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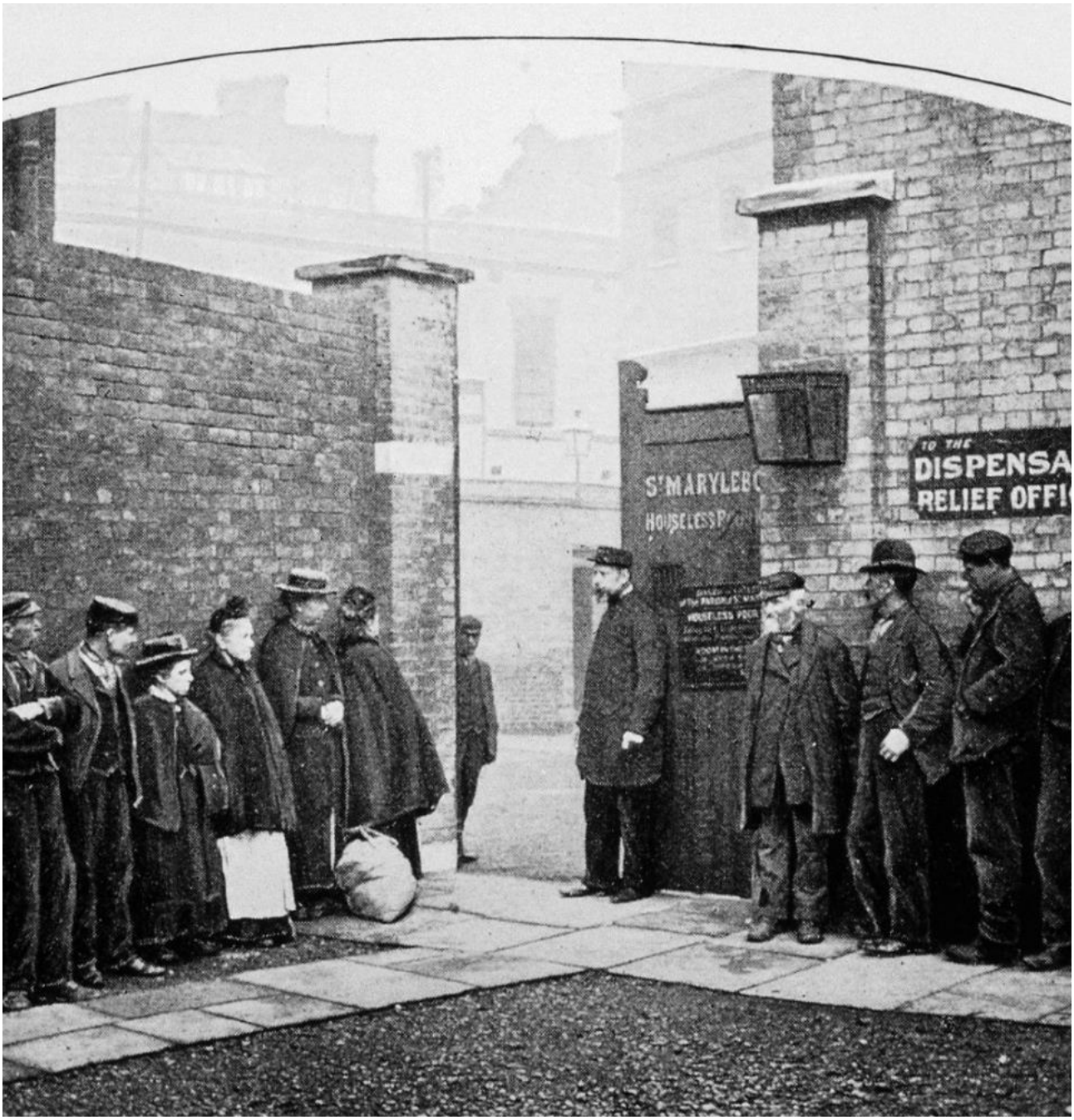

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On the cover: People queuing at S. Marylebone workhouse circa 1900 (detail). Wellcome Collection.

About the Social Work History Network

The Social Work History Network (SWHN) exists to explore the nature and growth of social work in order to inform contemporary policy and practice. Founded in 2000, it is an informal network of social workers, historians, archivists, researchers, educators, students, and social work policymakers. The Network meets three or four times a year in the United Kingdom to discuss papers given by invited speakers. Meetings are open to all. The *Bulletin of the Social Work History Network* is an e-journal: it is available on the Network website and via email to those on the mailing list.

To join the SWHN emailing list please contact: stephen.martineau@kcl.ac.uk

The Social Work History Network is supported by The British Association of Social Workers (BASW), The Open University, the University of Chester, and the NIHR Policy Research Unit in Health and Social Care Workforce at King's College London.

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SPECIAL ISSUE

Comparative histories of the development of social work across the Commonwealth

Editorial

Sarah Vicary

Editor, *Bulletin of the* Social Work History Network

Collated in this special issue are the papers presented at the two day conference on Comparative Histories of the Development of Social Work across the Commonwealth, which was held in spring 2022. The conference, and now this special issue, is a unique opportunity to reflect upon the history of social work from this perspective and will, it is hoped, be the start of a future project. Presented in the order of that conference, this special issue comprises a written version of presentations which can also be listened to through the recording which is available here. I am indebted to all who have made their input available and contributed to what I am sure you will all agree is a fascinating insight.

In her introduction to the conference, Sylvia reminds us of the significance of the Commonwealth in past and contemporary society. She lists the values of the Commonwealth Charter and the place of the social work profession within it. Her use of several quotes resonates with the reason why the Social Work History Network in the United Kingdom was set up. Endorsed by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth and Director-General of the Commonwealth Foundation respectively, the webinar is welcomed as a way of recording this history and of acknowledging both the alignment (based as both are on human rights) and of social work's unique position within. The personal reflections of Wendy Thomson, herself a social worker and now Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, also reinforce the importance of the webinar which builds on the importance of understanding the connections and shared history of the Commonwealth.

Lectures on day one began with Philip Murphy, Professor of British and Commonwealth History, who spoke about the central importance of historical research and its value in helping practitioners and policy makers make informed contemporary and future decisions. He discusses the impact of colonialism and the need for social work to reflect upon this. His talk concerns nine key principles, each of which he suggests might equally be applied to the history of social work and in turn will be of value to contemporary policy makers. Meanwhile Professor Liz Beddoe summarises three non-Western conceptual models and explains how they are used in the teaching of social work students in New Zealand in an evolving curriculum. She describes this as a journey rather than a destination reached. A second Philip (Mendes), Professor and Director of the Social Inclusion and Social Policy Research Unit, Monash University bases his paper on primary sources of the Australian Association of Social Workers to provide a potted chronology from 1946 to 2022 in three parts. He discusses insights into the historical engagement of the Association with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. Teoh AI Hua and colleague examine the key incidents and policies of social work and social welfare services in Malaysia compared to the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. They provide a fascinating account of this chronology. The next three pieces concern India. First, Fasal Rahman analyses the contribution of Indian social work with a particular focus on the influence of Gandhian concepts and ideas, which he suggests are inseparable from the idea of professional social work as recognised by the National Association there. He proposes the need for these concepts to be more formally recognised in all social work curricula. It is social work education and practice in India that forms the content of the next lecture by Baiju Vareed who explores the influence of western concepts in Indian social work. He goes on to explore and argue for the greater recognition of indigenous concepts. Last, Meenu Anand examines feminism and professional social work through the lens of the development of social work in India. She provides a perspective based on the dynamic between them and concludes that more indigenous theory and practice tools, both successful and those which challenge, are required in social work education. Day one closed with the Social Work History Network's chair. The paper delivered by David N Jones explores the

regulation of the social work profession including developments in the Commonwealth in which many of its countries are actively exploring such a move. David poses the question who does and who should define social work?

Day two did not disappoint. George Palattiyil from the University of Edinburgh started with a talk concerning global social work and the Commonwealth. George urged engagement in the debate on the history of minoritised communities to enable space for critical examination through a decolonial framework. He asks us to consider the authentic individual and social work as a profession that is global in that it responds to local needs. Linda Kreitzer, Adjunct Professor, University of Calgary and colleagues explore African social work history and introduce us to the Sankofa, a Ghanaian symbol of a bird looking back, thereby illustrating the importance of learning from the past. They go on to describe the development of the former Association of Social Work Education in Africa, the work that has been undertaken to date and how they are to continue to learn about the development of social work in Africa. Turning to the development of social work in Zambia and Zimbabwe, Noel Muridzo and Joachim Mumba from the International Federation of Social Workers chronicle the respective histories and ponder next steps urging, as others have done, the need to benefit from the adoption of indigenous knowledge systems to inform. Next, Thembelihle Makhanya talked about a research project which aimed to reflect on the historical development of social work education in South Africa. She echoes in the findings of that project that a social work curriculum lacking indigenous inclusion is misguided. Eleanor Hendricks suggests that there is a need to embrace alternative philosophies and illustrates this call through her discussion of Ubuntu values of hospitality and community. The focus of the piece by Cerita Buchanan and Sarah Bailey-Belafonte is the English-speaking Caribbean and the growth and development of the assistant social worker. They begin by recognising the contribution of the late Dr John Maxwell who played a pivotal role in Caribbean social work scholarship. Jake Kuiken, a retired social worker and former President of the Alberta College of Social Workers, Canada discusses social work as typically finding its pathway to becoming a profession in a context of economic, social, and cultural upheaval. He provides a chronology of the developments in Alberta still shaped he contends by the Poor Laws of England and ponders the impact of the regulatory framework for social work practice for which the outcome of the recent changes remains unclear. Charles Mbugua, a member of the Commonwealth Histories of Social Work Steering Group, next comments on how enriching reflecting on such developments is and urges that we dig deeper. The final contribution from Sharon Rose-Gittens, President of the Barbados Association of Professional Social Workers, acknowledges the rich and engaging webinar.

I trust that what has been collected here pays appropriate thanks, to the Commonwealth Histories Steering Group – David N Jones, Philip Murphy, Charles Mbugua, George Palattiyil, Jill Manthorpe and Sharon-Rose Gittens – enables an accurate and accessible record of the webinar and sets a foundation for future developments.

Dr Sarah Vicary is Professor of Social Work and Mental Health at The Open University.

Comparative Histories Of Commonwealth Social Work Steering Group

Dr David N Jones (Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work – COSW) Co-Chair
Prof Philip Murphy (University of London) Co-Chair
Prof Jill Manthorpe CBE (King's College London)
Dr George Palattiyil (University of Edinburgh)
Charles Mbugua (COSW)
Sharon-Rose Gittens (COSW)

The online conference from which the papers in this issue derive took place on 31 March and 1 April 2022. It was jointly organised by the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work and the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

Welcome from the Chair of the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work

Sylvia Daisy Romanus

A warm welcome on behalf of the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) and the organizers for this online webinar on 'Comparative Histories of the Development of Social Work across the Commonwealth Countries'.

'Whoever is a victor, there should be, after the war, a Commonwealth of Nations', said the great political leader, Mahatma Gandhi. His quote helps us to realize the significance of the Commonwealth in the past and contemporary society. The Commonwealth has transformed societies, in line with the values of the Commonwealth Charter, democracy, multilateralism, sustainable development, and human rights. We find in history that, to promote and protect the rights of the vulnerable, the Commonwealth continues to encourage and assist member countries, particularly small states, with the process of ratifying the major human rights conventions, drafting and implementing legislation, to give them effect in national laws, and with reporting obligations arising from them.

By learning the History of Social Work, we understand that the Social Work profession has its roots in the history of the Commonwealth. And among the human service professions, social workers are the ones that are better placed to organize and provide social services to the people. They are the key component of national and social development. We also understand from history that the Social Work profession grew out of humanitarian and democratic ideals, and its values are based on respect for the equality, worth, and dignity of all people which aligns with the values of the Commonwealth. Social Work as a noble profession promotes social change, problem-solving in human relationships, and liberation of people and engages in actions designed to influence social policies. Theories of human behaviour and social systems are applied in the Social Work profession, to intervene at the points where problems arise when humans interact with their environment. Thus, Social Work as a profession helps society work better for people and helps people, function better within society.

The History of the Commonwealth indicates that the Commonwealth with its wide-reaching networks of governmental, non-governmental, and civil society organizations across all continents is an ideally placed network to tackle global challenges. Financial crisis, income inequality, changing technologies, war and armed conflict, poverty, and the pressures of immigration are the present global challenges, and to tackle these global challenges the support of the Commonwealth is required in almost all spheres and sectors in terms of new policies, intervention models, and strategies, with due consideration of the lower and middle-income groups countries. 'In a gentle way, you can shake the world', said Mahatma Gandhi. The time is now for the Commonwealth to capitalize on the diversity within its network to work together to respond to these challenges and consider how the Social Work workforce can be positioned to deal with the contemporary global challenges.

'People without knowledge of the past history, origin, and culture are like trees without roots', said Marcus Garvey. I trust this webinar on 'Comparative Histories of the Development of Social Work across the Commonwealth Countries' will help us to get the right perspective and align all our actions to create a better world for everyone, keeping in mind the vulnerable communities, lower-income countries, sustainable goals, environment, democracy, good governance, and human rights for all.

'A small group of determined and like-minded people can change the course of history' – Mahatma Gandhi.

'History can never give us a program for the future but can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves and our common humanity so that we can better face the future' – Robert Penn Warren.

May this webinar help each one of us to make a greater impact globally and locally. I once again welcome the speakers of the webinar representing the different Commonwealth countries, the participants, and all like-minded people who want to be history makers. Let us stay united to make this world a better place for all.

Dr A. Sylvia Daisy is Chair of the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work.

Message from the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth

Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC

Colleagues, partners, and friends from across the Commonwealth.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this fantastic event – and to support this brilliant initiative on comparative histories of the development of social work across the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) is as much a part of the fabric of our family of nations, as social work is part of the fabric of our societies.

We value COSW's commitment to education and training, to providing connections, and to enabling progress on critical issues such as the alleviation of poverty.

Social work – and social workers – are of critical importance.

Social work speaks to the very heart of Commonwealth values of service, solidarity and social justice.

Social work is about protecting the vulnerable.

It is about enabling everyone to unlock their talents and unleash them on the world.

It is about being there for people when they most need support.

And social work across the Commonwealth has a proud history –

From the day-to-day difference that social workers make to millions of people around the world – to the essential support that social workers provide in emergencies and times of crisis.

It is important that we have an accurate history of the way social work has developed in the Commonwealth.

Too often, we record versions of history that do not fully reflect what actually happened.

We must also be open and honest in our reflections, with special sensitivity to the strengths in indigenous community practices, linking professional social work with community realities.

Not only will this help us understand where we have come from – it will help to shape where we are going.

I welcome the contributions that will be made across this session, and the progress it will stimulate in this fantastic project.

I wish you well for this webinar and look forward to hearing about the comparative histories project as it develops.

Thank you.

—31 March 2022 (Recorded on 29 March 2022)

The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC is Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

Message from the Director-General of the Commonwealth Foundation

Anne T. Gallagher AO

It is with great pleasure that I deliver this short contribution to what I know will be a fascinating event on the past – and the future – of social work across our Commonwealth.

While I'm providing my welcome by way of a pre-record, I do intend to watch at least some of the proceedings in person. This is a subject that is close to my heart, and I really don't want to miss the opportunity of learning from you.

And I want to begin by affirming the connection between the subject of this conference: your work, your profession – and the mission of the organisation that I lead.

The Commonwealth Foundation was created by Heads of Government to advance the aspirations and needs of the 2.4 billion Commonwealth citizens. It operates within that all-important space between government and the people. I can think of few professions more closely aligned with the mission and purpose of the Foundation: social workers are at the forefront of ensuring that citizens needs are recognised and met. It is social workers who do so much to build that vital link between government and citizens. It is this profession that helps bring to life the conditions of human flourishing that we are all committed to under the Commonwealth Charter – the very highest standards of health, of education, of sanitation and housing.

I come to this issue as a human rights lawyer so I hope you will forgive my immediate focus on the link between social work and human rights. There can be many kinds of lawyers, but it strikes me that all social workers are human rights practitioners. Your profession is the embodiment of what human rights are all about: the dignity and worth of human beings.

It's important for us to appreciate that making a link between human rights and social work is not just a rhetorical device. It's much more than that. It is a way of saying that social work means much more than ministering to the needy. That this is a profession which is actively engaged in helping people secure the rights to which they are entitled as human beings, under the law; that it is a profession which looks not just at the fallout, but also the underlying causes of injustice, inequality and discrimination. As a human rights profession, social work must, by definition, be engaged in the broader and bolder struggle for a world that leaves no-one behind.

And there is another dimension to a human rights approach: one that is especially important in the context of the Commonwealth. A rights-based approach helps us understand and appreciate what has gone wrong. Like medicine, like psychology and psychiatry – like law for that matter – the history of social work across our Commonwealth is complicated and fractured. There are so many achievements to celebrate. But crimes and injustices have been perpetrated on individuals and communities in the name of social work – and by social work professionals. The lens of human rights matters so much because it gives us the clarity we need to openly and honestly excavate and reflect on the past.

