

Development of Social Work Profession in Pakistan

The concept of social welfare is not new in our country. Our philosophy of life, religious values and traditions always inspired the spirit of helping the distressed. Charity, almsgiving and other philanthropic activities inspired by religious values and humanitarian outlook are still there to help the needy and the distressed people in our country. But with the expansion of urbanization and development of mills and factories, after independence, Pakistan experienced so many socio-economic problems that the charitable and philanthropic activities failed to solve the ever-increasing problems adequately. The problems became further aggravated by the influx of refugees from India. This invited the serious attention of the Govt. for introducing systematic social services under public support and facilitating the smooth running of the available voluntary social services.

Social Work Education in Pakistan

Though some private organizations were working for the education of poor children and women i-e APWA (All Pakistan Women Association) formed by Raana Liaquat Ali Khan but there was need of professionalism in the field of welfare.

In the year, 1951, the government of Pakistan approached the United Nations for suggestions and cooperation for the solution of her ever increasing social problems. The development of social work as a profession in Pakistan is the result of the cooperation between the Govt. of Pakistan and the UN experts.

In 1952, a group of United Nations experts was sent to Pakistan to survey the needs, problems and social structure of Pakistan and assess the feasibility of implementation of social welfare programmes. After a comprehensive study, the experts put priority on training of social work. The beginning was made with the introduction of a short term training course in Karachi. Mostly, the people already working in welfare institutions

were trained through that course. In 1953 a similar three months training course was started at Dacca and Lahore.

After that, with the financial help of federal and provincial govts, University of the Punjab LHR started two year diploma course in social work soon after that, the same university started classes of M.A Social Work.

In 1961, Karachi University also opened the postgraduate program in social work and Sindh University in 1966. In 1974 and 1978, Bloachistan University and Peshawar University respectively opened the Departments of Social Work. At BA level, in more than 100 Colleges, Social Work is being taught.

In 2002, University of Sargodha and in 2004, University of Bahawalpur started master programs in Social Work. Social work education is considered very essential to produce much more professionals who can study, observe and understand the social problems and social stricture of the Pakistan society in well way and can play best role in policy making, implementation of programs and evaluation.

