SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL HARMONYTHROUGH NATIONAL INTEGRATION

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Abstract

Social work is a profession among the social sciences that endeavours to improve the lives of individuals, groups, and societies. It incorporates and uses other social sciences as a means to improve human conditions with practice based. This paper attempts to present an overview of the social harmony through various practices based on the Social Work intervention. It is important as it promotes understanding, tolerance and friendship among human beings in their diversity of religion, belief, culture and language, and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, regardless of their race, gender, language or religion.

The term social harmony can be defined as a condition where different ethnic communities could co-exist peacefully. It is the glue that binds the people of a nation together.When it comes to country, social harmony is related to development without which the overall development of a country might not be achieved. But today, we see intolerance amongst sub-groups that people have formed on varying degrees of common interests. How long is it going to take before people realize that all people can form a big community, rather than smaller groups forming selfish communities?

National integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a country. It means that though we belong to different castes,

religions and regions and speak different languages we recognize the fact that we are all one.

According to the Indian Constitution, one of the fundamental duties of every citizen of India is to "promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities."

The main objective of this article is to explain an effective plan and strategies to enhance social harmony in order to prevent the future ethnic crisis and develop the country. This article also defines social harmony and role of Social Work and it will also explain Social Work methods and tools which can be used to build social harmony.

Key Words- Social Harmony, Integration, Religion, Values, Peace Building

Introduction

India comprised of variety of ethnic groups. People belong to different cultures, religions, caste and tribes. These differences formed large ethnic diversity in India. The people have different thoughts, traditions, languages, cultures and own believes. Their attitudes, decisions and activities mainly depend on the ethnic diversity. The peace and violence, happy and sadness, smile and tears and the development and non-development of India is directly depend on the situation of ethnic harmony in India. Based the various studies it is understood that India is not having very effective strategies to build ethnic harmony national policies and systematic proper plan. Therefore requirement of standard and systematic planning and policies to enhance the ethnic harmony are utmost important.

Concept

Social harmony is a complicated concept to analyses: a literature search across various academic disciplines indicated that it is rarely explicitly defined. It tends to have broad implications; one well-cited article uses the term in conjunction with community cohesion, inter-group empathy and mutual respect and peaceful coexistence.

In the report of the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission of November 2011, the terms harmony, disharmony, community harmony, communal harmony, ethnic harmony, religious harmony and social harmony are commonly used in random with those such as unity and national reconciliation. A variety of government and international donor initiatives apparently aim to foster social harmony, for example through education or language rights programmes.

Based on this understanding finally Social harmony can be defined "as a condition where different ethnic communities could co-exist peacefully. When it comes to a country, social harmony is related to development without which the overall development of a country might not be achieved"

39

Traditional Social Work Ideology and Religion

India has a long tradition of social service. The responsibility of assisting the individual in need was shared by the community and the rulers. Devotion and service towards one's fellowmen, love for charity and brotherhood existed even in the feudal times. According to Bhagwat Gita, charity is valid if it takes into account desh (place), kal (time) and patra (recipient). The forms of the charity were artha (money), vidya (education) and abhaya (courag). Religious institutions like temols, dharamshalas, maths became the centres of social service. They provided shelter and free kitchens of the poor. Thus religion emphasised the values of charity, philanthropy and mutual help.

Hinduism Perspective

Hinduism, one of the oldest living religions, with a history stretching from around the second millennium B.C. to the present, is India's indigenous religious and cultural system. It encompasses a broad spectrum of philosophies ranging from pluralistic theism to absolute monism. From fetishism, through polytheism and pantheism to the highest and the noblest concept of Deity and Man in Hinduism the whole gamut of human thought and belief is to be found. Hindu religious life might take the form of devotion to God or gods, the duties of family life, or concentrated meditation. Given all this diversity, it is important to take care when generalizing about "Hinduism" or "Hindu beliefs." For every class of worshiper and thinker Hinduism makes a provision; herein lies also its great power of assimilation andabsorption of schools of philosophy and communities of people, (Theosophy, 1931).

