



Psychology and Social Work

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Abstract:

Technology has made communication a very easy today. The development has picked up a drastic pace due to industrialisation. We are experiencing rapid changes in the society today. Technological advancement have lead to a cut throat competition. Internet and various social media platforms brought us closer today but ironically people are lonelier than ever. This sense of loneliness on one hand and the cut throat competition on other hand is driving a substantial number of individuals in our society to problems like depression and aggression. The magnitude of this situation can be understood by the alarming increase in the rate of juvenile delinquency divorce rates addictions frustration in the people. The social workers are a very essential factor in this scenario. Their role of supporting the lives of such people can get an immense boost, if they are equipped with the knowledge of human behaviour and emotional intelligence. Both these factors complement the work carried out by these social workers. This paper gives you awareness of psychology an important ingredient of social work. This paper gives you knowledge about important concepts in psychology and importance and necessity of emotional intelligence competency in social work place.

Key Words: Psychology, Social Work, Human Behaviour, Emotional Intelligence.

Introduction:

Psychology and social work are two difference disciplines but they are closely related to each other. Psychology provides many fundamental concepts and theories for developing tools and techniques for social work. The concept of emotional intelligence plays a very vital role in the

life of human beings. Both these disciplines deal with components of human personality, human nature, human needs, abilities and behaviour.

Methodologies of helping people in both disciplines involve similar tools and techniques to a considerable degree. So it is but natural to know about the relationship of these two professions oriented disciplines.

Objectives:

The objective of this paper is to provide understanding and relevance of psychology to social practise. This paper gives knowledge of emotional intelligence and at the same time awareness of usefulness of emotional intelligence in social work practise. After reading this paper we will be able to

- a) Understand the nature of psychology.
- b) Understand psychology: an important ingredient of social work.
- c) Understand nature of emotional intelligence.
- d) Usefulness of concept of emotional intelligence in social work.

The term psychology derived from Greek word “Psyche” and “Logos”. Psyche means soul or mind, Logos means science. So psychology is the study of soul or mind. With the passage of time the nature of psychology has undergone many changes. Psychology is now considered as science of behaviour. Woodworth defined psychology is the science of the activities of the individual in relation to the environment.

Watson has defined psychology as the positive science of behaviour. Morgon and king defined psychology as psychology is the science of human and animal behaviour, it includes the application of this science to human problems. Above definitions reveal that psychology is a positive science that deals with human beings and other animals. As the psychology is related with human behaviour there are so many branches of psychology which are concern to have better welfare and understanding of human beings like biopsychology, experimental psychology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, health psychology, clinical psychology, counselling psychology, educational psychology, social psychology, industrial organisational psychology, consumer psychology, environmental psychology, clinical neuro psychology.

Social work and human behaviour:

An understanding of human behaviour is essential for the profession of social work. A social worker while working at social work place has to deal with behavioural, psychosomatic socio economic problems faced by people having different socio economic status. People positive behaviour like cooperation, participation, assistance, coordination, interest and willingness to resolve problems help social worker to make a proper diagnosis of the problem and plan of action for treatment. Negative behaviour like unwillingness, non-cooperation, escapism, isolation, hiding facts create trouble.

During case work a social worker has to handle his client along with the family, parents, siblings, other family members, neighbours, friends, schoolmates, colleagues, though in case work the focus is on the individual but the actions of others play a significant role. Need for love and affection for a client can only be fulfilled if family members parents, friends, colleagues are affectionate to him or her. A group worker may help a group in its formation and harmonious functioning if its members act in cooperative manner. In community or in organisation the behaviour of community people, community leaders, existing organisational personnel and others who influence the community play an important role in helping the organisation.

Psychology deals with the human behaviour it includes cognition, attention, perception, thinking, learning memory. Psychology helps social workers to understand social process. Psychology studies the interaction pattern of heredity and environment. Psychology gives awareness to accept the individual differences in physical and mental traits abilities. Actually when social workers are dealing with people having different problems their focus is of modification of behaviour. Here, social worker seeks help from psychology. In resolving any kind of problem in society like disturbed family environment, divorced people, orphan, juvenile delinquencies, teenage problems and old age problems psychology helps social worker.

Social psychology studies group morale behaviour traits, behaviour of crowd, audience, leadership qualities; which are useful in group work while working in society. Psychology provides help in modification of behaviour, diagnosis and treatment of problems, problems of children related to schooling. For the persons having severe mental illness and those who seeks medical help psychologist help social workers to give understanding diagnosis and modification

of group behaviour. Psychologist helps social worker in counselling and guidance for enhancement in adjustment and fulfilment of needs of individual and society.

Psychology: an important ingredient of social work.

Human being is social animal. Socialisation is one of the basic needs of all human beings. Human beings cannot leave alone. Our society is a mixture of lot of things. Here, we are understanding relevance of psychology to social work practise. Our society includes family, marriage, childhood, adolescence, old age, child abuse child delinquency and other lots of behaviour problems.