The programme ahead of you – and the wider research project that I hope will emanate from it – will not shy away from asking tough questions, about times when ignorance was too often enshrined in law, when the treatment of Indigenous people and marginalised communities fell well below the standards we should expect. And this should never be solely an academic or intellectual reflection. We look to history to teach us about how to be now: to help us understand how to live and work and flourish into the future.

This is a difficult and uncertain time for our world – and our Commonwealth. So much of what we believed in and trusted is disappearing. The gap between what people need – and what their governments are able or willing to deliver – seems to be growing.

Today, more than ever, we need to speak up in defence of the marginalised and the powerless. Social workers – the social work profession – is uniquely positioned in this regard. You know what is happening on the ground. You have the authority and the insight to speak out loudly and clearly about what must be done to bring dignity and security to the lives of the ordinary citizens of our countries and our wider Commonwealth. I urge you to use the language of human rights to communicate the story of people's lives and to demand the changes that the people are entitled to.

Thank you and I wish you all the best for this important, and timely event.

Dr Anne T. Gallagher AO is Director-General of the Commonwealth Foundation.

Social work in the Commonwealth: Some personal reflections

Wendy Thomson CBE

I am delighted to have the opportunity to say a few words to this two-day conference on the Comparative Histories of the Development of Social Work across the Commonwealth. First, my congratulations to the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) and the Institute of Commonwealth Studies for organising this event – and enabling it to encompass time zones and communities from across the Commonwealth. I have known and admired David Jones for many years. He has been a stalwart advocate for social work, around the world, over many decades. It is a pleasure to join David and Philip Murphy at this conference today.

Of course, the University of London has a longstanding relationship to the Commonwealth, social justice, and international education. More than 50,000 students participate in our educational programmes, studying in more than 180 countries. Our mission as a university is truly international; based in London but with a mission that aims to reflect and embrace the world. Our interaction with students in the communities where they live provides unique and privileged perspectives on the subjects taught. It offers an appreciation of diverse cultures and knowledges; challenging the hegemony of western thought over many professions including social work.

The University of London's School of Advanced Study is home to the Institute of Commonwealth Study. Following the report from the Rifkind Committee in 2021, the Institute has renewed its commitment to the study and engagement with the contemporary Commonwealth and is developing collaborations with commonwealth institutions and pressing policy issues. We are grateful to those who have contributed to the work of this committee and the future of the Institute. We look forward to making a positive space for collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the nations of the Commonwealth.

This conference and its plans to study the historic development of social work, is an excellent example of the importance of understanding the connections and shared history of the Commonwealth.

More personally, I am proud to be a social worker, starting out as a young undergraduate student, then qualified with a BSW and an MSW from McGill University in Canada. I went on to practise professionally in community organisations and family work in Montreal. I came to the UK, to do my PhD with Peter Townsend, well known in England for his study of poverty. More recently, I returned to the School of Social Work at McGill as Director and Chair in social policy.

Drawing on this personal experience, I can say how important an opportunity social work presents to people of all ages, very many of them women, who wish to work with people and to make the world a

better place. People who are outraged by the inequality and hardship they see around them. People who see enduring poverty and discrimination, and know that it shouldn't and doesn't have to be this way. It provides access to an important profession that, at its best, appreciates the contribution made by women with families themselves, racialised experiences, people with first-hand understanding of poverty and powerlessness.

Grounded in a universal framework of values, knowledge and skills, social work offers socially minded people the opportunity to advance social justice, to intervene in progressive ways. It does this at different scales – casework and counselling with individuals and families, working with groups, community development and action, and international development and humanitarian crisis.

Drawing on the knowledge and analysis of society, power, institutions and social issues of the social and psychological sciences, it provides the possibility for practical and progressive professional practices.

As social work looks to the future, it must do so with an understanding of its past and an appreciation of the particular disadvantage experienced by diverse individuals and groups in the contemporary moment. This is what makes the project of the Comparative History of the Development of social work across the Commonwealth so important.

In my lifetime, I have experienced very significant changes in the institutions, financing and practice of social work in the west. I have observed the emergence of social work as the profession to bring to life the Personal Social Services, along with social security, the NHS, Education, housing, and full employment – to tackle the five giants of Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness on the road to post-war reconstruction. This period in the UK and Canada in the late sixties and early seventies witnessed the move from social work operating in voluntary, charitable and religious organisations (with their Charity Organisation Society origins still palpable) to the statutory institutions of Seebohm in the UK and the Castonguay reforms in Quebec.

Social work in the state took on a more powerful role, but with it inevitably came the challenges to its normative foundations, and distrust and opposition from disenfranchised and oppressed groups. We have seen the profession come under criticism from left and right, from within and against the state. In child protection in particular it has come under intense and often unfair public scrutiny, for failing to intervene or intervening too much.

Canada has witnessed the intergenerational damage done to First Nations communities following colonisation – the deaths and abuses inflicted in church-run residential schools, the continued removals of children in the 'sixties scoop' and even today the disproportionate number of First Nations children taken into care, too often removed from their communities and isolated from their culture. Social work is an historical and contemporary actor in these struggles. I hope that today it is part of the process of reconciliation and justice.

At McGill, for many years we worked alongside Inuit in Nunavik, bringing university social work education and engaging with Inuit culture and values, teaching with indigenous co-educators in Inuktitut. With social work qualifications, and the community connections, Inuit professionals are providing services to their communities. I was proud to have appointed the first indigenous faculty associate to the School at McGill and supported the growing interest and advocacy for the rights of First Nations. Changes like this are taking place across the Commonwealth.

Looking at the issues facing the world today, we see the presence of social work – in war-torn countries, humanitarian crises, natural disasters, human rights abuses. Social work deserves recognition for the good it does and for the insights it brings to advancing social justice.

My congratulations to David, Philip and the COSW for today's conference, and for the continuing work on research into the Comparative Histories of Social Work across the Commonwealth.

Professor Wendy Thomson CBE is Vice-Chancellor of the University of London.

Comparative histories of the development of social work across the Commonwealth

Keynote lecture (day one)

Philip Murphy

This article seeks, very briefly, to offer some thoughts about how, in broad terms, historical research can help social work practitioners and policymakers make better informed decisions for the future. A recurring theme in recent historiography has been that the profession is almost irredeemably tarnished by its association with colonialism. It is, it has been argued, 'grounded in ideological foundations rooted in the European project of colonial expansion, racist capitalism, and coloniality and its history is grounded in the social engineering of white supremacy' (Kyere and Khandare, 2020, citing Harms Smith, 2019). Not only does this make it unable to respond to the genuine needs of indigenous peoples, but history 'has also seen the profession collude with the apparatus of the state such that social work cannot be seen as innocent of the historical abuses associated with colonialism' (Cunneen and Rowe 2014). Attention is increasingly being paid to the ways in which 'whiteness continues to organise social work theories, education, practice and the field' (Carranza, 2022).

This intensely critical self-reflection is unquestionably highly valuable and arguably long overdue. Yet the question for those making and implementing policy is the perennial one of 'where do we go from here?' The debate can easily become polarised between those who simply wish to dismiss these sorts of difficult histories as having no bearing on the present, and those who insist on the need for revolutionary epistemological and organisational change. The temptation for policymakers is to take the former position. Their perspectives are inevitably rooted in the urgent problems of the moment, and they have to use the tools that are available to them. In that context, history can sometimes seem little more than a counsel of despair.

But can insights from history actually chart a course between these two extremes, in the process pointing to positive elements that can be nurtured and amplified? A recent discussion of the role of history in relation to development policy (Woolcock et al., 2011) suggest they can. From it, one can extract nine key principles which might equally well be applied to the history of social work.

1. **It is vital to appreciate the importance of context.** Historians tend to focus on the particular, and only cautiously and provisionally generalise from that. There is an ingrained suspicion of all-encompassing categories that do not take geographical and temporal variations into account. In this context, even commonly used terms such as 'colonialism' itself have frequently been challenged as failing to capture the precise nature of particular power relationships. History can hence help us clarify our thinking about how a given set of problems has arisen in a particular national or regional setting.
2. **History helps us to understand process.** A recurring theme in history is the gap between intention and outcome in policymaking. While elements of the theory of social work might be grounded in a Western epistemology associated with colonialism and white domination, historians tend to take a particular interest in what happened when those theories collided with realities 'on the ground'. How has social work practice been impacted by the unintended as well as the intended consequences of the application of those ideas in particular Commonwealth settings? And, conversely, what unintended consequences might follow from the attempt to jettison some of the colonial baggage of the profession?

3. **History helps us understand how institutions have evolved.** This relates closely to the previous heading. Although the structures through which social work are delivered in given Commonwealth settings might be Western in origin, they have inevitably evolved in response to local conditions and needs. This in turn results in a degree of 'hybridity'. Over time, 'interactions characteristically emerge through a political process of contestation, and thereby have a content and legitimacy they would (and could) not have had if they had been singularly "imported" from elsewhere' (Woolcock et al., 2011: 16) As such, the tools available to contemporary policymakers might themselves have been shaped by patterns of localised resistance and adaptation. Conversely (see Skinner, 2011), Western forms of knowledge and expertise were often nurtured by newly independent regimes which saw them as intrinsic to the creation of effective states. This is a contradiction that proponents of 'decolonizing' the profession need to reckon with.
4. **History can help indicate who were the dominant actors in this process of evolution.** It is important to be able to identify which individuals, groups and organisations were instrumental in implementing, modifying or blocking policies. This in turn can help policymakers develop the most effective networks and collaborations to help deliver policy in the future.
5. **'Mapping exchanges' can help us gain a clearer idea of how ideas about particular groups in society gained traction.** Increasingly, historians are interested in the multi-directional flow of influences, which includes the ways in which practice within the colonial 'periphery' influenced the metropolitan 'core' within imperial systems. Bush (2013) for example has considered how the study of working class families in Liverpool was undertaken with methodologies developed in a colonial setting. Again, this raises questions about what we mean by 'decolonising' social work.
6. **History is very effective in tracking long-term trends.** Increasingly, senior management roles are occupied by people who remain in post for relatively short periods of time before moving on to other departments or organisations. Meanwhile, politicians tend to focus on policies that will bear fruit in time for the next election. This can lead, not just to a short-termism – neglecting policies that might bring real benefits but over a longer period of gestation – but to a lack of 'institutional memory' and a failure to learn lessons from past mistakes. History can help policymakers view their actions in a much longer term perspective, both in terms of their inheritance from the past and their assessment of what constitutes effective action.
7. **Historians have increasingly been interested in revealing suppressed or marginalised narratives.** The voices of marginalised communities have often been silenced in the historical record. In recent decades, historians have paid attention to these silences, seeking ways to recover the voices of the marginalised. They can sometimes point to ways in which the communities concerned have coped with adverse conditions, highlighting areas of resilience which can be nurtured. For example, 'critical exploration of how enslaved Africans and Africans on the continent have resisted and coped with slavery and colonialism can reveal certain culturally relevant attributes that can support thriving and can thus be applied to inform indigenous social work practice in Africa and with peoples of African descent' (Kyere and Khandare, 2020).
8. **History can point to policies either not pursued or abandoned.** One of the dangers inherent in 'group think' is imagining that there is only one feasible approach to solving a particular problem. History is full of 'paths not taken'. Sometimes, we might suggest that these paths could have proved successful under different circumstances, or actually did prove successful but were resisted by particular interests at the time. The study of history can open up alternative options, leading to more creative and adaptable policymaking.
9. **Historical methodologies can be helpful in 'stress testing' policies.** We often think of history as dryly empirical – never venturing further than the written evidence allows. Yet there is a strong imaginative element to historical research. Historians have to think their way into the minds of

the people they write about and try to see the world through their eyes. With limited evidence to hand, they often need to make an informed guess as to why an individual acted in the way they did. This imaginative aspect of their work enables historians to be helpful in tracing the possible outcomes of a particular policy. Taking examples from similar actions and policies in the past, they are well placed to imagine what could go wrong, and how to mitigate particular problems and unintended outcomes.

This is by no means a comprehensive list of the various ways in which the history of social work in the Commonwealth might be of value to contemporary policymakers. But it suggests that, far from giving us the sense that we are all 'prisoners of history', reference to the past can enable us to imagine and construct better futures.

Philip Murphy is Professor of British and Commonwealth History, University of London.

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Social work education in Aotearoa New Zealand: Building a profession in contested territories

Liz Beddoe[*]

Social work in Aotearoa New Zealand was a colonial project from the outset and its development has to be seen in that context. The first formal development related to the role of almoners (medical social workers) and child welfare workers and began in the 1930s.

The Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the foundational document and treaty signed by the British Crown and indigenous peoples in 1840. There are significant differences between the two versions of the treaty (e.g. about sovereignty and leadership). The development of social work cannot escape the issues arising from the contested space of the treaty, especially relating to significant inequalities for Māori and Pacific Island peoples.

Social work has developed in both governmental and non-governmental sectors but also as a workforce committed to building social justice and human rights, which also creates a challenge for the development of the profession. The first qualifying diploma in social work was started in 1949 at Victoria University, led by graduates of the social work course at the London School of Economics. The

[*] Summary and editing by David N Jones.

development of social work education continued to be modelled closely on the UK experience for many decades.

The first national professional association was formed in 1964. A degree qualification was launched in 1980; the ghost of the CQSW (UK Certificate of Qualification in Social Work launched in 1972) still haunts New Zealand social work.

A stand-alone statutory children's service was created in 1972 which has subsequently undergone 25 restructures, illustrating constant change and many name changes, making it difficult to develop a consistent practice.

A major report on institutional racism was published in 1987 – 'Puao-te-ata-tu' meaning daybreak. It followed extensive consultation with Māori communities and was led and written by a Māori child welfare officer and leader John Rangihau (1987). This report was to be very influential, often beyond child welfare, as it illustrated the significant cultural inequalities and the institutional racism which permeated the system, leading to a continued debate about reform, including, in 1989, legislation to create the Family Group Conference framework.

Non-mandatory registration of social workers and creation of a Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) happened in 2003, aiming to improve social work practice after a critique of social work in the aftermath of several child death tragedies. In 2016 the SWRB required a four-year BSW or qualifying masters, creating a situation like Australia. Registration became mandatory in 2020 including protection of the social work title.

Leland Ruwhiu (2013) identified key recognition points for work with Māori people: significance of history; role of narratives in promoting identity and the importance of cultural concepts of well-being. It was argued that key Māori theoretical concepts had to be integrated into social work practice. The SWRB published ten competence standards as a formal requirement for social work registration in 2016/17. These standards included competence to work with Māori and competence to practice with ethnic and cultural groups.

An insight into non-Western models of health and wellbeing can be seen in three conceptual models:

- Te Whare Tapa Wha – the house with four walls illustrating the inter-connectedness of the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional, familial and social built on the land and roots (Durie, 1984).
- Te Wheke – the octopus – with eight tentacles referring to similar elements including ancestry (Pere, 1991).
- The Fonofale – a Pan-Pacific model drawing on Samoan concepts (Pulotu-Endemann, 1984).

All social work students learn these models and explore how they can be used in social work practice.

Looking to the future, the elements discussed above remain contentious. The curriculum continues to evolve in a process of continuous redevelopment. There is an increasing role for Māori organisations in child protection and a new Māori health authority has been created.

Social work in Aotearoa New Zealand was founded on colonial and UK concepts and structures but has evolved into a unique professional identity that is best thought of as a decolonising journey of constant change rather than as a destination reached.

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The Australian Association of Social Workers and its historical engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Philip Mendes

To date little is known about the historical engagement of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. The aim of this paper is to examine the policies and activities of the national AASW on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues from its formation in 1946 to the current day.

Methodology

This paper is based as much as possible on primary sources such as national AASW conference proceedings and national bulletins, the *Australian Social Work* journal, Norma Parker addresses and Victorian AASW Branch annual reports. Unfortunately, the AASW's national archives are currently uncatalogued, and relatively inaccessible to researchers. This means, for example, that some key sources of evidence such as a full set of the Association's national annual reports is not available.

Part one: 1946-1975

Social work was a very small profession for much of this period, given that few universities were offering professional social work courses. The AASW estimated in 1948 that there were no more than 500-600 professionally qualified social workers in Australia. Lawrence (1965: 168) calculated in 1954 that the total number of social workers in actual employment was merely 368. Elsewhere, Lawrence (1976: 27) cites the national membership of the AASW as growing from 486 in 1960 to 1,244 by 1970. Figures for the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and Northern Territory were only included from 1970 onwards. Given the above figures, it seems likely that only a very limited number of social workers practised with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities in this period.

The AASW was not active in social policy debates till approximately the mid-1960s. Indeed, Lawrence's history of Australian social work (1965) does not make any reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and only seven articles on social work practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in *Australian Social Work* appeared during this period. The first did not appear till 1969, and none dealt with policy issues such as coerced assimilation.