The Gita discusses selflessness, duty, devotion, and meditation, integrating many different threads of Hindu philosophy; it is a microcosm of Vedic, Yogic, Vedantic and even Tantric thought of the Hindu fold. It speaks not only to Vaishnavas but to all people, and it is accepted by the members of all Hindu streams as an influential text.

Hindu Virtues

Following are some of the important qualities listed in the scriptures:

1) *Ahimsa* (non-violence) – based on the concepts of *a/man* and reincarnation
2) *Sam yam* (control of mind and the senses) – considered essential for any form of morality
3) Tolerance – of different beliefs, opinions, religious traditions and persons.
4) Hospitality – demonstrating magnanimity, and the value of service
5) Compassion – based on notions of atman; an ability to feel for others as we feel for ourselves
6) Protection – giving shelter to others, especially those less fortunate
7) Respect – for all living beings; for sanctity of life
8) Wisdom – knowledge is contrasted with ignorance; ability to sift out right and wrong
9) Austerity – Practical wisdom and discipline in addition to theoretical knowledge
10) Celibacy – important for spiritual life; only one of the four ashramas – grihasthya-permitted sexual gratification
11) Honesty – to avoid self-deception; essential to build trust within relationships.
12) Cleanliness – includes external hygiene and inner purity
13) Charity – "Charity given out of duty, without expectation of return, at the proper time and place, and to a worthy person is considered to be in the quality of goodness." *(Bhagwad Gita, 17.20)*

A Tenfold system of virtuous duties was prescribed by Manu Smriti:
(1) "Contentment; (2) Abstention from injury to others, active benevolence, and returning good for evil; (3) Resistance to sensual appetites; (4) Abstinence from theft and illicit gain; (5) Purity, chastity, and cleanliness; (6) Coercion of passions; (7) Acquisition of knowledge; (8) Acquisition of Divine Wisdom; (9) Veracity, honesty and fidelity; and(10) Freedom from wrath and hatred;"
– *Manu,* vi, 92.

Hinduism and Social Work

The affinity between Hinduism and modern Social Work becomes immediately apparent in the light of the foregoing discussion.

1) The Hindu Philosophy and Traditions are replete with the importance accorded to the spirit of service and compassion; and sacrifice of personal gain in favour of others less fortunate.

2) The Hindu concepts of social conscience and social concern emphasize the fact that one's welfare is entwined with that of others. The mutual aid and mutual interdependence have been in practice right from the ancient times.

3) However paradoxical it may seem, the concepts of God, Soul and maaya provide the foundation for social justice. Hindu Philosophy holds all living beings equal with similar capacity to realize their real potential; to achieve divinity. It discards all social ranks and differences as illusory (*maaya)* and temporary and denounces all discriminatory practices as sin.

Islam Perspective

Islamic values and practices have profoundly influenced Indian social tradition. Certain writers consider the process of Islamisation an important modernising influence on the Indian social tradition.

Social work profession deals with individuals, singly and collectively. Its main concerns are "the creation of those conditions within the society, and the development of those capacities within the individual, that increase the probability of a more satisfying way of life for the members of that society" (Bisno, 1952). For its applicability and effectiveness, it is heavily dependent upon the social organisation and cultural ethos, including faith and religion. Given this, the possibility of Islam having an impact on social work practice is strong.

Islamic tradition is determined by mainly three sources: (a) the Holy Qur'an, (b) Sunnah – sayings and practice of Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless and greet him), and (c) *Fiqh* or *Ijtihad* – interpretation given by the knowledgeable on emergent or disputed issues. In a way, these also determine the worldview of Muslims.

From an Islamic perspective, the world is a collection of multifarious but inter-connected realities which have and continue to come into existence through the Will of God. In Islam, racial groupings, caste grades, or social classes have no place. All people have been created alike and, irrespective of their lineage, they stand in one row. In principle, the whole world is based on equity and justice. Further, the believer has *eiman*(faith in Islam) which, in turn, brings several social obligations. Given this perspective, it would be highly relevant to study Islamic values and practices in relation of those of social work.

