

**Social Work Profession
in India :
An Uncertain Future**

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T.K. Nair (Ed)



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**Dedicated
to**

Madras School of Social Work (MSSW),

Late Mrs. Mary Clubwala Jadhav,

Founder of MSSW,

Late Mr. M.S.S. Nambudiri,

Most outstanding alumnus of MSSW & My beloved friend,

Prof. K. N. George,

Director of MSSW for fifty years &

My teacher and mentor

Foreword

Social reform, sociology and social work have a long history of close association. But the cleavage between sociology and social work appeared from the first decade of the twentieth century itself. The formation of the American Sociological Society in 1906 coincided with the "beginning of the differentiation between academic interests in the social sciences on the one hand, and social work and social reform on the other "(Peter Leonard, *Sociology in Social Work* ,1966). During the first three decades of the twentieth century, social work was heavily leaning on Freudian psychology. At the same time , it was sociology that provided a conceptual framework, particularly the urban sociological theories of the famous Chicago School or the Ecological School, for studying individuals in their social network. Mary Richmond, considered the mother of social work, in her book "Social Diagnosis" (1917) laid the solid foundation for social work theory and practice by explaining that the conscious life of any human being is interwoven with the lives of others. But her contribution was not received well at that time because of the dominant influence of psychoanalysis in social work. In India too social work has been over dependent on psychology and psychoanalysis till recently when some social work scholars and professionals strongly felt that social work would lose its relevance in India without a sound understanding of sociology, ecology and political economy. The mindless proliferation of social work education programmes and the declining standard of social work education are very disturbing, and there is an urgent need for the creation of a statutory Council on Social Work Education in India.

"Social Work Education and Social Work Practice in India", edited by Professor T. K. Nair and published by the Association of

Schools of Social Work in India (ASSWI) more than three decades ago, was a landmark publication. That is the only book based on a serious review of the first four decades of social work education and practice in the country. The present book "Social Work Profession in India : An Uncertain Future", edited by Prof. Nair, is definite to be a watershed contribution for the reorientation of social work education in the country in the coming decades. Scholars and practitioners have written on different issues needing urgent consideration and intervention. The eighth decade of social work education is only months away and this book is most welcome at this time.

Professor K.V. Ramana,
Former Vice-chancellor &
Former Professor of Social Work,
Andhra University,
Visakhapatnam.

Preface

Social work education in South India was heralded with the founding of the Madras School of Social Work (MSSW) in 1952. It was the fruition of the vision and determination of the late Mary Clubwala Jadhav, a colossus among social workers in the country. She founded MSSW under the joint auspices of the Guild of Service (Central), one of the oldest voluntary welfare organizations in India, and the Madras branch of the Indian Conference of Social Work (renamed the Indian Council of Social Welfare). Mary Clubwala Jadhav devoted her whole life for serving children, women, differently abled, war veterans, urban poor and other needy sections till she breathed her last at the age of 67. Ill - health and personal tragedies never deterred her from reaching out to the people in distress. She was an epitome of courtesy and social grace.

Institution- building of a School of Social Work was a tough task. In this herculean effort, Mary Clubwala Jadhav had the strong support of Prof.K.N.George, the third professionally qualified social work Director of MSSW. Prof. George served MSSW for more than five decades in different capacities, and during this period the physical infrastructure of the school was strengthened significantly in place of the thatched huts. The academic programme also underwent many positive changes, and I had the opportunity to associate myself actively with these changes, and to direct many research studies sponsored by the central and state governments, UNICEF, FAO, US government, and other agencies. Despite various efforts, the affiliation with the University of Madras did not materialize due to reasons other than academic. Finally, it was Dr.Malcolm Adiseshiah, who made the affiliation possible. On assuming the Vice- Chancellorship, he announced suo motu in his three-year plan of action that MSSW would be affiliated with the University. The statutory procedures followed soon to formalize the affiliation.