The goal of social worker is human welfare. Psychology is the science of studies the behaviour of human being. Psychology is the science that studies conscious and unconscious phenomena as well as feeling, thoughts, attention, perception, thinking memory. Although psychology and social work are different disciplines psychology is important in social work practise. It helps to understood human behaviour. There is a close relationship between psychology and social work. Psychology and social work is close helping professions that study individuals. Their aim is to solve problems. This does not make them same but makes them similar. Psychology and social work is differing because their professional focus is different. Social work provides social services to clients while psychologist emphasise more on cognitive process and behaviours by providing mental health services. However psychology is extremely relevant to social work. It indicates relevance of psychology to social work.

In psychology there are psychological theories for ex. Psycho analysis by Sigmund Freud, Behaviourism by Watson, and Humanistic Approach by Roger Maslow life wise. These theories help to understand human behaviour. Psychology is essential to social work because, it helps social workers to find out reasons behind a particular behaviour. For ex. While studying stages of human development psychologist get knowledge about factors affecting growth, process of growth. It helps to have understanding about human growth and development.

A social worker in a social work intervention needs knowledge and information about client's background. For detail understanding of client taking case history is very important. A social worker must look at factors like heredity, environment that plays vital role in

development. Clinical social workers are closest to psychologist. Clinical social worker deal with variety of disorders like depression.

Social workers are expected to have basic knowledge about a client's personality. Psychology comes to play an important role here. Psychology studies human personality and factors affecting it. The theories like psychoanalysis by Freud, psychosocial theory by Erikson finds very useful. Psychology is very useful and necessary to social work.

Psychology studies behaviour from many different perspectives.

- Behavioural perspective focuses on overt behaviour
- Biological perspective focuses on biological functioning.
- Psychodynamic perspective focuses on unconscious internal processes(unconscious motives)
- Cognitive perspective focuses on the cognitive processes such as memory thought, reasoning, how people know, understand and think about world.
- Developmental perspective focuses on changes in behaviour and cognitive processes over the life span.
- Humanistic perspective suggests that human are free rational beings with the potential for personal growth.

The basic knowledge of psychology helps social worker to understand his client at social work place. We have here in detail discussed importance of psychology at social work. A social worker with knowledge in psychology will handle a situation definitely better.

Understanding the concept of Emotional Intelligence

Emotion plays a very important role in our lives. Thorndike (1921) coined the term social intelligence to describe the idea of acting wisely in human relationship. Weschler (1944) proposed that the non-intellectual abilities were essential to success in life. Gardner (1983) developed the idea of multiple intelligence. It was Salovey and Mayer (1990) who first used the term, "Emotional Intelligence" that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminates among them and use this information to guide one's thinking and action.

The term emotional intelligence entered the main string only with Daniel Golman in 1995. Goleman says that 80% of success comes from emotional quotient.

Goleman suggests that emotional intelligence consist of five major parts.

- Knowing our emotions
- Managing our emotions
- Motivating ourselves
- Recognising the emotions of others
- Handling relationship

Need of emotional intelligence for social work.

As a social worker it is necessary to understand recognise your own emotions and those of others. Consciously or unconsciously emotions play an important role in our behaviour. Lack of emotional awareness and understanding can result in poor performance.

Rosenthal (1977) discover that people who were best at identifying others emotions were more successful in their work as well as their social lives. Emotional intelligence is being able to motivate oneself, to control impulse and to regulate one's moods and keep distressed from swamping, the ability to think, to empathize. It is need to discuss the relevance of emotional intelligence to social work. As social worker people are working with all age and different types of people. Social workers requires intra and interpersonal skills like

- 1) Listening and building empathy.
- 2) Self-awareness

Empathy is very important. Self-awareness, self-management, awareness of others and relationship skills are important. There is growing realisation that psychological processes considered to be purely cognitive or intellectual in fact depend on an interaction between cognition and emotion.

To foster emotional intelligence competence various useful skills are required to learn. These includes

- Labelling and describing emotions

- Judge basic emotions in one self and others
- Conflict management
- Taking perspective of others
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Effective peer relation training

As social worker is dealing with society rapport establishment plays a vital role. Empathic relationships in social work is important. Empathy is central to the social work tasks. A social worker must have empathy, understanding the effects of non-verbal communication and reaching to self-awareness. Empathy may itself have a therapeutic effect and may contribute to relieve distress. Empathy is a key component of all helping relationships. It has been found to have strong positive therapeutic effects on service users whether physical mental and social wellbeing (Morrison 2007).

It is important for social workers to understand that their emotional responses while handling the problem situation will inevitably influence their professional judgement. For social workers the importance of emotional regulation skills is important for their own sake. For social workers while dealing with social problems their own intactness is very essential.

Behaviour exposing biases, cultural, social, religious differences may create hurdles in the community work for social workers. Social workers like nurses and health care workers have high stress job which can take a mental or physical toll. Studies shown that emotional intelligence training did have a measurable effect on social workers stress in England. Social workers have to play a positive role in the lives of children from exploited and abusive background.

Intelligence in self-awareness (ability to know one's own emotions) self-regulation (controlling emotions) social skills (managing relationship) empathy (considering others feelings) motivation; these emotions helps at work place and are identified in to basic domains such as

- Intrapersonal (self-awareness, self-management)

- Interpersonal domain(awareness of others and relationship management)

Conclusion:

Social workers to give quality social service and to avoid risk of professional stress emotional intelligence competency is essential. With awareness and competency in emotional intelligence social worker can able to achieve their proper outcome.

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