Social Work Values and Islam

While a *value-base* is necessary for all professions, it is crucial for social work (Gutierrez, 1999). It gives form and substance to professional ethos. It provides a direction and focus, and lends professional authority for multi-layered social work practice. At one and the same time, the value-base of social work provides for stability and change in social organisation and functioning (Dominilli, 2005). Moreover, paying attention to social work mission, practitioner-client relationship or intervention methods – all are found to be linked or even dependent upon societal values. Indeed, the value-base of social work is informed by numerous historical-cultural forces, including religious ideologies.

Christianity Perspective
Christianity is the name given to that definite system of religious beliefs and practices, which were derived from the teachings of Jesus Christ in the country of Palestine, during the reign of the Roman Emperor,Tiberius.
The Christian life is centeredaround some essential aspects of the Christian religion. Among them the following are key ones:
- Fellowship with God
- Our relationship with others
- Obedience to God's commands
- Discipline

Christianity is built around the value of relationship: with God and with others. When Jesus was asked to summarize his teachings, he said that it was all about "loving God and our neighbour". Everything else is a means to that end. One of the most important terms used in Christianity is "fellowship". This term covers their life together in communion as Christians. This means first of all that they spend time together in family, in worship, work, service to others, and having fun. They hold community as a value; it is in and through community that they desire and achieve their life's ultimate goal of salvation through Jesus Christ. The Bible refers to the Christian community using organic metaphors, such as a vine and a body. It talks about them sharing with each other and supporting each other.
The Christians have their religious rules that are meant to regulate their behaviour and facilitate the modes of worship. Respect for others, regular prayer both individual and communitarian, discipline, self-less service to others and sharing of faith are some aspects of Christian life. The basic tenets of Christianity show compatibility with the cardinal values of social work. Moreover social work flows from the same premise of Christianity, which upholds the dignity of the human being. Christianity as a religion has certainly played a central role in the development of social work as a profession.

Sikhism Perspective
Sikhism, the youngest and the fifth largest world religion was founded about 500 years ago by Guru Nanak in Punjab district (of what is now India and Pakistan). Sikhism is based on Guru Nanak's aching and those of the nine Sikh Gurus who followed him. There are about twenty million Sikhs in the world, and most of them live in India. It emphasizes the belief in one Supreme Being 'the Creator'. It offers a simple straight path to eternal bliss and spreads a message of love and universal brotherhood.

Basics of Sikhism

i) Unity of God: There is but One God-Ek-Omkar. He is unborn, omnipotent, infinite, formless, all knowing and all-pervading.

ii) Simran and Sewa form the essence of Sikhism. Simran means to remember and Sewa means to give voluntary help without any external reward. Simran and Sewa can be done by performing the following (three golden rules of Sikhism) duties:

1) Kirat Karna: means to earn an honest livelihood. To work with one's own hands.

2) NaamJaapo: NaamJaapo means to remember God always in our minds at all times.

3) VandChhako: means to share our earnings with others. Sikhs should give charity to the needy and care for the needy.

iii) Equality: Sikhism emphasizes equality for all human beings. All human beings are equal and alike in front of God. They all should be loved, respected and treated equally. No distinctions have to be made on the basis of gender, race, religion, wealth, caste or creed.

iv) Character Building: If the mind is impure, it cannot deserve union with Divinity. The development of character is the only foundation on which the edifice of disciple-ship can be raised. Conquer of the five deadly sins – lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride is must. Morality is the foundation of Sikh religion.

v) Sikhism Values:

1) Love – Love of God is given high importance by the Gurus. We can love God only when we cease to love ourselves. We must first destroy the ego (haumai).

2) Humility – In complete humility and humbleness all selfishness disappears; one has no ego and the soul no longer lives for its own self.

3) Compassion – In Sikhs, Guru demand a high level of compassion; one should help and serve others in words and deeds. Service to mankind is service to the God.

4) Contentment – It is an important virtue for Sikhs. It is to abide by the will of God with happiness. The soul of such person is satisfied and linked to God. By devoting one's life to service, one gets rid of ego and pride.

5) Truth – Truth means truthfulness of mind, body and action. Guru Nanak preached, "Truth is higher than all things but higher still is the truthful living."