The earliest AASW reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues seems to have been in 1949 when the *Forum journal* – later renamed *Australian social work* – mentioned an interest by the Victorian Council of Social Service in establishing social services for Aboriginals in Victoria. In 1950, the Victorian

Council of Social Service, which worked closely with the AASW, partnered with the Psychology and Social Studies (later renamed Social Work) Departments of the University of Melbourne, to conduct a survey of the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Melbourne. The survey specifically examined whether the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of the suburb of Fitzroy needed a social worker, but concluded that the community would resent being targeted as a disadvantaged group requiring assistance.

In 1965, the Victorian branch of the AASW formed an Aboriginal welfare sub-committee to advocate changes to the administration of the state Aboriginal Welfare Board. The Committee identified a number of tensions between government policy and social work values, including the lack of consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents, the lack of respect for their privacy, and the generally paternalistic and authoritarian approach adopted, which conflicted with the principles of participation and self-determination.

The Committee's views provoked some robust internal debate, with some AASW members questioning whether the Association should be involved in critiquing government policy at all, and others denying that the AASW had any special expertise to offer on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. Nevertheless, the Committee forwarded a submission to the Minister in 1967, recommending a Committee of Inquiry into Aboriginal Welfare and the appointment of a social worker to a three-person Board to conduct that inquiry. For reasons that are unclear, the Victorian Committee seems to have lapsed in 1968.

The National AASW passed a motion at the 1967 National Conference welcoming the passage of the May 1967 referendum giving the Commonwealth new responsibility for Aboriginal affairs, and urging the Commonwealth to widely consult with representatives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and relevant professional groups including social workers, in developing their policy agenda. An editorial in the July 1968 Federal Newsletter urged 'concrete action to not only give the fullest possible recognition to the rights of the only real Australians, but also to enable them to assume these rights to their fullest potential' (p.3). There was a move to create a national committee on Aboriginal welfare around this time, but the proposal seems to have floundered due to tensions between the national secretary and the branches.

The John Tomlinson Affair

The John Tomlinson Affair involved a Northern Territory social worker who defied Ministerial instructions, and organized for a seven year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girl to be taken from white foster carers and returned to her natural parents. Tomlinson was demoted, following a departmental inquiry which found him guilty of refusing orders from the Minister and misleading the Director of the Welfare Branch.

In January 1974, the six social workers employed by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in the Northern Territory called the first ever social work strike, to protest Tomlinson's demotion from acting regional social worker to base-grade social worker. They also attacked the inadequate services and policies of the Department, such as the widespread removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families without any legal process, and demanded the employment of more social workers plus Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander welfare officers, and the extension of foster care payments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers at the same rate as paid to white carers. The strike was supported by the Northern Territory Branch of the AASW led by President Colin Clague, although the national AASW, which was still a registered industrial union, adopted an ambivalent approach warning that 'such strikes can create employer resistance and destroy professional reputation'. Nevertheless, the national membership contributed over $300 to a Fighting Fund established to assist the strikers.

Social workers and the Stolen Generations of Aboriginal Children

A number of commentators have suggested that professional social workers participated directly, or at least indirectly via their professional silence, in the forcible removal of thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by Australian Governments (estimated at between one in three and one in ten) from their families between 1910 and 1970 known as the Stolen Generations. For example, Bennett et al. (2013) argue that 'social workers (or people known as social workers)' played a 'major role' in developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander welfare policies and practices that involved 'instruments of social control'. These practices provoked significant 'distrust and suspicion of social workers' within many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities (pp.19-20).

But understanding the precise nature of the relationship between social workers and the Stolen Generations is dependent on a number of contested interpretations and definitions. Firstly, are we talking only about qualified social workers who were members of the AASW, or are we talking about anybody who called themselves a social worker or welfare officer in that historical period? As Healy (2012) notes, it is likely that few, if any, of the persons employed in child welfare departments prior to the 1970s had professional education or training. Indeed, Lawrence estimated that, in 1954, just 40 social workers worked in state government child welfare services, of whom 33 were in New South Wales. It was only in the late 1950s that the Victorian government began to employ social workers in its child welfare services. At this time, there were no social workers employed in child welfare in Queensland, and no reference at all is made by Lawrence to social workers in the Northern Territory.

Secondly, do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities historically, or today, make any distinction between qualified social workers and other welfare personnel? Thirdly, does the term 'Stolen Generations' only refer to the period when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were removed without legal accountability by police and other welfare authorities, or does it also include the continuing large-scale removal by professional child protection authorities of large numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children? To date, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are removed at 11 times the rate for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, forming 41 per cent of the total out-of-home care population nationally.

If we only refer to qualified social workers from 1910-70, then the evidence for social work complicity seems mostly hidden and partial at best. The official *Bringing them home report* makes very few references to social workers. There is one statement by long-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child welfare activist, Molly Dyer, regarding 'social workers' from the Victorian Aborigines Welfare Board allegedly policing the homes of Aboriginal families in the 1950s (Wilson, 1997: 33), but it is unclear whether this refers to professional social workers. The report also attacks social workers for lacking understanding of childrearing values in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies. A study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of child separations refers mainly to the role played by the police and welfare organisations in removing children. It implies that some of the welfare officers had social work training, but only names one particular social worker who worked briefly in Aboriginal welfare in Victoria from 1965, and then returned again in 1970.

Part Two 1975-1996

At the end of 1975, the AASW membership voted to split the association (which still held formal trade union registration under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act) into two separate bodies: 1) A trade union to be known as the Australian Social Welfare Union (ASWU), which would represent all social welfare workers rather than just qualified social workers and would participate in political and social policy debates; and 2) The remaining professional association, which would concentrate on professional education and accreditation issues. The split reflected a number of factors, including ongoing divisions over political and social action, and pressures to broaden the membership of the AASW to include all social welfare workers.

The split with the ASWU inevitably left the AASW weakened in terms of numbers and resources, and there was little organized commitment to social action and reform over the next two decades. During this period, the emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child welfare organisations publicized concerns about the continuing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, and specifically criticized the role played by social workers in child welfare policy and practice. They argued that white social workers were applying culturally insensitive practices that contributed to the disproportionate removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their parents and broader kin networks. Social workers had by then become a significant professional group in most State and Territory child welfare departments. For example, by 1978, social workers held all major policy and administrative positions in the Victorian Social Welfare Department, and as late as 1994 social workers still held most senior management positions in child protection.

Another tension between white social workers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians seems to have existed around qualifications and eligibility for AASW membership. According to Fejo-King (2013), a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners acquired either a Community Development Certificate or an Associate Diploma in Social Work in the 1970s via the South Australian Institute of Technology, but were denied AASW membership because they did not have a university degree. It was not until the mid-1980s that most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners were able to secure university social work degrees. From the available literature, it seems that the AASW had little to say on these key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy debates.

Part Three 1997-2022

This period saw a much greater engagement of the AASW with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, as reflected in supportive policy statements, the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concerns in significant AASW practice and education documents, and attempts to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in AASW activities. The turning point appears to have been the *National inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families*, and the *Bringing them home report*. The AASW presented a submission to the Inquiry, which acknowledged the role social workers had played in the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The AASW statement noted:

'We know and sincerely regret that social workers, and unqualified workers known as Social Workers, were actively involved in the removal of Aboriginal children from their families even up to relatively recent times. As far as we are aware, our professional association has not made any comment or apology about the involvement of social workers in the separation of families which has had such a dramatic impact on aboriginal communities…The Association acknowledges that social workers were involved in the forced separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families in every state and territory in Australia during this century'.

Additionally, in August 1997, the AASW voted to co-sign the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) *Statement of Apology* for the 'damage caused by the forcible separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families'. The statement noted that 'we feel a particular sense of responsibility for the consequences of these racist policies because their implementation required the active involvement of community welfare organisations'.

The AASW has been active since that time in promoting reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and advancing culturally responsive practice. Some significant actions include:

- A statement acknowledging the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
- Completion of three updated Reconciliation Action Plans from 2013-2022.
- Revised Codes of Ethics in 1999 and 2010 and new Practice Standards in 2013 recognizing the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and urging culturally responsive practice and education.

- Enhanced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in *Australian Social Work* and *Social Work Focus*.
- Invitations to prominent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social workers to address national conferences.
- Reserving a Board position for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander member.

But some tensions still exist about barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social workers participating in the AASW, and whether or not professional initiatives such as the current AASW campaign for registration of social workers adequately consider the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social workers and service users (Tangney and Mendes, 2022). It is arguable that whilst progress has been made, more needs to be done in terms of effectively applying cultural responsiveness and developing a fully decolonised social work practice (Bennett, 2021).

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Social work development in Malaysia: History and connection with the Commonwealth

Teoh Ai Hua and Fuziah Shaffie*

Teoh Ai Hua

Social work emerged in Malaysia during the British Colonial administration, particularly with the establishment of the Social Welfare Department after World War II. This presentation examined some of the key incidents and policies which show the different pathways social work and social welfare services in Malaysia have taken compared to the UK and some other Commonwealth countries. Despite these differences, the presentation also highlighted some continuing link between the development of social work in Malaysia and the Commonwealth in recent years.

Malaysia, or Malaya as it was known then, was initially placed under different British Colonial administration in different entities or groupings of states, namely the Straits Settlements (Penang, Malacca and Singapore), the Federated Malay States and the Unfederated Malay States. After World War II, Singapore was placed under different British Colonial Administration while all the other states in Peninsula Malaysia became the Federation of Malaya. The Federation of Malaya gained independence in 1957, with Singapore and two territories in Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak), which had very different colonial heritages, joining to form Malaysia in 1963. Singapore became an independent state within the Commonwealth after separating from Malaysia in 1965.

The first formal social welfare structures established in the colonial period were the Protectorate of Chinese in Singapore (1878), Penang (1889), Kuala Lumpur (1895) and Melaka (1915), established to protect women and girls who were being trafficked into these economic centres to meet demand from migrant workers. In 1912 the colonial government established the Labour Department to manage the welfare of migrant labourers recruited from India and China. The Department of Social Services was formed in 1937 in some states, mainly staffed by expatriates from the UK. It can be concluded that the early social welfare services, similar to other colonies, were catering for the needs of its civil servants and employees of its enterprises, as well as the migrant labour community in safeguarding its primary economic interest.

Following the war, and the occupation of Malaysia by the Japanese, the restored colonial government created the Department of Social Welfare in Malaya in 1946. Dr C. P. Rawson, who qualified in social work at the London School of Economics (LSE), was appointed as the Chief Social Welfare Officer of Malaya and he introduced casework, probation, children's services, protection of women and girls, and focused on the training aspect of social work to welfare officers.

The post-war colonial government also determined to play a more active role in providing a better standard of life, and followed the White Paper on 'The Organisation of the Colonies Service' (Command Paper No. 197) to localise and adopt their public services to the local conditions, and to establish the Public Service Commissions (PSCs) in the colonies to recruit locals into the public services in preparation of independence. Local people were recruited and many were sent to the UK and other Commonwealth countries for their social work education and training, even after the independence of Malaysia in 1957 until the 1970s. Mr S. Sockanathan, who was among the earliest cohorts sent to do social work at the LSE in late 1940s, became the first qualified local social worker to be appointed as the Director-General of Social Welfare of Malaysia in 1969.

* Summary and editing by David N Jones.

However, there were significant departures from the UK approach to social work in the post-war period. Whilst the UK developed a welfare approach influenced by the Beveridge report (1942), the changing perception of the purpose of social welfare in Malaysia from 1952 onwards is seen in the movement of the responsible department in Malaysia between different ministries, variously focused on labour markets and economic development, health and welfare and promoting national unity. The 1948 Federation of Malaya Agreement set the framework for policy in this period. It envisaged a strong central government, providing health, education and social welfare services, unlike the UK model of delivery through local councils.

The first local training course for social workers, a two-year Diploma, was established in 1952 at the University of Malaya in Singapore, focused primarily on training social welfare officers (two years) and almoners or medical social workers (three years). The head of the course was Jane Robertson who had trained in the UK and worked in Australia and New Zealand and then in Malaya. The programme was explicitly designed for the local context and not modelled on UK or US courses.

The Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW) was formed in 1973 and joined the Malaysian Professional Centre (set up under the aegis of the Commonwealth Foundation) soon after. The Association played a key role in the formation of the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work, under the leadership of Anthony Tan. There have been several Commonwealth visits and exchanges by social workers since that time.

In 1975, on the advice of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (UNECAFE) (specifically Miss Frances Maria Yasas who qualified in the USA), Universiti Sains Malaysia launched an undergraduate qualifying course, long before this became the minimum standard in the UK. Many Malaysian social workers still went abroad for postgraduate and policy training, including to the UK, USA, Australia and elsewhere. There are now seven public universities offering undergraduate social work qualifying courses in Malaysia. These universities formed the National Joint Consultative Committee on Social Work Education in 2000.

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Globalizing Indian thought – What India contributes to professional social work in the world

Fasal Rahman. M.*

Global social work principles can be seen to be informed by universal social values such as humanism, rationalism, welfarism, democracy and utilitarianism. Social work emerged from a number of roots, including social reformers, local rulers, local and colonial governments and philanthropists. The social work profession in India today is a fusion of the Western models of professional social work with the traditional social service activities that have existed for centuries in India; the two cultural elements are not separable. The main focus of this presentation is on the historical analysis of the development of the social work profession in India. It explores the contributions of different religions, individual philosophies and formal organisations to the development of social work as a profession in India. The study analyses through history the contribution of Indian social work to the world of professional social work, with a particular focus on the influence of Gandhian concepts and ideas.

The significance of ethical and spiritual values has formed a significant part of Indian tradition and culture since the early Vedic period (1500–500 BCE). This can be seen in the concepts and theologies of Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism. These consistently emphasise the concepts of non-violence, universal brotherhood, compassion, respect, honesty, voluntary service and social justice (among others) and can be seen to have contributed to the evolution of professional social work in India.

Colonial rulers

India has experienced the influence of Western ideas and colonial rulers since the end of the 15th century, including the Portuguese, British East India Company, French East India Company and Dutch East India Company. The various colonial rulers introduced formal education, health services, social welfare, concepts of empowerment, building of infrastructure, development of industry and a commitment to the rule of law which have benefited India. In the later period, many Indians went to the UK and other countries for higher education. Some returned as social reformers, committed to challenging existing Indian social structures and culture.

Gandhian influences on social work – 'my life is my message'

There is clear evidence of a commitment to social service and social action in the philosophy of Gandhi, which emphasises cooperation over competition, interdependence over rugged individualism, compassion for others over pursuit of self-interest and social justice over individual achievement. The specific Gandhian philosophies which are of particular significance for social work can be said to be:

- *Ahimsa* – non-violence

This concept emphasises non-exploitative relationships which are honest, genuine, real and trusting – clearly consistent with social work values and the core principles related to social work/client relationships;

- *Satyagraha* – social action for social integration

This puts the emphasis on attainment of truth through personal growth and socio-political change, valuing non-violent public protest. Change is best when it comes about through persuasive reasoning, suffering and non-violent coercion;

- *Sarvodaya* – dignity of all people and welfare of all

* Summary and editing by David N Jones.

There is a duty and need to serve all people, with a moral obligation to first serve those in greatest need, regardless of caste and status. This links with principles of sustainable community development and social work ethical principles.

Gandhian principles can therefore be seen to be inseparable from the idea of professional social work in India, as recognised by the Indian National Association of Social Workers. They are both practical and idealistic, setting high ethical standards and promoting development. It can be argued that these ideas have contributed to the development of contemporary social work in India and around the world and this needs to be more formally recognised in all social work curricula.

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Teaching of others: Influence of Euro-American systems in social work education in India

Baiju P. Vareed*

Social work education and practice in India has been criticized for the adoption of and reliance on western concepts and practice models, and its failure to devise indigenous strategies for social work. This presentation looks at the influence of western concepts in Indian social work and considers indigenous concepts which should have greater recognition.

Western influence in social work education

The main initiative for the establishment of the first school of professional social work in India in 1936 was undertaken by an American missionary, Clifford Manshardt, whose social work experience was gained in both the USA and India and who became the Founder-Director of the school, now known as the Tata Institute of Social Work, Mumbai (Mandal, 1989: 33). The various specialisations in social work education programs – medical and psychiatric social work, family and child development, correctional administration and labour welfare – were introduced by visiting academics from US universities (Mandal, 1989). The specialisation in labour welfare, for example is a specific legacy of the colonial focus on concern for migrant and local workers in the developing capitalist industries.

Murray Ross was a Canadian sociologist and missionary who argued that 'community organisation is a process by which a community identifies its needs or objectives, orders (or ranks) these needs or

* This presentation has been summarized by David N Jones and agreed with the author.

objectives, finds the resources (internal and external) to deal with these needs or objectives, takes action in respect to them and in so doing extends and develops co-operative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community' (Murray G. Ross, 1964). This is still used in Indian social work education, although not found in the textbooks on community organisation in his country of origin in Canada.

The origin of formal and professional social work in India was therefore not Indigenous but Western. The social work curriculum in India followed the methods and techniques offered by the colonisers and international agencies. It has been heavily dependent on textbooks from western countries, mostly American. It has been noted that the western methods of social work practice may not be befitting all realms for practice in India (Midgley, 1990).

