure that technology conforms to all practices and regulatory standards.

- **Core values**
  - ➢ **Social justice:** Social workers primarily focus on issues of poverty, unemployment discrimination and another form of social injustice. Social workers ensure equal opportunity for all, equality, meaning full participation in decision-making for all. Justice should be fair to all. As in front of the law, all are equal. Social workers take utmost interest in helping clients to use the service which is just and fair. Social workers must also be able to deliver the values in a justifiable manner and be honest and clear of the services they wish to offer to the clients.
  - ➢ **Service:** Service to mankind. It is not on a message note but serves the needy through the needs available. The service provided would improve the quality of life by creating awareness and sustaining the community in employment, housing, medical, and educational facilities. Elaborately the service provided in the medical worth mentoring. All people would be having more knowledge about illness, and are well aware of prevention, curative and promotive aspects. The social worker adopts the skills of facilitating the available treatment and advocacy if is involved.
  - ➢ **The dignity of the worth of a person:** Dignity is valued as an important integration of human life. A person can let go of all not his dignity. The social worker should treat all humans with dignity and this enhances their self-worthiness. Social workers promote social dignity and this would help the clients in self-determination. Client's conflict will be resolved by their self and society's demands.
  - ➢ **Importance of human relations:** Social workers should have the ability and intention of valuing and respecting human relations. As social workers work in society building relationships remains an important feature. This helps the social worker in promoting the better capacity of an individual.

- **Integrity:** Social workers adhere to the ethical principle of integrity by maintaining a high code of behavioural honesty and being respectful. A social worker should turn towards having a sense of high tolerance, justifiable in his approach and fair towards his attitude. Social workers should stick on to their personal code of conduct and stick on to doing what is right and wrong.

- **Competence:** Competency is where social workers regularly keep up with research and participate in continuing education relevant to social work. As social workers deal

with diverse clients, with diverse backgrounds they recognise this diversity as a means of helping people to acknowledge these differences and find solutions to their problems. Social workers engage people and structures to address life challenges and enhance the well-being of individuals. Social work as a profession promotes the social well-being of an individual. Social work intervenes at certain focal points like social systems, empowers the people, and enhances. Wellbeing and thus people interact with their environment.

6. **Access to Technology;** Enduring competent practice to ensure that the client has access to technology. Electronic communication can provide access to information, provide advocacy, and should be aware of their services. Therapy and services may differ advent but digitalization has reached all boundaries and social workers to make sure that the service provided is reaching all without any barriers and are applicable to all vulnerable populations.

    - **Technological competencies :** Social workers have ample support to utilise technical and ensure client access to technology. When people face difficulties of ten to additional support needs social workers should advocate for both themselves and for the clients to resolve access problems. Client perspectives of therapy and service delivery through the internet may differ. But social workers should know the strength and weaknesses of modalities and take due consideration the client's diverse geographical cultural contexts and provide service modalities to them.

    - **Risk management:** Social workers providing services through electronic means should ensure that all services are legally and meticulously provided and the client's needs and wants are safeguarded against all litigations. It is necessary to ensure equitable fee procedures, laws, protection, and security procedures are offered to the client for the betterment of the client's health.

    - **Role of ethical good governance:** The organisation establishes policies, which are to be implemented, and develops systems, which ensure prosperity and stability.

7. **Values and Religion:** God is above all. All of us turn to God when the need arises above everything.

    Social workers are motivated by religious faith, likewise the needy are driven to the faith above all. Stronger religious conviction lessens the anxiety about one's healing and need. Religious leaders do not hesitate to include people who come to them searching for relief. This leaves belief, a belief in freedom and confidentiality. It gives a super satisfaction as they have been relieved from getting to suffer.

    - **Policy making:** Great thinkers, philosophers, and social workers have contributed to policy-making that our felt need becomes our basic needs. Ultimately, they become the real need. A person has to set himself actualized life. It is a social entitlement he gets and feels elected to reach up to this level. People's needs are measured against their assets. A felt need can be deflated by the rejection of services. Most of the time they expressed needs. In a workplace, an individual turn to these needs and gets wrongly understood for political activity against the government. Most of the time

needs are the same. In developed countries, families face the same variety of problems as in other countries.

- **Social work for poverty reduction:** The larger responsibility of the government towards its peoples are to reduce poverty. To achieve this target the government sets many targets. Launching of various schemes by the government to set the people free from hunger and thirst. The calorific requirement differs from country to country. It has a direct relationship to the rising level of climatic change. Climate change has a very direct effect and is seen as deciding factor for the poverty standards set by a state. poverty remains as an individual of multiple indices like for example not only hunger but education, medical and service, water, and sanitation, are met. A loss in measure ability would become an incident. Natural disasters and manmade disasters both remain contributory factors in making life miserable for becoming a victim. Refugees, Migrants, and Immigrants all are subjected to Poverty. Indigenous people suffer as they suffer from unemployment. This becomes a contributory factor to Poverty. The role of the Government and that of the collaborating organisations can lead a way to the sustainability of the Vulnerable groups. Community practice combines work with Individuals and Families with Community work, focusing on enhancing resources and capacities. So that this becomes a mutually reinforcing resource. It has been reported that 10% of our population suffers from Poverty. At least a certain percentage of people can be less than 375 per month.