As a teacher, I am proud of the amazing contributions of MSSW graduates in alleviating human misery and suffering, and in enriching human resources. Many of them have changed the landscape of social work practice. Padma Shri Shanthi Ranganathan (founder of TTK Hospital for treatment and rehabilitation of alcoholics and substance addicts); Vandana Gopikumar (co-founder of The Banyan engaged in promoting mental health); Stephen Vidyakar (founder of Uthavum Karangal – Helping Hands – extending support to the abandoned in the streets); K.R.Gangadharan (President, International Federation on Ageing, and Founder of Heritage Foundation offering health care for the elderly at home and at the Heritage Hospital); late M.S.S.Nambudiri (first Director of Seva Samajam Boys’ Home who was an architect of deinstitutionalization of child care, high quality of education to poor children, and skill building among the young to compete successfully in the market); and J.M.Sampath (creator of DISCOVERY, a value clarification tool for individual and organizational excellence) stand tall. “The architecture of concurrent field work and block placement of four weeks made me a budding professional during the studentship itself. In addition, we were inducted into social work projects, which involved working together as a team. The projects gave me a tremendous learning to understand social realities, and to work with people belonging to different social backgrounds. On the whole MSSW gave me life skills”: B.Jaikrishna. The two years at MSSW, says J.M.Sampath, “laid a part of the foundation on what I have become today. From the rural camp to the field work at Seva Samajam Boys’ Home, and then to the industries opened my eyes to the real world I lived in and the need to connect with it”.

A book of this nature has been a difficult effort at 77. But the encouragement and support of many well-wishers made it possible. My son K.N.Ajith has been a source of strength all through in various ways without which this book would not have been a reality. P.P.Sukumaran (President-HR, GVK Group), J.M.Sampath (Managing Director, Arpitha Associates) and B. Jaikrishna

(President- HR, Amarraja Group) supported the publication of the book wholeheartedly. I am deeply indebted to Suku, Sampath and JK, my former students. My daughter Minii was also helpful.

The articles in the book are written by eminent persons in their fields of interest. They found time to write the articles of high quality. Professors R.R.Singh and B.Devi Prasad were very supportive. Dr.B.Devi Prasad also suggested the second part of the title of the book, that is, "An Uncertain Future". Shanthi, Nadarajah, Sampath, Nalini and Annie were my students at MSSW. Joe (Henry D'Souza) and I worked together at MSSW, and we have been close friends for nearly four decades. Kalpana is like a member of my family. I thank each one of them for their affection.

Institute of Social Work and Research, a training, research and consultancy institute, has sponsored the publication of this book. I am grateful to the Institute.

I am grateful to Professor K.V. Ramana, former Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University, for writing the foreword of this book. Prof. Ramana was the President of the Association of Schools of Social Work in India during the finest period of ASSWI, when I had the opportunity to be the General Secretary. We worked as a team with Dr. S.R. Billore, the Treasurer and other members of the Executive Committee.

I have the privilege of dedicating this book to my Alma Mater, the Madras School of Social Work; its founder the late Mrs. Mary Clubwala Jadhav; its most distinguished alumnus Mr. M.S.S.Nambudiri; and my teacher and former Director Professor K. N. George.

My young friend Mr. M .H. Ramesha is a dynamic social work professional and a committed publisher of social work and social development books under the auspices of Niruta Publications, which he founded. I thank him for publishing this book.

I am also grateful to Ms. Anitha Ashok of Niratanka for her enthusiastic support.

Dr. T.K. Nair

Contributors

Annie Namala is Executive Director of the Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion at New Delhi, which she was instrumental in founding. The Centre is an advocacy and research organization. She was a member of the first Right to Education National Advisory Council of the Ministry of Human Resource Development from 2010 to 2012. She is currently a member of the Executive Committee for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan under the MHRD and is also a member of the National Resource Group of the Mahila Samakya programme. Earlier, she worked with the **UNICEF**.

B. Devi Prasad is a Professor at the School of Social Work (Tata Institute of Social Sciences). Earlier, Dr. Devi Prasad was Director of the Centre for Social Studies at Surat and a Professor of social work of Andhra University. He has conducted research studies on many social issues. He is an acclaimed researcher on domestic violence, elder abuse, and social work education. He has contributed scholarly articles and research papers to prestigious journals and has written chapters of many books. He was Principal Investigator of an ICMR study on elder abuse and co - authored the report *Psychosocial Consequences of Elder Abuse and Neglect*.