Western social work concepts and practices do not address some of the major social challenges faced by social workers in India. Whilst poverty and related issues still dominate the areas served by social workers, structural factors, which are not addressed in the Western models of practice, shape the reality of social work practice in India, such as 'casteism', poor governance, gender and lack of education, all of which perpetuate poverty.

Other worlds are missing in the history in social work education

Chanakya (Koutilya) was born in 321 BCE and is known as the Indian Machiavelli. He authored a substantial work on governance and ethics, *Arthashstra*, which is hardly known in the West. Yet no mention of Koutilya has been found in the textbooks on the history of human rights which have been consulted. Social work education in India still draws on the history and concepts of social work in Europe and America, but the West does not learn about the rest of the world, including, for example, the approach to human rights seen in indigenous cultures and communities in the global south. 'History is written by the lies of the victors' (Lawrence Ferlinghetti). Social work should broaden its understanding of non-Western histories and cultures.

Enhancing horizons

It has been recognized that the globalization of theoretical production arises from a limited geographical space (Menon, 2022). But for the global south, colonization and colonized education has caused people to lose ways of thinking, imagining, and living. The challenge is epistemological rather than geographical; this limits the 'acceptable' forms of thinking and writing. It is important for social work to broaden our archive of concepts by moving away from Euro-American formulations to conversations embracing the diverse cultures of India. Finally, indigenous social work education in India itself should move out of the hegemonic and hierarchical power structures in the country, seen especially in the caste system.

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Feminist social work in India: Deriving an indigenous model of practice

Meenu Anand

Abstract: The arenas of feminism and professional social work, each with its own unique mission and perspective, have independently evolved over the years. As both fields continue to develop, their common grounds and postulates can be explored along with the application of their combined ideas at the grassroots.

The current paper begins with a brief documentation of the history and development of social work in India. The paper also traces the trajectory of ideas around feminism by discussing the history of women's movements in the Indian context. Deconstructing the application of feminist theory as a theoretical framework for viewing the world and a lens to study patriarchy within various institutions and structures of society, the paper locates the historical development of feminist theory in the Indian context. Describing the unique commonalities and shared ideas around feminism and social work, it attempts to contextualise the practice framework for feminist social work.

The uniqueness of the paper lies in its attempt to present a small number of efficacious initiatives in the form of case illustrations from the Indian grassroots that highlight the amalgamation of feminist ideas in social work perspective. Through its narration of success stories from an indigenous perspective, the paper unveils combining of experiential reflections from the Indian grassroots through social work practice and the feminist perspective 'at work'. The central idea of the paper is to explore learning insights from the field based on successful practice oriented models and how these can be amalgamated to develop an indigenous framework for the practice of feminist social work in India.

Key words: Feminism, Feminist Social Work, India

Introduction

A feminist social work discourse relevant to the Indian context will necessitate a critical engagement with the manner in which feminists spoke the voice of the colonisers as well as the limits of concepts from Western feminism to other cultures. I will foreground the fact that I write this paper as a feminist social worker/ educator who is located in a rapidly globalizing yet deeply diverse Indian context. It is also my effort to create room for integrating contextual ideas in the dynamic and ever evolving field that continues to seek greater attention, with a strong need to advance scholarship in the arenas around feminism and social work in the Indian context.

Historical underpinnings of professional social work in India

Professionalisation of social work in India began with practice in Mumbai (erstwhile Bombay) in 1936 under the leadership of Sir Clifford Manshardt, an American missionary, at the Nagpada Neighbourhood House (Settlement house for family welfare). He became the Founder-Director of the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work which began with a Diploma in Social Service Administration. In 1964, it became the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (a Deemed University) which offered a Master of Arts Degree in Social Work. A decade later, in August 1946, the second institution of social work was established under the Directorship of Ms. Nora Ventura with support from the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of India, Burma, and Ceylon. It was first named as National YWCA School of Social Work and later Delhi School of Social Work (presently known as the Department of Social Work, University of Delhi). On the day of Indian independence, Kashi Vidyapeeth located at Varanasi opened the first postgraduate department of social work (Bhatt, 2021). During the decades of 1950s and 1960s several schools of social work started in other parts of the country. As per the second University Grants Commission (UGC) Review Committee report, there were 35 social work educational institutions till 1975 and the number grew to 53 as per the Directory prepared by the Planning Research Evaluation and

Monitoring (PREM) division of the Ministry of Social Welfare (Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India, 1995 as cited by Bhatt, 2021). At present, there are more than 526 social work educational institutions in India offering social work education programmes in various central, state, private and deemed universities and colleges (Anand, 2022; Bhatt, 2021; Bhatt and Phukan, 2015).

The need for indigenisation of the social work curriculum has been reiterated by various social work educators as the same continues to remain influenced by the western theories. During the 1970s the concept of integrated methods and integrated social work practice entered the curricula of several social work programmes across the country. This led to a greater accent on the interface between macro and micro practice using the systems framework for social change (Pincus and Minahan, 1973). A very significant paradigm shift in the social work curriculum was the move from a 'social problem perspective' to a 'developmental perspective' in the analysis of social issues. Since the turn of the century, social work educators have joined hands with human rights groups to protect the rights of children, women, prisoners, activists, etc. In addition, there has been a growing demand for social workers to adopt the human rights approach, particularly with increasing social and economic inequalities, poverty, religious and civil conflicts, disasters, and displacements (Nadkarni and Joseph, 2014; Nadkarni and Sinha, 2016).

After gaining a brief understanding of the historical underpinning of professional social work in the Indian context, let us take account of the genesis of the women's movement in India.

Genesis of women's movement in India and the question of femininity

The women's movement in India goes back to more than a hundred years but its composition, its agenda, its form and style, outreach and inclusiveness has changed over the years (Krishnaraj, 2012). John (2019) stipulates three main epistemes or grids of intelligibility in the history of 'women' and 'feminism' in India – the colonial, the national and the post-national. The colonial episteme, considered as the longest in temporal terms – its first rudiments are discernible in the early nineteenth century and come to fullness in the first decades of the twentieth, and began to fracture during the 1930s and 1940s, in the years preceding independence and the ratification of the Republic and its constitution in 1950. She cites how the very first campaigns, public debates and fierce controversies about women and their status were initiated by men (Indian, British, missionary, etc.). The discussions held around girls' and women's education and the practice of *sati* were followed by demands for widow remarriage, raising the age of consent for marriage and combating female infanticide. In the Indian context, this phase was marked as first-wave feminism in the Indian context with its gender politics that touched only women from upper castes and upper classes (Desai, 1977). The first generation of English educated empowered women became foremothers of the women's movement in the pre-independence period. Most of them channelled their energies in building pioneer women's organisations such as All India Women's Conference (AIWC), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and Anjuman-I-Islam. The political agenda of AIWC was to fight against child marriage, mobilise public opinion in favour of voting rights for women, and impart basic skills (such as tailoring, embroidery, cookery, hair styling, childcare, folk and classical music and dance, letter-writing, etc.) so that they became efficient homemakers. Non-violent means of protest actions under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi ensured massive participation of women in the national liberation movement (Patel and Khajuria, 2016).

In the second wave of Indian feminism, that began in the mid-1970s, the educated middle class women who were actively involved in different social movements of students, youth, workers, peasants, tribal, Dalits and civil liberties played a central role (Patel, 1985). They detested the paternalism of benevolent males and upper-class women's 'charitable' and 'philanthropic' social work and declared themselves as fighters for women's rights. Here, the gender politics was focused on 'women's agency' and women were seen not merely as passive and mute victims of discrimination, injustice and exploitation but as active agents challenging gender-based discrimination and gender violence in all compasses of their lives. The earlier women's organisations were perceived to have an elitist bias by the newly formed autonomous women's groups. To them, those were seen as privileged 'women from good families' who

did some philanthropic, social work activities for common, poor, miserable women, which perpetuated iniquitous relations and did not transcend the existing social order. Feminists also averred that the conventional women's organisations abided by the rules of caste system in their personal lives and were generally oriented towards maintaining the status quo (Patel, 2010; Patel and Khajuria, 2016).

The *Towards Equality* report (1974) released by Status of Women in India Committee appointed by the Government of India was a path breaking report that symbolised a historic moment in women's movement as it provided a fresh perspective and insights on gender inequality prevalent in the country in the post-independence era. It revealed shocking descriptions that manifested in declining sex ratio, very high rate of female mortality and morbidity, marginalisation of women in the economy and discriminatory personal laws. The major achievement of the report lay in the policy decision taken by the principal research body viz., the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), to provide financial support to scholars committed to the women's cause, to conduct research into problems faced by women in poverty groups (Patel and Khajuria, 2016).

The third feminist wave essentially covers perspectives from those marginalized or excluded from previous 'waves' of feminism – Dalit women, tribal women and women of colour, women from the postcolonial world, young women, differently abled women, women from ethnic and religious minorities and women with alternate sexualities (Erevelles, 2000). The wave deepens the treatise of discontent while critiquing the binaries across the sexes. It allows the women to define feminism for themselves by incorporating their identities into the belief system of what feminism is and what it can become through one's own perspective. Contemporary gender politics encompasses macro, micro and meso realities in all spheres: economy and polity, jurisprudence and policymaking, and local-national-regional global governance (Krishnaraj, 1986; Patel and Khajuria, 2016).

Patel (2019) alludes to the dialectical relationship between 'pedagogy' and 'praxis' vis-à-vis the 'women's question' that has been a matter of great concern for pioneers of women's studies. She affirms regarding the need to study women's issues in academic institutions and to conduct research based on experiential material and affirmative action that began among Indian women's studies scholars by the early 1980s.

Feminism and social work: common allies

The emphasis on women as a significant category in professional social work has always been one of the central facets of the discipline. The fields of feminism and social work, each with its own unique mission and perspective, have independently evolved over the years. As both continue to develop, their common grounds and postulates can be explored along with the application of their combined ideas at the grassroots (Anand, 2022).

As a theoretical framework for understanding the world, feminist theory offers a theoretical lens through which to explore patriarchy, how it permeates different institutions and social structures, and the effects of this oppression on women. The premise of feminist theory is that women's interests and views are legitimate in and of themselves, are not subordinate to or secondary to those of men, and should not be understood just in reference to or as a departure from men's experiences (Freeman, 1990). Feminism is a mode of inquiry, a perspective to life and politics, a manner of posing questions and looking for answers, and is based on the interdependence of the social structures that influence people's daily lives and a commitment to equality (Hartsock, 1981).

The principles, goals, and philosophical frameworks of feminism and social work intertwine and give each other greater identity, making social work 'fundamentally feminist in nature' (Collins, 1986). Feminism and social work both have a comprehensive approach to the social relations of reproduction, including the family, sexuality, social control, and social transformation (Hudson, 1985). Feminism is a broad theoretical framework that is frequently used in social work to study and critique from a holistic perspective how society has been built at many levels, both historically and currently, to prioritise, uphold, and continually perpetuate patriarchy.

Gender is indeed inextricably integrated within the realms of social work theory and practice (Anand, 2009) with the inclusion of men as well as those with alternate sexualities. A feminist perspective brings a critical lens to explore gender-based hierarchies and inequalities, and offers a broad theoretical base that enables social workers to advocate for social justice, empowerment and social change. Also, engagement with the feminist perspectives within the social work profession has become more nuanced over time and includes attention not only to oppressive structural gender power inequalities but also to the social construction of gender, the intersection of gender with other social inequalities and prospects for women's agency.

Both feminism and social work have a c*omplementary vision and common ground*. Feminist theory with its multiple variants, offers a relevant framework for the assessment of social functioning, which formulates the core of social work. Both are natural allies with their *vision towards an egalitarian society* with respect for men as well as and women as 'equal' *human beings* (Wendt and Moulding, 2017; Dominelli, 2002). Both view the 'person / client as a whole', that is, as parts of their overall context within the societal structure and lived experiences and have an *eclectic perspective*. Feminists argue that ideas and practices that are oppressive to women need to be recognized and challenged by social work practice. Furthermore, both thrive on the social instruction of gender and therefore place importance on the *inclusion of men* and those belonging to both marginalised gender identities as well as sexual identities (Anand, 2022 and 2019).

A contextualizing practice framework for feminist social work in India

Intersection with caste: Intersectionality *viz.* intersections of gender, caste and class is at the centre of considering women's lives and movement activity seeking social change for women (Subramaniam and Krishnan, 2019). The intertwining, crossings and intersections of gender with the socio-cultural realities of caste within the Indian context reflect how the structure of social relations which shaped gender is reproduced by achieving the compliance of women. In fact, the process of caste, class and gender stratification, the three elements in the establishment of the social order in India shape the formation of Brahmanical patriarchy where women are regarded as gate-ways – literally points of entrance into the caste system (Rege, 1998 and Chakravarti, 1993). Chakravarti (1993) explicates how hierarchies based on caste and gender are the organising principles of the Brahmanical social order and are closely interconnected. Exploring the interconnections, she explains how men exercise effective sexual control over women to maintain not only patrilineal succession but also caste purity, the institution unique to Hindu society.

Inclusion of men: Within feminism, the various strands voice the various discourses to undo the systemic inequalities. More recently, there has been a greater trend towards 'gender inclusion' by way of embracing men and those with alternate sexualities into feminine scholarship. These crossings unfold in multifarious forms – as intersectionalities, intertwinings, frictions, encounters, dissonances, hybridizations, cross-hatchings, conversations, translocations, impasses, solidarities and coalitions. Rather than binaries, these couplings are intended to suggest a braided interweaving of estimated boundaries, with a view to unearth their rich effects on the current shape of the field, and to examine related implications in the contexts of activism, research and pedagogy.

Aneja (2019) expounds: *"the overlapping terms 'gender' and 'women' are infused and complicated by their enduring crossings with complex questions related to caste, class, religion, ethnicity, disability and sexuality, leading to ongoing intersectional re-hatchings. At the same time, feminists working across disciplines have been attentive to revised connotations and epistemologies of 'women' and 'gender' while drawing upon indigenous as well as international theoretical perspectives to posit forward-looking frameworks for feminist discourse in India. The pull and push between activist and academic pursuits (when not in tandem), tensions generated by ways of being in a world that is predominantly patriarchal, and the institutional hierarchies within which feminist academics function give rise to both convergences and incompatibilities".*

The LGBTQIA movement and queer studies: Rooted in the feminist movement, the LGBTQIA movement, which began in the early 2000s, did not see itself as a kind of minority politics, thereby getting trapped in the 'us' vs. 'them' dichotomy. 'Queer' is an inclusive umbrella term that designates all those who are willing to question the norms of gender and sexuality. The word 'queer' is used consciously to differentiate itself from other categories, such as LGBT politics, and queer politics is approached through the idea of intersectionality. Sexuality is not seen through the prism of equal rights or identity. There is no one notion of sexuality, and sexuality is interconnected with the concepts of caste, class, religion and sex in a fundamental way (Patel, 2019).

Transcending boundaries: The intersectionality of caste, class, ethnicity, disability and sexuality in the relegation of women strongly proposes that solutions to the gender question would have to be found on multiple fronts and not on the plank of patriarchy alone; when women dare to defy the system, success is sure to come (Patel, 2019). Moreover, there have been more recent discourses like Dalit-queer intersectionality.

Heterogenous realities: The success of feminism lies precisely in its capacity to motivate 'people' to affirm themselves with the belief in gender equality. In recent years, one of the ways of expanding the horizons beyond an isolated focus on women has been the shift from 'women' to 'gender', with the latter term encompassing discourses on alternate sexualities and masculinity.

The aforesaid has given an insight into the deeply intertwined nature of feminist social work in the Indian context with inclusion of contemporary discourses. Let us explore the application of these ideas in the Indian grassroots and attempt to derive an Indian model for feminist social work.

Deriving an Indian model for feminist social work

The social work response to structural inequalities has been eclectic in nature. Nadkarni and Joseph (2014) emphasize the multidimensional nature of the social work response to heterogenous social, economic, cultural and political realities. 'The high degree of ethnic heterogeneity and dynamic interface of gender-caste-tribe-religion-class reality coupled with the dialectical relationship between the "traditional-modern" and "conservative-progressive" subsumed within an overarching frame of institutionalised exclusion and oppression in the form of caste, is indeed a colossal task to comprehend' (Bodhi, 2011). They strongly voice the need for a curriculum that will depart from its traditional trajectory and move towards one that will equip students with liberatory and emancipatory ideologies, theories and practice of social transformation with radical underpinnings that are in congruence with the evolving realities.

Feminist social work practise in India is not a very popular discourse in academia. Therefore, the available literature on feminist social work pedagogy from an Indian perspective has been sparse. Ironically, there have been numerous initiatives at the grassroots level with regards to women's empowerment in the context of feminist social work, connecting the micro and macro realities. Thus, there is a sizable corpus of practicum-based grassroots work on the fundamental principles of feminism.

Citing evidence from the grassroots, Pandya (2014) asserts various strands of feminism in the Indian context, that concern not only on working with women but also with men, families, communities, systems, and structure – thus, revealing the multidimensional and multisystemic framework of practice. Working from an ecological framework, due recognition is given to the intertwining and complex nature of women's issues with emphasis on contextualising socio-cultural issues including caste, class, ethnicity, and faith that need to be contextualised within the framework of hierarchies of power and domination.