  Today's economic and social rights speak to the claim of the oppressed and the powerless and the chances of their fulfilment are slim. The redistribution of resources or to building the economic base that favours economic justice.

  The four types of poverty:
  ➢ Situational Poverty
  ➢ Generational Poverty
  ➢ Absolute Poverty
  ➢ Relative Poverty

  The common root cause of poverty can be social injustice, and lack of government support. The mechanism to reduce these would be through the proper Administration of the Government Schemes and proper schemes to reach people at the right time and with the right spirit.

- **Environment and social work:** Environment Sustainability is very important in having a balance on poverty-free age. The effects of poverty are reflected in almost all people, especially in the vulnerable and children at risk. Malnutrition which causes deficiency is a root cause of male health. The service of health can be a factor in the upliftment of human needs. The government intervention to provide health for all is a mandatory programme to be adopted. Services are started in all health centres.

- **Human rights and social work:** A human living in a dignified way is a satisfactory factor. But today sustainability for a decent life is an expectation. It adopts a broad view of social development. Human rights have become one of the important frames works of human relations. Now the concept of human rights is becoming highly

politicised. Considerable advantages in using human rights for social development. Human rights have become an increasingly effective way to pressure Government. Human rights are inseparable from social work theory, Values and ethics and practice. Advocacy has become an integral part of social work. Human rights and social work is a system. The focus of human needs shapes its conviction as it becomes an impulsive need for social justice.

- **Equality and Non-Discrimination:** The fundamental principle of equality is a manifold aspect of interpersonal relations. It is the cornerstone of justice, social, cultural and spiritual needs and on individual contribution to the welfare of others. Discrimination can be said to be the denial of the fundamental rights of the individual. The social workers have to be self-aware of their own beliefs, attitude and social action.

8. **Justice:** Various aspects have to be considered for justice. The importance of a proper judiciary is an inviting factor. Social Workers have to empower the people to a fair social justice system as that is an important social responsibility.

- **Social responsibility:** Social responsibility is the notion of trusteeship. It is the utilisation of resources and commitment to the poor and the needy.

- **Realigning programme:** Each developing country has a unique mix of opportunities for the development of the health system, education, housing and community facilities. The mother and child programme along with the scheme for lactating mothers is an investment by the government. Strengthening the health work programme would be a service to enhance delivery. The main area to focus on these services would be for better family conditions, and spacing of children caring for the elderly and vulnerable people to encompass a better alignment of service delivery.

- **Ethics in a different practice:** The practice of social work should be given weightage as one is applying the knowledge and skills of social work in a practical setting. The social worker makes it a point to be advent when it comes to delivering the service in the medical setting. As it is to deal with the human mind it is necessary that ethics and values are more important given more intensified care.
- **Industrial Social Work:** Industrial Social Work deals with diverse minds and also with a different calibre of people. As companies outsource their employees there remains a major need for ethics and values to deal with also it is necessary that when an employee needs guidance in his approach the contribution of the social worker is very much valued.

- **Community Development:** The eradication of poverty and reduction in poverty are given more importance in practising social work in a community setting. The reduction in poverty would lay much emphasis on education, employment and health awareness. Climatic change has also affected our farmers in a large way. The social worker has to give much awareness and also impart the need for practising social work in a realistic manner.

II. CONCLUSION

The values of social work should be converted to ethical practice. The ethical values of the social worker should go beyond the social worker's capacity in dealing with the client's problems. The effective supervision of the social worker is to organise the practice of social work and alienate the practice of social work in a risk-free manner. Ethical standards also guide the practice of the social worker in order to provide service for the needy and vulnerable in a justifiable manner.

REFERENCES

[1] Asha Ram: Children in Different situation in India; A review Bombay, Tata Institute of Social Sciences1986.
[2] Desai, M Curriculum development on the history of Ideologies for social change and Social Work Mumbai 2000
[3] Desai, V, Rural Development (Vol 1) Mumbai; Himalaya Publishing House 1988
[4] Lobo G.V Human Rights in Indian Studies, Commission for Justice, New Delhi 1994.
[5] Madison, B. Q; The meaning of social policy; London room Helm 1980
[6] Patel A.K, and Dubey M.V., Social Work Practice, Crescent Publishing Corporation New Delhi 2010
[7] Reamer, F.G. Ethical Standard in Social Work; A critical review of the NASW Code of Ethics, Washington, DC; NASW Press 1998.
[8] Vasudeva, P and Justino, P; Trade and Poverty; Poverty Research unit notes no 5 Sussex, 2001.