Henry J D'Souza started his career as a community organizer with the koraga tribes and landless labourers in Karnataka before joining the faculty of the Madras School of Social Work. He then pursued his doctoral degree in social work and sociology at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Dr. D'Souza is currently a Professor at the Grace Abbott School of Social Work, University of Omaha at Nebraska. An outstanding scholar in social work, and social research methodology, Dr. D'Souza has contributed many articles and research papers in journals and books. He has served on the State Board of the Nebraskans for Peace, one of the oldest peace and justice organizations.

Kalpana Sampath is a human resource professional. Dr. Kalpana Sampath is a Director of Arpitha Associates and leads the EFIL Educational Services based at Bangalore. Besides holding a PhD in the area of “Belongingness in Organizations”, she is a performing artist with a Master’s degree in Indian classical dance. She is the author of the book Keys to Social Entrepreneurship and many articles in journals. She is a visiting faculty at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

M.V.Moorthy was a revered social scientist, social work teacher and Sanskrit scholar. Late Professor Moorthy was the first head of the department of PMIR at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Later he became Professor and head of the department of Sociology and Social Work at Andhra University. Introduction to Social Work, Field Work in Social Work, and Social Action are Dr. Moorthy’s books.

M.Nadarajah is a Co –Founder of the Global Centre for the Study of Sustainable Futures and Spirituality (GCSSFS). He earned a PhD in sociology from JNU, New Delhi. His doctoral thesis on a critical study of Marxism was published as an acclaimed book Culture, Gender and Ecology: Beyond Workerism. Among his several publications, Another Malaysia is Possible and Other Essays; Writings in Culture and Politics for a Sustainable World; Urban Crisis: Culture and the Sustainability of Cities; Living Pathways: Meditations on Sustainable Cultures and Cosmologies in Asia are noteworthy. He is an Asian Public Intellectual Fellow of the Nippon Foundation.

Nalini Gangadharan is a development professional with experience in institution building and change management. As the chairperson of CAP Foundation, Dr. Nalini Gangadharan leads a team of professionals in providing community – based solutions for linking learning and livelihood through business – government – community partnerships.

T.K.Nair is a former Professor of social work and a former Principal at the Madras School of Social Work. Dr. Nair has conducted various research studies on social work and

development subjects. He has many publications to his credit. Among them, Social Work Education and Social Work Practice in India, Social Welfare Manpower, Ageing in an Indian City and Old Age in an Indifferent Society are prominent.

J.M. Sampath is the Managing Director of Arpitha Associates: A Centre for Excellence with offices in India, Malaysia and Singapore. DISCOVERY, developed by Dr. Sampath, has been hailed as "the teaching revolution". Inner Realities is another well known book of Dr. Sampath. He has designed and developed a number of tools and processes which can facilitate greater level of synergy within individuals and organizations.

Shanthi Ranganathan is the founder Director of T.T. Ranganathan Clinical Research Foundation now known as TTK Hospital, a pioneering institution, known across the world for treatment and rehabilitation of people addicted to alcohol and drugs. Dr. Shanthi Ranganathan with more than three decades of clinical experience has successfully designed and implemented a community approach, which is culture-specific, and brings a paradigm shift to alcoholic treatment. Dr. Shanthi Ranganathan was awarded the Padma Shri by the President of India, and the First UN Vienna Civil Society Award by the United Nations Secretary General. Colombo Plan Award (2003) recognized her outstanding service in the field of addiction.

R.R. Singh is a social work professor of eminence and contributed immensely in the diverse spheres of social development. He was a Professor at the Department of Social Work, Delhi University, and a former Director (Vice-Chancellor) of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Dr. Singh held important positions in Universities, government committees and other bodies. He was Convener of the UGC Panel on Social Work Education. A prolific writer, Professor Singh contributed more than 150 articles in journals and chapters in books on social work, social development and social work education. Among his books, Social Work Perspectives on Poverty, Field Work in Social Work, and Whither Social Development? are well-known.

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