Presented below are three case vignettes from Indian grassroots practice that reflect on the implementation of basic feminist social work principles.

Case vignettes from the Indian grassroots

Case vignette one: SAHAJ (Society for Health Alternatives)

Founded in 1984 in Vadodara, SAHAJ focuses on social accountability and citizenship building for children, adolescents and women in two specific sectors – health and education. Through thematic interventions in the key areas of child rights, adolescents' rights and maternal health with emphasis on social accountability, the organisation works with stakeholders to ensure access to public services and improve their quality. The interventions involve direct action in the communities, action research, promoting social accountability and influencing policies. Working with tribal and marginalized communities in the districts of Gujarat, they aim to work towards ensuring better maternal healthcare outcomes through community action and social accountability mechanisms. In partnership with two other organizations, ANANDI (Area Networking and Development Initiatives) working in Dahod and Panchmahals districts (two of the most deprived districts of Gujarat) and KSSS (Kaira Social Service Society), the project involved marginalized groups with an equity and rights based perspective. During the first phase of the project from 2012-February 2016, the project raised the consciousness of women on their entitlements to quality ante natal, delivery and postpartum care. In the second phase, community leaders entailing members from self-help groups (SHGs), women's collectives (Sangathan) and Panchayat members (with preference to women) were assessed with respect to knowledge, attitudes, and practices and thereafter series of activities were conducted to motivate and increase 'maternal health literacy' and awareness generation on their responsibilities towards maternal health.

With the belief in maternal health care as a human right, the community leaders were mobilized to recognize this right through a feminist lens and respond to it. Thus, SAHAJ converted maternal health from being a personal to public issue that surpassed beyond the boundaries of the family and the household. The adoption of baseline survey tools followed by planning for interventions, usage of participatory learning activities, rights-based approach reflect how behavioural changes were brought about through community-based practice. The community leaders were engaged in vision-building trainings to create an inclusive society, to proactively look beyond the self and reach out to overall maternal health in the community. Social accountability as demonstrated through this project was not limited to demanding answerability of the health care providers but was extended by the action of women's collectives towards demanding accountability from the village institutions including the Gram Sabha, Panchayat, Village Health, Nutrition, Sanitation Committees (Khanna and Zararia, 2018).

Case vignette two: Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee

Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC) is a Kolkata-based organisation and an umbrella body that comprises sex worker organisations, representing more than 65,000 sex workers (female, male and transgender, both brothel and street-based) and their children in more than 69 sex work sites in West Bengal. Working since 1995 through its Sonagachi project, DMSC works through peer outreach, clinic services for STIs, condom promotion, social marketing and community mobilisation activities. Explicit about its political objective to get sex work recognized like any other work and sex worker like any worker in the society, DMSC is involved in advocating reform of laws and policies that restrict human rights of sex workers, and tends to criminalize and limits their enfranchisement as full citizens of the country. It actively supports various kinds of development activities for the sex workers community which includes their children and lover (Babus). It also helps collectivization and development of other marginalized communities in the country e.g., domestic workers, indigenous people, construction workers, fisherwomen and others and promotes their rights and dignity. Focusing on empowerment, the sex workers have been able to successfully set up co-operatives and open bank accounts in order to save money. There are varied personnel from a wide variety of disciplines working with DMSC including professional social workers (Anand, 2012). They are involved in heterogeneous activities such as project management, counselling, and awareness generation with sex workers, advocacy, health, education etc. Durbar makes efforts towards enhancing a process of socio-political change with an objective of strengthening the sex workers' social status, working towards empowerment to lead a life with dignity

and stature in the communities. They are working towards integrating the sex workers movement from the rights based perspective to merge with the broader global movement of meeting the rights of the marginalised communities (www.durbar.org).

Case vignette three: Deccan Development Society

The Deccan Development Society (DDS) is a grassroots organization founded in 1983, working in about 75 villages with Women's Sanghams (voluntary village level associations for the poor) in Medak District in the town of Zaheerabad, Telangana. It works with Dalit ('untouchables') and tribal women to develop climate-smart agricultural practices that secure community nutrition, health, and livelihoods. Over the past decades, the organization has supported over 2,700 women to reclaim their farmlands and, in its first ten years alone, generated over one million days of employment for women across 30 villages. To combat environmental challenges of poor soil quality and limited water, DDS supported women to form voluntary groups to establish sovereignty over seeds, food, farming, health, market, and media. Through these groups, the organization successfully created its own seed bank, millet processing unit, outlets for farm product sales, and restaurants, providing a powerful network of support for its women entrepreneurs.

DDS has indeed become a tool of empowerment for women to address the larger issues of food security, natural resource enhancement, education, and health needs of the region. The programmes initiated by the Society have evolved over the years into a strong political base for rural women. The conscious integration of various activities by DDS has helped to retrieve women's natural leadership positions in their communities, and to fight the lack of access and control over their own resources. These activities, alongside ensuring earth care, have also resulted in human care by giving the women a newfound dignity and profile in their village communities.

The members of the organization have built their own elaborate Seed Bank, have their own school and office, built with laterite rock blocks, that gives a cooling effect like that of a Natural Air Conditioner during summer while producing a warming effect in the winter. They also own an exclusive Community FM Radio Station ('Women Speak to Women: DDS Community FM Radio') that daily broadcasts information on different topics on Traditional Crops, Traditional Technologies, Traditional Education as well as Village Folk songs. In addition, they also run a millet restaurant called CAFE ETHNIC, an initiative to encourage the urban food consumers of Zaheerabad to adopt the millet and organic food culture (Anand, 2022).

Implications of case vignettes: articulating the Indian feminist social work model

The three case vignettes reflect the extensive work being done at the grassroots level in India to empower women from a feminist as well as the human rights perspective. Led by social workers, there is an analysis of the socio-cultural realities through a feminist lens followed by efforts towards striving to address the concerns and challenges with respect to attaining gender equality. An analysis of the aforesaid case vignettes reveals that the feminist practice model by SAHAJ has led to increased accountability by the village institutions that have not only taken more accountability but also collaborated with community women to plan and achieve sustainable goals in various programmes. Similarly, the efforts by DMSC reiterate the belief in strengthening the capacities of sex workers through information, awareness, mobilisation with a rights-based approach based on feminist principles of equality and social justice.

With a thrust on discovering and strengthening the culture and tradition in the Indian context, feminist social work incorporates some valuable local social-cultural practices with interlinkages across the social factors including caste, class, traditional practices etc. Thus, operating on 'Global to Local' in the context of consolidation of community based practices, there needs to be a strong thrust on retaining the uniqueness of the indigenous practices with great pride (Anand, 2022). The model therefore contextualises and takes account of the inter-connections across caste, class and gender stratification

and the consequent struggles and prevalence of violence that are inscribed into Dalit women's sexuality, bodies and notions of femininity (Rao, 2015) with the pervasive nature of violence inflicted on them in all forms. The DDS case vignette is an illustration of such integrations.

Aneja (2019) explicates the crossroads at which women's studies and more recently gender studies find themselves today in India and is a unique juncture in their travelogue. On the one hand, the discernible influence of the women's movement and of feminist scholarship is an indication of the consequential significance of the overlapping terms 'women' and 'gender' in contemporary times, terms of equal import for those involved in activist and academic pursuits, in public discourse, and especially for those in places of power from which vantage point taxonomies can be facetiously bandied about as a rationalization for state largesse. On the other hand, and paradoxically so, feminists involved in the movement and in institutionalized spheres of women's and gender studies confront new challenges to their ideology and threats to their survival each day. These challenges continue to sculpt the contours of the field that must relentlessly adapt to changing circumstances while being attentive to internal evolutions. A rich body of scholarship in the area buttresses these efforts and provides the flag posts of the achievements and obstacles on the tortuous trajectory (Aneja, 2019).

Moreover, the grassroots experience reflects strong field-based action projects being successfully run by professional social workers. These reiterate the belief in the praxis between theory and practice based on the marriage between social work and feminist ideologies. However, there is scarce literature in the academic discourse on indigenous efforts towards developing a feminist social work model in the Indian context.

Some of the key points that emerge through the aforesaid discussion highlight the following ideas as central to the practice of feminist social work in India (as derived from Anand, 2022):

- Focus on understanding the 'unique local context' by engaging with the women through participatory dialogues with active participation of key stakeholders.
- The strengths and potentials of women to be explored and nurtured to the fullest extent possible with emphasis on building confidence and self-esteem. Core of the practice to focus on exploring and developing indigenous practice towards self-sustainability.
- Understanding and addressing the socio-cultural dynamics of power structure, issues of marginalization and oppression taking into account the diversity among the population groups.
- Identifying and mapping of resources, unique to the local context and harnessing them to the full benefit of empowering women.
- Multi-tier planning and multi-pronged interventions – individual, group and community levels.
- Capacity building of women through nurturing skills, communication, self-esteem, confidence and building trust.
- Focus on developing innovation through local means and resources.
- Building community-based networks and structures.
- Popularizing the successful stories / models to strengthen self-reliance among women and also inspire others to follow.
- Participation of men also needs to be incorporated within the efforts with focus on their sensitization and eliciting support and partnership.
- Inclusion of persons with alternate sexualities.

Social work focuses on praxis between theory and practice through transformation of theoretical discourses in the field. However, in the case of feminist social work, there is a dearth of clear-cut indigenous models for practice. There can be an exploration of more of such successful initiatives followed by documentation. These in turn can be discussed, debated through classroom discussions, conference papers, fieldwork by the academic community and can be further reinforced.

Future directions for a feminist social work in India

There are vexed but enthralling questions to ponder over when one thinks of taking the grassroots experiential insights to academic scholarship and vice versa. Even though there are no easy rejoinders; yet, they do summon speculation, discussion, debate, scrutiny, critique and theorizing. The intellectual field that has been mapping different problematics, assigning aspects of Indian society to particular disciplines, maintaining authority over and hierarchies between areas of research – all of which has shaped the study of women – lacks thematization (John, 2019).

Understanding how gender relations are organized and experienced is at the heart of social work. Both feminism and social work have evolved from their initial focus on a mere relatively uniform and unified reality and now the emphasis on theorizing diversity. Within complex yet similar realms, both share key principles, diverse knowledge base, and practice including the commitment to social justice, the importance of a critical and reflexive stance on social work, and the valuing of personal experience as political (Wendt and Moulding, 2017). Social workers are expected to respond to the most complex social problems of the day, including rising inequalities and conflict, and male-perpetrated violence and abuse (Dominelli and Ioakimidis, 2016).

Feminism plays a dynamic and central role in contemporary social work. In the context of India, it is important to examine women's life politics from their perspective, take into account their evolving circumstances, and engage in holistic analysis and negotiation. There is also a significant need to integrate feminist social work discourse in academia with the numerous practice-based success stories available in the Indian context. Furthermore, there has to be a close connection between grassroots initiatives and academic discussions on the subject.

We probably need more indigenous theory and practice tools, to bring more of the success stories as well as challenges from the grassroots into the social work classrooms and also take the classroom discourses into the community. The road ahead entails going back to the Indian roots with an emphasis on the local experiences and developing social work theories from an indigenous perspective.

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The development of regulation of social work in the UK and around the Commonwealth

David N Jones

Introduction

Many Commonwealth countries have enacted legislation to regulate the social work profession or are actively considering how to do this. This paper briefly surveys some developments in the Commonwealth but focuses primarily on the history of the regulation of social work in the United Kingdom (UK), documenting the different stages in the campaign to achieve recognition of social work as a profession and some of the challenges which remain. The paper poses the questions: Why regulate? Regulate what? How to regulate? What is the impact of regulation? A key question is: who defines (and controls) the profession? This article draws heavily on a report by the author published by the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) which addressed the issues of regulation of social workers (Jones, 2018).

The author is a registered social worker, qualifying in 1974. He has extensive national and local government, NGO sector and private sector experience. He is a Governor of a local National Health Service (NHS) healthcare provider and has always worked in multi-professional settings. His doctorate from Warwick University researched the impact of quality inspection on social work practice. David was Global Coordinator of The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development overseen by the International Federation of Social workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work and the International Council on Social Welfare (IFSW/IASSW/ICSW) (2012-20), editing four global reports. He has published and spoken globally on social work practice, social service management and regulation of social work and social services, children's services, child abuse, social work and disasters, international social policy and the history of social work. He is co-chair of the Comparative Histories of Commonwealth Social Work Project Group.

Regulation in the Commonwealth

Several countries in the Commonwealth have established forms of regulation of social work since the 1970s (Jones, 2007). The Australian Association of Social Workers regulates qualifications and the different states are exploring forms of statutory regulation (Miller, 2016; McCurdy et al., 2020). Canada has regulation of social workers with slightly different arrangements in each Province and a close link with the system of regulation in the United States of America (USA) (Comer and Bell, 2020). New Zealand (Worsley et al., 2019), South Africa (Mazibuko and Gray, 2004) and Zimbabwe all have statutory regulation of social workers as well as of the qualifications framework. The National Council for Social Work [Establishment] Act 2022 was signed into force by the Nigerian President in December (Adebayo, 2022). The UK regulated all social work qualifications from 1970 and some fields of social work had an earlier form of self-regulation; regulation of social workers was introduced in the 1990s, as described below.

Several Commonwealth countries are actively exploring forms of regulation (Palattiyil et al., 2015; Gray, 2019), including for example India, Kenya (Gray, 2019), Malaysia (Malaysian Association of Social Workers, 2003; Amin and Azizul, 2019), and Trinidad & Tobago. Being aware of these diverse developments, the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) is planning a webinar series on developments in regulation during 2023 (www.cosw.info).

Why regulation?

The classic public sector rationale for regulation of any profession is that:

- it provides a foundation of principles and values;

- this is transparent and those regulated are therefore in some way accountable to service users, the wider public and peer professionals;
- there is predictability and consistency so that people know what to expect and the quality which should be delivered, with sanctions when these expectations are not delivered;
- regulation confers a comparable status alongside other professions; and,
- it is argued that regulation is especially important for social work because it operates in a field with highly contested values and use of state power.

Who defines the profession?

Exploration of regulation in its different forms leads to the inevitable question of who defines and controls the profession – who sets the standards and the sanctions. In particular, is this done by the members of the profession or by an outside body or government which imposes the regulation on those regulated? The traditional critique of professionalisation and regulation is that it becomes a conspiracy against the public to protect the professionals (Shaw, 1906/2003; Illich, 1977). All these are particularly sensitive issues in social work.

What type of regulation?

There are various forms of regulation around the Commonwealth and used within each country in respect of different professional groups. I have reviewed these elsewhere and do not have space to elaborate here (Jones, 2018; Jones, 2020). The main questions (with some examples of answers) are:

- Why regulation?
    - See above
- Regulation for whom?
    - Service users, government, other professions, own profession
- Regulation of whom?
    - Qualified professionals, post holders, specified roles
- Regulation of what?
    - training and qualifications, services and structures, individual practice and behaviour
- Accountable to whom?
    - Professional peers, government, independent regulator, employer
- Regulators appointed by whom?
    - Profession, government, independent body
- Regulation by whom?
    - Independent body, profession, government,
- Consequences of regulation?
    - Sanctions, penalties, loss of right to work, loss of qualifications, loss of right to provide services
- Paid for by whom?
    - Registrants, employers, government

Regulating social work in the UK – How did we get here? (pre- 1970-1980)

Whilst some specialisms within social work developed regulation earlier in the century, the framework for regulation of social work qualifications as a single profession was introduced in 1970 with the creation of the Central Council for the Education and Training of Social Workers (CCETSW), which survived until 2000. The focus was on regulation of the content of professional qualifications, later expanded to include a continuum of practice qualifications from basic service delivery to postgraduate awards and a stronger focus on the quality of outcomes (Bamford, 2015; Bamford and Bilton, 2020).

In 1976 the BASW AGM in Nottingham 'approved in principle proposals for a scheme of accreditation', by large majority, implying support for regulation of the practice and behaviour of individual social workers. BASW convened a Joint Steering Group of several organisations, including the directors' associations and

social worker representative bodies (e. g. the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS), Residential Care Association (RCA) and BASW), with observers from government which produced a second and final report with recommendations for ways forward in 1980 (Joint Steering Group, 1980). However, also in 1980, the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) published an analysis of the proposals suggesting that the costs and effort involved would be 'disproportionate' (Malherbe, 1980). This was a serious blow and undermined the campaign.

At that time, all political parties were opposed to the proposal for a social work register, not least because all the major employers were not convinced, including local government and the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). At that time, the private sector was largely restricted to residential care and did not employ many social workers. Insofar as there was any mechanism for testing the views of service users, the feedback was that people were ambivalent about the proposals and not really interested; the consumer movement was only just emerging at the time. More seriously, social workers themselves were divided, with the main unions actively opposed.

The main arguments directed against regulation were that social work was already regulated by employers, there was a risk of double jeopardy for individuals facing challenges from both employers and regulators, that regulation as a profession was elitist and inconsistent with social work values and objectives, and that any form of regulation would be too expensive.

How did we get here? (1980-87)

Whilst the start of the 1980s saw considerable setbacks for the campaign for recognition of the social work profession through statutory regulation, the issue did not go away. In 1982, the Barclay Committee on the roles and tasks of social workers, set up by government, concluded that the committee had some sympathy for regulation but felt the 'case not made' (Barclay Committee, 1982). BASW persisted with the launch of a further campaign, spearheaded by Sylvia Woolfe and Terry Bamford which kept the issue alive.

However, during the 1980s, the policy and organisational context was changing. There was increasing out-sourcing of services by local authorities resulting in an increasing diversity of employers, evidence of poor decisions on disciplinary cases by local councils began to emerge (including cover-up of abuse scandals), a number of child abuse tragedies hit the headlines leading to concern about the quality of practice and management and there was an increasing concern about standards. The increasingly consumerist culture, placing a high value on individual experience of services with rights to complain and challenge alongside the growth in articulate service user groups, were significant contributors to this trend.

In 1987, The Rowntree Trust convened a consultation on the regulation of social work involving all the main stakeholder groups. This led to the formation of the General Social Services Council (GSSC) Action Group, including representatives of local government, professions, directors and regulators under the aegis of the National Institute for Social Work (NISW), chaired by Sir Peter Barclay supported by Daphne Statham (the Director). Bill Utting (Chief Inspector of Social Services) was an active observer in the group.

How did we get here? (1987-97)

The GSSC Action Group commissioned an independent study by Professor Roy Parker. *Safeguarding Standards* was published in 1990 and recommended that the government should legislate to create a statutory regulator (Jones, 1990; Parker, 1990). The scope of regulation was recommended to embrace social work and social care, protection of title and sanctions for individuals found guilty of poor practice (General Social Services Council Action Group, 1993). The Action Group then reformed as the General Social Services Council Implementation Group and worked up a costed model of regulation (General Social Services Council Implementation Group, 1997).

Meanwhile, European Union Directives on Mutual Recognition of Diplomas raised issues of UK comparability with the rest of Europe and in particular the standard of a three-year minimum degree

level qualification for professional activities. This implied benchmarks against both other professions and other countries (European Economic Community, 1989; Jones and Pierce, 1990; European Economic Community, 1992).

The Conservative government procrastinated about its response but was not enthusiastic. In 1996 the government published *Obligations of care: a consultation paper on the setting of conduct and practice standards for social services staff*, which stopped short of a formal regulatory framework (Department of Health, 1996). However, the Labour Party embraced the idea and its manifesto for the 1997 general election included a commitment to legislate for a regulatory body for social work and social care.

How did we get here? (1997-2015)

Following a landslide victory in the 1997 election, the Labour government published a consultative White Paper in 1998 *Modernising Social Services* (Department of Health, 1998) including a commitment to legislate for regulatory bodies in each of the four UK countries (Brand, 1999). The Care Standards Act was passed in 2000 and work immediately started to prepare the ground including a *Draft code of conduct for staff and also a code of practice for agencies for the General Social Care Council* (Jones and Corrigan, 2000; Office for Public Management, 2000). The inclusion of the code of practice for agencies recognised that the practice of social workers is crucially dependent on the agency environment in which they are employed. In 2001, separate but inter-connected regulatory bodies were created in the four countries of the UK. They jointly implemented statutory *Codes of practice for social care workers and employers.* Protection of the title of social worker was implemented in 2002. The regulators in the three smaller countries immediately moved to regulate both social work and social care but the General Social Care Council (GSCC) in England consulted on regulation of social care but ultimately decided against doing so, chiefly because of the large numbers involved.

Having existed for almost ten years, the government suddenly announced in 2010, without consultation, that the GSCC in England would be disbanded and the regulation of social work would be transferred to the newly renamed Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) (GSCC, 2012). The HCPC had no prior experience of a code for employers in other sectors and refused to continue to support the code for social work, although the code continued to be applied in the rest of the UK. Social work was the biggest professional group within HCPC, which had no prior experience of the social work environment and arguably found the adjustment to the more 'political' environment of social work more than challenging.

How did we get here? (2016-2022)

HCPC and social work developed a working relationship, although problems continued arguably resulting from the different roles and employment environment of social work as compared with the health professions. In particular, the Department for Education, which had responsibility for children's social work (including the majority of regulated social workers), seemed to find it unsatisfactory that the profession was regulated by a health regulator. The government therefore announced in 2016, again without consultation, that 'social work in England would be moved from HCPC to new regulator'. The 2017 Children and Social Work Act resulted in the creation of a new body, Social Work England. In anticipation of this change, BASW published UK-wide principles for regulation and expectations of Social Work England in 2018 (Jones, 2018). Social Work England was launched in 2019 (Social Work England, 2019). The government failed to appoint any social workers to the Board, apart from the Chief Executive and staff, arguing that this was not necessary, despite protests from the profession. It took several years before two registered social workers were appointed to the Board.

Workforce challenges

Before 1970, social work qualifications in the UK were diverse and fragmented between different specialisms. It took more than two decades to achieve a requirement that social workers must be qualified. Between 1971 and 2001, CCETSW developed a UK-wide, continuum of qualifications, including a practice learning award and advanced awards. Social work qualifications evolved from a two-year (minimum) higher education diploma Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (although many took the

qualification as part of a degree), Certificate in Social Service, Diploma in Social Work, and eventually a minimum requirement of a degree level qualification (CCETSW, 1995). This was to some extent influenced by the 1999 Bologna Process aiming to achieve Higher Education comparability in degrees and qualifications across Europe (Engelberg et al., 2012; Campanini, 2015; European Higher Education Area (EHEA), 2017). CCETSW also developed a range of vocational qualifications in social care (CCETSW and City and Guilds, 1997).

The constant debate between employers, universities and education providers saw the emergence of some creative and effective partnerships but also a continuing struggle around the appropriate scope of the basic qualification.

Those working in the arena of qualifications are wearily familiar with the frequency of structural change at national level. The disruption of these changes must have contributed to the uneven development of qualifications, not only in the social care sector.

Reflections

There has been constant disruption and upheaval in the regulation of social work practice and qualifications in England since 2000. Whilst there has been little consistency in England, there have been more positive partnerships in the rest of UK. There continues to be a struggle between the funding power of government and the managerial concerns of service providers and between the perspectives of employers and the vision of education. There is evidence of a more authoritative and confident professional voice to work alongside service users and in partnership with other stakeholders. There is a growing research evidence base but still many areas which are under-researched. The key role of social workers was recognised in many places during the pandemic, but the evidence still points to the need for more positive working environments and financial recognition of the skills required. Finally, it is perhaps inevitable and constructive that there remain tensions between stakeholders and regulators.

Commonwealth developments?

Over the coming months and years, COSW and others will observe whether countries continue to work towards regulation of social work or whether, in the face of budget pressures and social changes, social work will continue to be exploited and unrewarded.

In the face of the major challenges ahead, the basic questions remain: who does and who should define social work?

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Global social work and the Commonwealth – Finding a common pathway

Keynote lecture (day two)

George Palattiyil

What issues surface when we talk of the Commonwealth and Global Social Work?

These notes are from a keynote address at the Comparative Histories of the Development of Social work across the Commonwealth International Webinar, 31 March – 1 April 2022.

They were preceded by a discussion of a major development in social work in the contemporary Western world. This is the professionalization and regulation of social work. The question was posed 'Has the regulation of the profession by statutory bodies benefitted the people social work is committed to serve?' and the discussion that followed speculated upon how much of this could and would crossover to social work in the global South.

The interplay of the north and south is the subject of my concern in this short paper. In theory, social work across the Commonwealth of Nations and indeed the world, is concerned with the impact of poverty and inequality, and with promoting human rights and social justice (Palattiyil, et al., 2019), and collective ways to advance human development. With a commitment to promoting social change, empowerment of people and respect for diversity, social work engages people and structures to address global challenges and enhance wellbeing (International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Federation of Social Workers, 2014). So far, so good, but what of the concrete realities of today's contexts for social work practice?

Professional social workers are on the frontline addressing some of today's most pressing global issues. The connected global challenges of forced migration, climate change, natural disasters and pandemics ALL call for social work's collective efforts in finding sustainable solutions. When we consider the degree and extent of the challenges, we can conclude that, speaking generally, with its tendency to concentrate on individuals to the expense of communities – their private troubles rather than public issues (C. Wright Mills) – in the global North there is less space for social workers to engage in community, cultural and societal challenges than is the case in the global South. Yet, due to historical and hegemonic reasons, how social work is conceptualised, taught and 'done' in the contemporary Western world has tended to dominate thinking and practice elsewhere in the world.

Yet this Western context is not static.

The commodification and bureaucratization of social work in the West, I believe, have given way to managerialism and neo-liberal imperatives, driven by an effort to promote an outcome-based approach that seeks to prescribe and measure effective social work. I feel such approaches leave out the 'social' in social work. As we all know, relationship is the core of good social work practice (Ruch, et al., 2010). While regulation and systematisation may be a step in the right direction, I believe the success of social work is rooted in building a partnership between the social work profession, service users and the state – a collective stewardship to promote human rights and social justice for all. When the state's actions, e.g. in the form of the contemporary domination of Western social work by managerialism (Rogowski, 2011) becomes the prime mover, then the public lose out.

What does this mean for social work in the Commonwealth countries? What might be the bulwarks against the absorption by the global south of less helpful forms of social work? What are the indigenous strengths of countries of the Commonwealth such as India, the peoples of Africa that came under British rule, the Caribbean? When it comes to resisting some of the unwelcome aspects of social work from the global north, can the empire strike back??

Education is viewed by some (Paulo Freire, for example) as a tool to advance oppression. As a product of Western values, the knowledge base of professional social work is rooted in evidence-informed literature. We need to carefully consider how much of western social work can be exported. What place does indigenous knowledge, practice wisdom, cultural norms and traditional values have in such theoretical milieu? Space needs to be made at the table for centuries-old building blocks of good social work. In order for this to happen western social work needs to undergo an introspective 'moment'. Today we have the tools to do this. At a time when the 'Black Lives Matter' movement and 'decolonising the curriculum' are an often used vocabulary in the social work lexicon, we have been made mindful of how unconscious biases, and certain dominant ideas and discourses deemed as 'the truth' (Cook, 2020) can limit the exploration of subjugated knowledge (Abram and Cruce, 2007) that allows voices from marginalised individuals and communities to be heard.

Decolonising the curriculum invites uncomfortable questions that interrogate and challenge accepted knowledge and thinking. I believe the history of social work, globally and locally needs to engage in a debate on the history of the minoritised communities, i.e. the history of race, slavery and colonialism. How do we create space for a critical examination, through a decolonial framework, of the cultural and historical underpinnings driving racism, of the 'assumed dominance' of the Western knowledge? This process can assist in the survival and prospering of ethical social work by according value and respect to knowledges and practices that have hitherto been overshadowed by the western canon of social work thinking, writing and practice.

If that is a valid aspiration, we then need to follow that with a critical question. That is – if knowledge is universal and social work is a global profession, then why is there a lack of indigenous knowledge from the 'subjugated' countries informing social work education in the Western centric environments? For example, in a profession that has been secular for decades in the global north, where is the room for the spiritual and religious dimensions of caring that remain a valid and powerful contribution to the work of caring for people? The ability to organise on a local and community level has been eroded in western social work, whereas elsewhere in the world, social work is successfully engaging to bring about meaningful change in refugee camps, in reaction to environmental disasters, and to alleviate poverty and hunger.

For example, in the post-colonial 21st century, Africa lives with complex issues such as poverty, combatting the impact of decades of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, gender inequality, and years of self-serving political regimes that have continued to widen the abyss of inequalities. Against the backdrop of these daily multi-dimensional realities and intersectional concerns, social work in Africa is embracing the notions of care, connection and community. 'Ubuntu – I am because we are' embraces the idea that human beings cannot exist in isolation.

In 2020, the *African Journal of Social Work* (AJSW) defined 'Ubuntu' as: 'a collection of values and practices that people of Africa or of African origin view as making people authentic human beings. While the nuances of these values and practices vary across different ethnic groups, they all point to one thing – an authentic individual human being is part of a larger and more significant relational, communal, societal, environmental and spiritual world'.

Michael Onyebuchi Eze (Oniya bachirees) in his book *Intellectual History in Contemporary South Africa*, avers that at the heart of 'Ubuntu' is the notion that a 'person is a person through other people strikes an affirmation of one's humanity through recognition of an "other" in his or her uniqueness and difference'. He points out that it is a 'demand for a creative intersubjective formation in which the "other" becomes a mirror (but only a mirror) for my subjectivity'. He goes on to suggest, that this idealism means 'that humanity is not embedded in my person solely as an individual; my humanity is co-substantively bestowed upon the other and me. Humanity is a quality we owe to each other. We create each other and need to sustain this *otherness* creation. And if we belong to each other, we participate in our creations: *we are because you are, and since you are, definitely I am*. The "I am" is not a rigid subject,

but a dynamic self-constitution dependent on this *otherness* creation of relation and distance' (Eze, 2010).

Ubuntu, when interwoven into social work practice, has the potential to stimulate sustainable development through the basic recognition that our shared humanity and unassailable reality of our situatedness in the human community goes beyond the present and touches on both the past and future communities.

So, when I look at the idea of global social work, what comes to my mind is the notion of diversity that social work encompasses – a profession that is global in nature responding to local needs. Yet, no matter how diverse, the core of OUR social work profession is embedded in the universal values of equality, worth, and dignity of all people. It is motivated by the aspirations for human rights and social justice; and strives to alleviate poverty and empower marginalised and oppressed people in order to realise their true potential (Palattiyil and Sidhva, 2012). Social work needs to embark on a bold vision that allows a fusion of north-south knowledge, and a greater understanding of our shared humanity, such that we can spend time away from bureaucratic tick-boxes to build relationships with individuals, families and communities. In other words, what can social work in the global North learn from the community oriented practices in the global South as a way of resisting bureaucratization and managerialism?

Co-production and Ubuntu are central to this. The Global North, but specifically western social work, needs to become more humble and receptive in the face of the vast amount of knowledge and skills that is offered by social work elsewhere in the world. The best of social work derives from all the peoples of the world.

As Lao Tse said: 'Go with the students – Live with them – Learn from them – Love them – Start with what they know – Build with what they have'.

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Reclaiming the history of social work education in Africa: Initial learnings from the Association for Social Work Education in Africa (ASWEA) document analysis project

Linda Kreitzer, Valerie Ouedraogo, Antoinette Lombard, Janestic Twikirize, Ziblim Abukari, Abye Tassé, Yassannah Musah

In Ghana, there are symbols that draw clarity to a point of view or speech. These are Adinkra symbols, and each is accompanied by a proverb or moral statement. The Sankofa is a bird looking back and this symbolizes the importance of learning from the past. Our research group has put this symbol into action.

Three social welfare conferences held in the 1960s (Ghana, Zambia, and Egypt) concerning social work in West Africa and three expert group workshops of social work educators in the early 1970s, paved the way for the creation of The Association for Social Work Education in Africa (ASWEA) in 1973 with the support of the international community, African governments, and non-government organizations. Its purpose was to bring together academics and practitioners interested in African social work education to discuss the issue of social work education in Africa and to be a guiding light to make social work education and practice relevant to social issues in Africa. This included promoting the profession on the continent, supporting research and teaching, providing an avenue to exchange information and experience throughout Africa about the profession of social work, and to address the need to make social work education culturally relevant to the continent of Africa. With a history of colonialism, independence, and westernization, social work education in Africa needed to revolutionize its training and practice to address the needs of the continent.

During its existence, between 1973-1989, the organization engaged 34 African countries in these discussions and produced 21 documents highlighting conference presentations and workshops as well as two social work training directories and a selection of case studies from both Anglophone and Francophone countries. Presentation and workshop discussions included the indigenization of social work education, the role of supervision in training, family planning, techniques of teaching, working with young people, the role of social work in national development planning post-independence, rural issues, importance of social research, community development and community organizing, and gender issues. By 1990, through many factors, the organization dissolved.

In 2000, Dr. Linda Kreitzer learned of this organization and through in-depth internet searching, found all but three documents. She also realized that few African social work educators knew about these documents. For 10 years, she scanned and printed the documents, produced 15 sets (each set has six volumes) and distributed them to different social work education programs in Africa. CDs were part of the 15 sets and were distributed with the hard copy documents to African universities with social work

L to R: Linda Kreitzer, Valerie Ouedraogo, Antoinette Lombard, Janestic Twikirize, Ziblim Abukari, Abye Tassé, Yassannah Musah

programs. They were put online at Witwatersrand University in South Africa through their archives program (ASWEA, n.d.). A book (Kreitzer, 2012) and book chapter (Kreitzer, 2013) were also written about these documents.

Believing the best analysis of these documents should come from African social work educators, a research group was formed in 2019 to analyze these documents page by page (3,500 pages altogether). The researchers represent different parts of Africa and are prominent social work educators in Africa. Recently, three of the original members of ASWEA met with the team in Uganda for an important conversation about the formation and work of ASWEA, adding to their understanding of ASWEA. The outcome of the project is a book for African social work educators to use in the classroom to teach African social work history, emphasizing how the profession came and evolved on the continent.

Preliminary learnings from this analysis are striking. The issues that were discussed in the 1970s and 1980s are still being discussed today. There was an incredible engagement of both educators and practitioners as well as an effort to bring translators who facilitated the linguistic barriers between Anglophone and Francophone. There was amazing support from the international, government and non-government organizations in the first ten years and eventually this support diminished overtime. One of the emerging questions is: What is needed today to strengthen our social work associations nationally and on the continent? A lack of case studies was addressed by ASWEA through documenting case studies but there continues to be a lack of African social work case studies in today's classrooms. Making social work education more culturally relevant continues to be a theme for social work education today and what it means in the African context. How can the profession effectively engage in the national development processes in Africa through working with other disciplines and sectors to effect change? Terminology continues to be debated; are social workers, community workers, social development workers the same or are they separate concepts with commonalities? These are but a few important issues for analysis from these 17 years of ASWEA work around social work education in Africa.

As a research team, we are learning so much about how social work education evolved in Africa. We look forward to sharing our more comprehensive results in due course.

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Development of social work along the Zambezi

Noel Garikai Muridzo and Joachim Cuthbert Mumba

Introduction

Noel Garikai Muridzo

Joachim Cuthbert Mumba

The discovery of minerals and the agricultural promise presented by Zambia and Zimbabwe, drew Europeans in large numbers. The early years of the colonial projects in both countries left the colonial administrators with a dire need for labour. This labour shortage was solved through the introduction of a tax system that forced and incorporated blacks into the money economy (Hampson and Kaseke, 1987; Noyoo, 2021). The introduction of the money economies produced social problems that included prostitution, crime, juvenile delinquency and destitution in the newly established commercial centres (mines and towns). Social work in Zambia and Zimbabwe is a profession that was largely imported by the colonial governments in response to the social challenges that were associated with the problems that were generated by colonization itself (Mupedziswa, 2020; Muridzo et al., 2021; Mwansa, 2011).

This paper chronicles the rich and diverse historical development of social work in Zambia and Zimbabwe: former colonies of the British Empire with the former a member of the Commonwealth and the later pursuing to re-join the group. While the development of social work in the two countries is closely linked to the colonial legacy and mirrors British practice and legal system, social work in Zimbabwe is linked to Zambian social work. Brief histories of social work in the respective countries are presented.

History of social work in Zambia

The social work profession in Zambia was introduced by the British Colonial Administration during the late 1930s, partly in response to the growing problem of poverty, destitution, and juvenile delinquency especially in the developing mining towns. Western missionaries were also the initiators of social welfare service in colonial Zambia with different motives from those of the colonialists, as Christianity was the major driving force behind their efforts. Later at the time, the colonial administration and mining companies came in to provide professional services using expatriates recruited on short contracts from the United Kingdom. Suitable local candidates for the various social welfare positions were then sought by respective authorities in the colony. Social work interventions by colonial authorities were however piece-meal in nature and only meant to subdue Africans as a way of maintaining the colonial set-up. At the time, social welfare interventions were not oriented towards developing the local capacities. However, this endeavour proved extremely difficult due to the non-availability of locally trained personnel. It was for this reason that field workers with a limited educational background became the first indigenous social welfare workers in Northern Rhodesia. An attempt to professionalise social welfare matters in Northern Rhodesia was done with the introduction of a course at Mindolo in Ndola in 1951. The training was earmarked for Africans working in social welfare organisations.

The main social welfare service offered to Africans was recreation with the exception of Barotseland, where three orphanages for African children existed (Noyoo, 2021). A standard generic social work course for Africans was introduced following the establishment, in 1961, of the Oppenheimer College of Social Services located at what is now called Ridgeway campus of the University of Zambia in Lusaka. The social work programme proved beneficial to practitioners, given the terrain and the multiplicity of social problems in the country as it gave a holistic appraisal of social realities. The generalist approach further gave practitioners the latitude to intervene at multiple levels. After independence, social work education did not change at all and instructions continued as before. The Oppenheimer College of Social Services

was preoccupied with the blending of American and British models. The philosophical underpinnings of both American and British social work models were pivotal in shaping the curriculum of social work in post-colonial Zambia.

The programme was later moved to the University of Zambia (UNZA) great east road campus in 1966 following its official opening to the public and provided instruction in social work at both degree and diploma levels. The main advantage of the University of Zambia in taking over the Oppenheimer programme was that there was an availability of trained staff to handle a professional social work programme. Furthermore, the Social Work Department at the University of Zambia had a reasonable budget for fieldwork placements and supervisory visits (Noyoo, 2013). In years to come, social work educators would constantly grapple with the foreign origin of the profession, as they sought after more relevant models of social welfare for a Zambian context. After attaining her independence in 1964, there were attempts to re-tailor social welfare approaches to the needs of the Zambian people. Noyoo (2013) argues that at the time, the ideology of the ruling party, the United National Independence Party (UNIP), dictated the pace as well as the content of development. Major policies in the social and economic sector were aligned with the ideology of Humanism whose motivation was to establish an egalitarian and non-racial society based on its principle of 'man' being the centre of all human activities. It was for this reason that social services were free and universal for all citizens between the 1960s and early 1980s. The government also placed great emphasis on community development in the same decades as an important arm of social welfare.

Following the liberalisation of the economy in the 1990s the educational provision witnessed fundamental changes as we saw a proliferation of public and private training institutions offering social work programmes at various levels. Some of the institutions offering social work programmes include the University of Zambia, Mulungushi University, DMI St Eugen University, National Institute of Public Administration, Evelyn Hone College, Kitwe Community Development College, Monze Community Development College and Rusangu University.

History of social work in Zimbabwe

The development of social work is best understood by appreciating a country's pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial experiences (Nhapi, 2021). It is therefore important to appreciate three important phases in the development of social work: pre-colonial, colonial and independent phase. The precolonial phase was characterised by communal life with well-developed indigenous responses to social problems, social life and problem solving. The principle of membership, solidarity and shared responsibility guided society (Mupedziswa and Mushunje, 2021). Mugumbate and Bhowasi (2021) argue that pre-colonial Zimbabwe had well established systems that responded to social issues and that these were uprooted by colonisation.

The colonial phase was characterised by the violent uprooting of indigenous way of life and the introduction of a particular type of capitalist social and economic formation that created pervasive economic and social dualism (Dhemba and Nhapi, 2020). This new order created its challenges. While professional social work in Zimbabwe developed as a response to the challenges brought about by colonisation and perceived threats to order: crime, prostitution, juvenile delinquency and destitution (Kaseke, 1991), Masuka (2015) is of the view social work in the colonial period was a mechanism of promoting human well-being and social control. Thus Kaseke (1991) traces the development of social work in Zimbabwe to the close ties with the country's colonial history, its orientation reflecting a wholesale transfer from the British experience.

Three key events mark consequential introduction of a formalised profession. The first was the recruitment of social workers. It was a statutory requirement for children between the ages of 5 and 16 years to be in school. To enforce the policy and to respond to truancy among this privileged population, the colonial government recruited a social worker employed as a school attendance programme officer: Mr. Kelly form the United Kingdom heralding the birth of social work practice in Rhodesia, now

Zimbabwe. It is important to note that the school attendance programme was exclusive: for white children reflecting a dual system (Mupedziswa, 1996). In 1949, the colonial regime recruited a black social worker: Mr Mwale who had been trained in Northern Rhodesia another British colony now Zambia. His brief was to attend to juvenile delinquency among urbanized black children. Emphasis was to keep the black population and particularly the juveniles in check.

The second key colonial social work event was the establishment of the Department of Social Welfare now the Department of Social Development, a statuary body providing assistance, in 1948 (Kaseke, 1991). For many years, social workers in the then Rhodesia were trained in Zambia and South Africa. In 1964 the Jesuit fathers, a Catholic order established the School of Social Work (Mupedziswa and Mushunje, 2021). Muridzo, Mukurazhizha and Simbine (2022) observe that social work in the colonial phase was guilty of acts of omission or commission that made social work a collaborator to human rights violation and social injustice.

A third key event was the opening of the School of Social Services, now School of Social Work by the Jesuit Fathers of the Roman Catholic Church in 1964 to train social workers (Chogugudza, 2009). Social work training has come of age and today social work training is offered at the School of Social Work Midlands State University, University of Zimbabwe, Bindura University of Science Education, Eziekiel Guti University, Women's University in Africa and Africa University (Dhemba and Nhapi, 2020). The third phase in the development of social work in Zimbabwe is the post-colonial phase. Important markers in this phase include the decentralisation of services, legislation of social work, the quest for relevance and the proliferation of social work education and practice.

Where to?

The legacy of colonization remains in Zambia and Zambia, with education, health, housing and social welfare among the areas still feeling the impact (Fox, 2010). Consequently, the relevance of social work in the two countries in terms of its philosophical, value and ideological base is questioned. In addition, social work was more of an instrument of social control than change. The quest for relevance of social work in Africa (Mupedziswa, 2000) has led to loud calls for Indigenisation (Osei-Hwedie, 1993; Twikirize, 2014), Radicalisation (Ankrah, 1987), and Africanisation of social work. These concepts of relevance emanate from the inadequacy of interventions given the structural issues that social work has to deal with. Social work has also evolved to adopt indigenous knowledge systems harnessing practices that can be adopted to bring about change and wellbeing of people in the Commonwealth. Philosophical frameworks such as Ubuntu have also been shared with the rest of the world and argued to be relevant. Others (Muridzo et al., 2022) call for a recalibration of social work education and practice by including and tackling problems affecting the continent which include poverty, social change, climate change, and development.

Conclusion

This article presented social work along the Zambezi (in Zimbabwe and Zambia) as an export of colonial powers (Mwansa, 2011), introduced to deal with the problems associated with colonisation itself. While social work in Zambia and Zimbabwe has evolved, calls for relevance grow louder. Social work needs to address itself to problems affecting the continent, which include poverty, social change, climate change, and development. Again, social work and people in both countries benefit from the adoption of indigenous knowledge systems to inform interventions.

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Indigenisation of social work education and practice: A call for decolonisation in South African higher education

Thembelihle Makhanya[*]

Social work in South Africa has been deeply influenced by colonialism and apartheid. In 2015-16 there were student protests calling for a more contextually relevant curriculum in all fields. This presentation reports on a research project based on interviews with ten postgraduate students in social work and twelve social work practitioners, following those student protests. Several quotations from the qualitative study were included in the presentation, illustrating the key findings.

The research outcomes provoke reflection on the historical development of social work education in South Africa and illustrate the continued exclusion of students coming from poorer and disadvantaged backgrounds. Learning was seen to remain problematic for students of African background, especially because of the reliance on English. Many students felt marginalised and alienated from learning as a result of lack of English language skills, digital ignorance, unfamiliarity with Western dominated modules and a failure to address the reality of the growing impact of unemployment facing social work professionals. Some students withdrew from the course because of their difficulty in coping with teaching in English and a feeling of exclusion.

There was concern about the Western model of oppression when applied to African culture, for example concerning the relationship between elders and younger people. Respondents felt that Western assumptions about the oppression of younger people by elders was not appropriate in an African context, for example; showing respect by remaining silent was not viewed as evidence of oppression.

The lack of any curriculum content about employment, management and entrepreneurship was seen as unhelpful, because these issues were crucial to the future employment and income generation of social workers.

In summary, the lack of use of indigenous languages was seen as a major omission and a result of the problematic history of social work education. There was a need to include a greater focus on digital skills and technologies, as well as on employment and entrepreneurial skills which are essential for future survival as a social work professional in South Africa. The reliance on Western theories and models of practice was seen as misguided, failing to recognise the reality of social life and social problems and of South African social work practice.

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[*] Summary and editing by David N Jones.

Decolonising classroom social work through conceptualising *Ubuntu*-social work and its values

Eleanor Alvira Hendricks

Social work around the world has been defined from Westernised / Eurocentric perspectives, values, and epistemologies. It is now being progressively more acknowledged that all epistemologies are culturally constructed, and that Westernised practice approaches represent cultural and epistemological traditions of the west and does not exemplify the cultural values, philosophies and knowledge systems in other contexts such as *Ubuntu*. Social workers around the world are calling out western colonialism, which has resulted in the imposition of western social work and are advocating for us all to embrace epistemological diversity. This piece is a response to the many calls by social workers to disrupt epistemic colonisation and articulate alternative philosophies that underpin social work values beyond the worldviews of a white western colonial dominance. Foregrounding the contradictions experienced in the author's social work education in South Africa, this piece addresses the question of how *Ubuntu* shapes and informs social work values.

Ubuntu values developed by African educationists from Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa to decolonise social work practice and education and aid in rendering effective services to indigenous people on the African continent. African clients embraced the values as it aligns with their indigenous way of life and Africanised social work services in a manner that resonates with the most vulnerable people (women, children, older persons, and the underprivileged) across the African continent.

Value of hospitality interlinked with association and sincere relationship building

Hospitality is a way of life in black households across Africa. Portraying hospitable behaviour toward a visitor is a sign of respect and acceptance – this accelerates positive relationships amongst people. Integrating hospitality into the social work curriculum would enable social workers to work with communities from black disadvantaged communities. Furthermore, when social workers display enthusiasm to aid and assist clients in addressing their needs (information, direction, healthcare, sustenance, housing, and social justice) without expecting any form of compensation but as an act of humility Africans may disregard the stigma associated with seeking counsel and intervention, which is a taboo in the African society.

Value of the power of community

Social work on the African continent to date mainly focuses on urban communities and disregards rural communities. In South Africa, like many other countries in Africa, social work agencies are located in urban areas / towns resulting in the most vulnerable communities in rural areas not being able to access social work services due to poverty, unavailability of transportation and language barriers. Social workers only visit rural communities once in a while as fieldwork or community outreach projects this has been termed 'neoliberal racism' which means urban areas receive services and rural areas are neglected. Since there is very limited social work intervention in rural areas, communities depend on each other to initiate initiatives in aid of addressing communal issues. *Ubuntu* social workers go in rural communities and embrace established initiatives and collaborate with communities in creating sustainable projects and initiatives that will elevate rural communities.

These two values, as a starting point to decolonise social work education and practice in Africa, have been piloted in selected African countries and proven to work well. Thus, it is suggested that more Africans adopt these values into their curriculum and practice.

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From social welfare to social work: Tracking the growth and development of social work paraprofessional training

Cerita Buchanan and Sarah Bailey-Belafonte

Cerita Buchanan

Sarah Bailey-Belafonte

Much of the documentation on the history of social work and social work education in the English-speaking Caribbean has been based on the foundational studies conducted by Dr John Maxwell. Dr Maxwell passed in August 2022, and we believe that we must acknowledge his significant contribution before starting this article. Dr Maxwell was a giant and genius among men, a scholar, a stalwart, a pioneer of Caribbean social work education and practice, a legend, and an overall amazing person. He was a man deeply concerned with the challenges of daily living, inequalities, institutionalised racism, and economic exploitation. His contribution to the development of social work scholarship is unmatched. He played a pivotal role in the development of the Association of Caribbean Social Work Educators and the *Caribbean Journal of Social Work*. Through these bodies, he increased the quantity and quality of Caribbean social work scholarship as it relates to social work theory and practice, curriculum advancement, and cutting-edge research across the region and diaspora. His life was a testament to his commitment to community service and education, he will be dearly missed.

Dr John Maxwell

Professional social work development has been well documented and given much focus. Paraprofessional social workers, however, have not been given the same attention. While often overlooked, they have played a substantive role in the development of the English-speaking Caribbean. As the importance of training for professional social workers increased, so did the need for assistants with basic skills and competencies to support their work and interventions. Buchanan (2017) defines a paraprofessional social worker as 'anyone who has acquired less than a BSc degree and is operating in the social service sector' (p.108). According to Holder Dolly, paraprofessional social workers have specific cognitive skills (e.g., non-complex client / client system evaluation, foundational understanding of conceptualised practice, able to differentiate between concrete service needs vs therapeutic need); Interpersonal / Relationship skills (e.g., listening, responding, referring, asking questions) and Interviewing / Intervention skills (e.g., assist in preliminary assessment; structure and conduct interviews; goal setting, planning, and contracting; and termination) (The University of the West Indies Open Campus, 2009). This article will briefly explore the development of the first documented paraprofessional training centre in the English-speaking Caribbean. It will look at their key courses and how their evolution mirrored the transformation of the centre as it met the demands of paraprofessionals and social development.

The Social Welfare Training Centre

To aid in understanding the development of the centre in 1962, one needs to understand what was occurring in Jamaica, and to an extent, the wider English-speaking Caribbean before its inception. According to Maxwell (2002), before 1948, the focus of the social welfare system was to meet people's basic needs through material support. There was limited capacity building and a lack of increase in people's self-reliance. Welfare was offered mainly through the church and religious charities, via persons who could be considered paraprofessional social workers, i.e., individuals who were willing to serve and

commit to social welfare services and volunteer activities. There was a period of unrest in 1938, which led to the Moyne Commission in 1940. The Moyne commission study was conducted to investigate the social and economic conditions in the West Indies. Findings and recommendations indicated that there needed to be expansion and improvement in overall human welfare services, specifically: education, health services, housing, as well as the establishment of labour departments, land settlements, and social welfare facilities (Maxwell, 2002, pp. 18-19). Therefore, alongside several changes as it relates to the provision of social welfare and the sources of the services, there was also a marked development in professional social work as it relates to training, education, and duties (Maxwell, 2002). For a more comprehensive history, refer to Maxwell (2002), Baker and Maxwell (2011), and Rock (2013).

The Central Council of Voluntary Services was one of the first agencies responsible for training, alongside other duties to enhance the capacity of the voluntary social service sector in the 1940s (Maxwell, 2002). Following this the Colonial Development and Welfare Office funded the training of social welfare officers from 1943-1953, who worked as social work practitioners (Maxwell, 2002; Fergus, Bernard, and Soares, 2007). In 1961, The University of the West Indies (The UWI) started offering a two-year professional certificate in Social Work (Maxwell, 2002; Rock and Buchanan, 2014). And, in 1962, the Social Welfare Training Centre (SWTC) was established to 'train social workers in the public and non-governmental sectors in the Caribbean to work with the socially disadvantaged. In providing continuing education for local and regional social workers, the Centre, which vowed to be one of excellence, provided training for those who were not pursuing studies towards a degree' (Fergus, Bernard, and Soares, 2007, p.108). The Centre was housed within The UWI under the Extra Mural Department. The focus of this department was to provide outreach services, building a connection between the university and the communities that it serves. As the first of its kind, a unit dedicated to developing the capacity of paraprofessionals, the SWTC provided training in varying formats including short certificate courses, seminars, and workshops. There have been four heads of the Centre since 1962, and the training offered during their leadership reflected their academic background and interest, see table 1.

Table 1
Heads of Centre and main activities completed during their tenure

Sybil Francis (1962-1981)	• 4-month course: Principles and Practices of Social Work • Health and family life education courses • Population study courses
Geoff Brown (1981-1993)	• Related courses in clinical counselling for professionals • New courses: Working in the Ghetto; Working with Youth; Working in Rural Communities • Continuing seminar series on topical issues: women in development, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, social policy and legislation • American Field Service international / intercultural student exchange programme • Establishment of the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development

Lincoln Williams (1993-2017)	• Co-creator of *Caribbean Journal of Social Work* Introduction of: • Certificate course in addiction studies • Diploma in Youth Development Work • Certificate in Social Service • Community Leadership and Development Programme
Cerita Buchanan (2017- present)	• Social Work licensure and registration advocate • Specialized training: violence prevention, case management, counselling techniques • Psycho-educational youth programmes Introduction of following short courses: • Introduction to Social Work • Mental Health First Responders Course • Digital Social Work • Play Therapy

This article will focus on three key training programmes, the Principles and Practice of Social Work and two of its by-products, the Introduction to Social Work course and the Community Leadership and Development programme.

Four-month course in the Principles and Practice of Social Work

First graduating cohort from the course in 1963

The four-month course in the Principles and Practice of Social Work, affectionately known as the 4-month course, was developed in 1963 under its first Head of Centre, Sybil Francis (Maxwell, 2002; Fergus, Bernard, and Soares, 2007). The course was hailed as a form of best practice at the time and became the foundation on which many of the current paraprofessional programmes provided by the Centre have been based. Offered annually from 1963-2014, this course trained individuals from across the Caribbean, and many of the students, especially in the earlier years, would reside at the SWTC for its duration. The main objective of the course was to 'introduce participants from government and voluntary organizations to the theory and practice of social work with a view to increase their skills and knowledge base in order to become more effective practitioners. Other objectives include helping students acquire a better understanding of human beings and human interactions, Caribbean social structures, social problems with which social workers have to cope in the course of their work and possible new approaches to these problems. The programme also aimed to inspire students to continue their studies after they return to their jobs and communities and to make their own contribution to the body of social work knowledge in the Caribbean' (SWTC, 2014, quoted in Buchanan, 2017, pp. 114-115).

Due to the nature and amount of content covered, the course required complete immersion. It consisted of four months of training, eight hours a day (weekends not included).

Four-month course cohort in class, 2008

Over the period, the students completed 48 modules subsumed under the following topics:

- Social welfare and social development
- Social work theory and practice
- Human growth and development
- Family life education
- Human relations
- Parenting skills
- Proposal writing
- Introductory counselling, crisis counselling and psychology
- Professional ethics
- Crime and delinquency
- Social entrepreneurship
- Basic accounting

Practicums and field trips were integrated throughout the certificate, and each module had a practical component. Also important was the celebration of the multiple cultures that came together for the course which happened at the cultural evening event. This highly anticipated event occurred at the midpoint of the course, it aided in the understanding of the material, and increased cultural sensitivity. During the event, there were displays of cultural artifacts, performances (songs, dances, poems etc.), and culinary delights from the various islands represented on the course.

Cultural Evening – 2008 cohort

Following the 4-month course's inception, there was a proliferation of professional social work training programmes. For example, the BSc in social work started at The University of the West Indies (1988- Cave Hill Campus, 1989- Mona Campus, 1990- St Augustine Campus), University of Guyana (1970), College of Bahamas (1981), and University of Belize (1996). Therefore, the importance of trained professionals to support the changing social development landscape was further reinforced. As the professional and paraprofessional training programmes developed over time, they shifted social work best practices from their colonial foundation (Fergus, Bernard, and Soares, 2014). The programmes exposed students to the diverse

realities and needs of Caribbean people, as well as aided in the development of Caribbean identity. It also increased cultural relevance and sensitivity to diversity, while maintaining a balance of incorporating global standards. By the end of the programme in 2014, there were approximately 2,400 persons across the Caribbean who had completed the programme (Buchanan, 2017).

Introduction to Social Work (10-week course)

Class in session – 2020 10-week course cohort

Unfortunately, due to changing market demands, the 4-month course was not sustainable. Firstly, it was difficult for people to obtain leave from work to attend the course for its duration. Secondly, due to a general lack of understanding about the purpose of a social work paraprofessional, and the lack of support from a labour perspective in both the private and public sector regarding clear pay scale, duties, and positions, organisations were less likely to sponsor employees to attend the course. There was also an increase in the number of social work training institutions across the Caribbean, which reduced the number of international students who could attend the 4-month course, thus changing the clientele to mainly Jamaicans. Therefore, the Introduction to Social Work Course, also known as the 10-week course, was created using the core courses and competencies from the 4-month course and was first offered in 2016. The restructuring and new marketing strategies opened the course to additional students. The 4-month course was known as the paraprofessional certificate training, the 10-week course was marketed and catered to persons who already have a BSc in another area – and wanted additional training to enhance the degree they possessed – alongside persons who do not have a degree at all. The course is once a week, for three hours per session. The main objective is 'to provide a foundation on which students can begin to understand the roles and functions of a generalist social work practitioner and the importance of linking knowledge to practice. It introduces students to social work through an exploration of its history, philosophical foundation, code of ethics and its responsibility to respond to the needs of people in varying circumstances' (Social Work Training and Research Centre, 2022, p.1).

Community Leadership and Development Programme (CLDP)

CLDP first cohort being greeted by former Principal of The UWI, Open Campus, Dr. Longsworth

Another key course which has its foundation in the 4-month course is the CLDP, developed in 2015. Using the modules related to community development, a more comprehensive and focused program was built. To ensure that the programme captured all relevant aspects, a wide range of stakeholders

were engaged in the development of the course, including state and non-state organisations, and community grassroots leaders. The focus of the CLDP is on those who preferred specialized training in community work i.e., members of parliament and councillors, counsellors, NGOs etc.

Therefore, the focus of this course is to 'equip grassroots community leaders and activists, as well as interested professionals, with the critical knowledge and practical skills needed to exercise or influence effective participatory leadership and carry out empowering community development activities' (Social Welfare Training Centre, 2015, p.1). This course consists of three certificates, levels 1 and 2, which are catered to individuals who do not have a first degree. The advanced certificate is a combined and more advanced version of the courses offered in the first two certificates and is for those who already have a degree or degrees.

CLDP students in the field

Introductory Certificate (Level 1)	Community Organising	Leadership and Advocacy	Community Safety	Parenting for effective community life
Introductory Certificate (Level 2)	Research and Action	Community Profiling and Proposal Writing	Restorative Justice and Trauma sensitization	Sports and Cultural Activities
Advanced Certificate	Community Organisation and Leadership	Social Planning	Alternative Livelihoods and Entrepreneurship	Human Rights

Conclusion

In 2018, the Centre was renamed from the Social Welfare Training Centre to Social Work Training and Research Centre to better represent the nature of social work and the services that are provided. Additionally, the name change reflected the Centre's expanded role in youth work, community development, counselling, and other human and social development areas. In alignment with the social development and social work needs of the time and its new mandate, the Centre continues to provide relevant training in mental health, social work research and evaluation, play therapy, and general social work practice. It has also played an active role in advocating for: (1) licensing and /or registration of both professional and paraprofessional social workers; (2) establishment of infrastructure to support paraprofessionals such as providing an identity and space for the paraprofessional / social work assistant; and (3) upskilling of social work professionals as social work teaching and practice changes. Given the nature of the past and emerging futures social work needs to pay more attention to the paraprofessional social worker. There is recognition that paraprofessionals are invaluable to the further development of the profession and need to be appropriately trained to fit the niche area and designation of the assistant social worker.

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Social work's history in the context of public policy: Alberta, Canada

Jake Kuiken

Social work has typically found its pathway to becoming a profession in a context of economic, social, and cultural upheaval. It followed this pattern in the late 1800s in the territory that would become Alberta when settlers arrived in sufficient numbers. The fear-led federal decision hastened the purchase of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Co. to protect Canada's interest in the territory west of Ontario after the Americans purchased Alaska from Russia. However, millenniums of the Indigenous sovereignty and the Metis were regarded as rebellious and dismissed. These decisions led to the creation of reserves for the Indigenous Peoples while the Metis were isolated and betrayed so the Canadian Pacific Railway and agriculture could replace the fur trade as Canada's next staple economic driver.

In the absence of developing a legal structure, the federal government imposed the English Poor Laws of 1834 on the newly renamed North-Western Territory. The Alberta Act of 1905 carried the Poor Law structure forward even as Ontario rejected its adoption. In the post Rupert's Land era, a total of 25 residential schools were established in Alberta and an additional 20 in Saskatchewan, all operated by Christian churches.

Soon after the creation of the Territory, settlers arrived with the promise of land for homesteading, farming, and ranching. Among the new arrivals in 1897 was the 37-year-old Marion Coutts Carson who on her arrival in Calgary helped establish the first Local Council of Women, a Lady Aberdeen and Lady Lougheed initiative. Carson's social work carried on by helping develop a Calgary hospital for tuberculosis patients. As an activist, Carson was soon viewed as a socialist in community debates about public issues.

Dorothy King is considered the first credentialed social worker in Alberta, hired by Edmonton's Board of Public Welfare in 1918 as a graduate of the New York School of Social Welfare. In 1933, King was hired by the Montreal School of Social Welfare after McGill abandoned its social work programme. King operated the Montreal School on student fees, gifts, and her sheer determination to carry on.

There are other stories of individual efforts. However, the enactment of Alberta's infamous sterilisation law in the 1920s led the government's Department of Public Health to hire its first social workers to locate and identify prospective candidates for sterilisation. The programme and social workers' involvement continued until the law was repealed in 1971.

The creation of a national organisation for social workers began in the late 1920s and after the end of World War Two the number of social workers in Alberta began to increase significantly. A public crisis in Alberta's child welfare programme in the late 1940s contributed to the need for a provincial organisation so that by the early 1950s social workers in Alberta were organised as Branches of the Canadian Association of Social Workers. Three well-supported themes appear in the early discussions of the national branches: the need for an Alberta-based association of social workers; a school of social work; and professional legislation requiring social workers to be registered.

The Alberta Association of Social Workers (AASW) was established in 1961 as a society intended to promote the profession and serve its members. Early efforts to study the need for a school of social work began with a successful request for funds from the Calgary Junior League, a voluntary agency formed by the wives of American oil executives who came to develop the newly found oil and gas reserve. The funding recognised the shift to a new economic staple to drive and dominate the Alberta economy for decades influencing the province's social, economic, and political climate.

After several years of study, the government decided to support the establishment of a school of social work. Its rationale for doing so was that Alberta society was also undergoing change and the number of families in need of income support and the similar increases in the complexity of family issues in child welfare, would require professionally educated social workers. The School of Social Welfare at the University of Calgary admitted its first students in 1967. The choice of name was controversial because it was seen to depart from an association with the profession.

This period was also the beginning of the 60s Scoop, a time during which social workers were expected to remove Indigenous children from their families as part of a belief that they would be better off in foster care or adopted mostly by non-Indigenous families. It was not until the late 1980s and early 1990s that Government attempted to overhaul the child welfare system in Alberta. However, Indigenous and Metis children continue to be vastly overrepresented in the child welfare programme.

Voluntary professional registration for social workers became available in 1969. However, subsequent efforts to make it mandatory were not successful until the early 1990s as the government decided to create a single act named the Health Professions Act, covering a wide range of professions. Initially, social work was not included but, in the summer of 1995, the AASW Council decided to devote time and resources to the cause. Although full inclusion in the Health Professions Act took place in 2003, several significant intermediate steps were taken to require social workers to register with the Alberta College of Social Workers. In 2019, a new government with a right-wing orientation decided to restructure the governing councils of the profession so that 50% of its membership will be vetted and appointed by the government.

Like other professions in Alberta, social work, has come a long way since the late 1800s. It has its own multi-level education programmes at multiple locations in the province. Nevertheless, professional practice continues to be influenced and shaped by the Poor Laws of England. At the same time, the regulatory framework for social work practice now faces an ideology that is often at odds with the historic values of the profession with the result that the outcome of the recent changes remains unclear.

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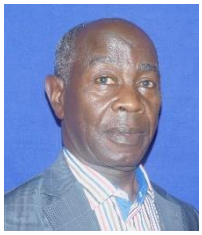
Researching the origins of social work in Africa: Challenge and opportunity

Charles Mbugua*



It is quite enriching and interesting to reflect on social work history, such reflections based on the available materials and oral history. Often, the written and oral history is from the west and even the practice trend is intertwined with colonial administrations, missionaries, traders and travellers' activities and traits. In my view, little is known about how communities delivered what is now termed 'social work' during the pre-colonial era, specifically in the traditional settings. Little is recorded about the response to illiteracy, ignorance, poverty and retrogressive practices which 'modern' social work practice ably addressed in later years, often through missionary work and voluntarily service efforts.

It is also believed that the interface between the locals and initial missionaries, explorers, traders and colonizers could sometimes be said to show some social work traits. This, it is suggested, focused on hygiene, nutrition and skills to deal with pandemics which were prevalent then. This is undocumented but connections could be verified from the existing materials in the Colonial Office archives.

Little has been written about practice during the pre-colonial, colonial and independent states eras. There is very little literature on what happened at that time, but there are some references in the modern social work literature. More could be unearthed from the British archives with time and resources.

Reflections on social work history may require interrogating some elements of the current definition of social work, to see how much these elements can reveal or conceal past practice. Questions arise when you reflect on phrases like 'work carried out by trained personnel', 'practiced based', 'an academic discipline' among others. If indeed the practice existed in African communities in the 19th century, what form and shape did it have in the colonies? What did this 'work' entail? Did we have a practice then, which today contradicts this definition? What did we have then that was not 'practice based' and which was not necessarily 'an academic discipline'? What about during the colonial era; what did that practice build on? For those regions where the practice was 'imported', what did it build on? Could it be that the practice then was built on loose traditional practices which were adapted and improved? What about the nature of social work problems then, and which according to records reflected on illiteracy, ignorance and abject poverty?

In many parts of Africa, for example, traditional social work in the early days focused on ignorance, lack of exposure and retrogressive beliefs and traditions, while in Europe the focus was on poverty and related urban and peri-urban problems. A comparative analysis many indicate what was picked from the tradition to the modern.

Like many other colleagues I'm in agreement that we need to dig deeper into social work history, in particular drawing on existing related and peripheral materials.

Charles Mbugua is a retired, qualified social worker, and Member, Commonwealth Histories of Social Work Steering Group.

* Summary and editing by David N Jones.

Reflection on COSW webinar 2022

Sharon-Rose Gittens

An extremely rich and engaging webinar series. I left the series feeling more passionate and committed to the profession. Unfortunately, the chronic problem for the profession is still present, that is, people still do not understand the value of the profession to empower lives, what social work is and what social workers do. Looking at the variety of angles brought up in the presentations on the history of social work across the globe, it is truly baffling why this misunderstanding is still present and where the solutions can be found. Our social worker educators and practitioners are clear on what the profession is, so is it time for the policy makers to be engaged on what the profession is.

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