6) Faith: One must have perfect faith in the Guru. Sikhism literally means the way of the disciple. The disciple must follow the Guru's word. Sikhs believe in the Guru Granth Sahib – "the Living Guru" or the Sikh holy book. Sikhs do not believe in idols or idol worships or rituals.

Janism Perspective

Jainism, traditionally known as Jain Dharma, is areligion and philosophy originating from BC Centuriesof South Asia. In the 21st Century, Jainism is a minorityreligion in India with growing communities in the UnitedStates, Western Europe, Africa and elsewhere. Jainshave contributed to sustain the ascetic tradition.

Jainism has significantly influenced other religions,ethical, political and economic spheres in India for wellover two millennia. Jainism gives stress on the spiritualindependence and equality of all life with a particularemphasis on non-violence which is one of the strategiesbeing promoted by social work profession in severalcountries. Self control is the means by which Jainsattain Moksha.

The Jain order, has four components: monks, nuns (sadhvi), lay men and lay women (shravika). The founder of Jainism was Vardhamana (C. 599-527 BCE), later known as Mahavira, the twenty-fourth and final Tirthankar.

Mahavira serves the religion as an illustration both of spiritual realization and social reconstruction. This religion is also utterly humanistic in its approach, and spiritualistic in its depth. Though humanistic, yet it is wider than humanitarianism, for it embraces all the *sentiments of beings* from one-sense to all the five senses. Jaina formulation of ethical theory is grounded in Jaina metaphysics. It argues that conceptions of bondage and liberation, *punya*and *paap,* heaven and hell, pleasure and pain and the like, loose all their relevance and significance, when we exclusively recognize either their permanence as constituting the nature of substance.

The **Jain ethical code** is taken very seriously. Five vows are followed by both laity and monks/nuns, which are

1) Non-violence (ahimsa, or ahinsa)
2) Truth (Satya)
3) Non-stealing (Asteya)
4) Chastity (Brahma-charya) and
5) Non-possession or Non-possessiveness (Aparigrah).

For laypersons, 'Chastity' means confining sexual relations within marriage. For monks/nuns, it means complete celibacy. Non-violence involves being vegetarian and some choose to be vegetarian. Jains are expected to be non-violent in thought, word and deed, towards humans and every living creature. While performing holy deeds, Svetambara Jains wear cloths over their mouths and noses to avoid spittle falling on texts or revered Images. Along with five vows, Jains avoid harboring ill will towards others and practice forgiveness. Their belief is that Atma (Soul) can lead one to become Prmatma (liberated soul) and this must come from one's inner self. No Jiv can give another the path to salvation, but can only show the way. In social work too, the worker is a guide and philosopher to the client who only shows the way and the final decision/act is left to the choice of the client.

Buddhism Perspective

In Buddhism social welfare is considered as the work done in different forms intended for the benefit of mankind. Such a work ranges from simple individual acts of charity, teaching and training to organized service in different forms for the betterment of the community which are common areas of social work intervention.

Five Jewelsof Buddhism

1) To refrain from taking life. (non-violence towards sentient life forms).
2) To refrain from taking that which is not given (not committing theft).
3) To refrain from sexual misconduct (abstinence from immoral sexual behaviour)
4) To refrain from lying. (speaking truth always)
5) To refrain from intoxicants which lead to loss of mindfulness (refrain from using drugs or alcohol)

Gautam Buddha was the *founder* of *Buddhism* and one of the noblest and the greatest teachers of the world. *Buddhism* was based on the noble teachings of *Buddha*

Basics of Social Work

Social work discipline is scientific in method and artful in manner that takes remedial action on problem in several areas in society. It helps communities to bring their welfare and related services in to good balance. Social work provides many services for people, especially for children, youth, women, family, aged, disabled, handicapped, displaced and dependents.

"The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance wellbeing. Utilizing theories of human behaviour and social system, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principals of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work," (IASSW and IFSW, 2001)

According to the definition social work is merely on helping people who are not able to come up with themselves. But they need someone help in order to come out from various problems. The main aim of social work is to enhance human happiness in general and help people to help themselves.

The ***purposes*** of social work are: enhance human well-being and alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice, enhance the social functioning and interactions of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by involving them in accomplishing goals, developing resources, and preventing and alleviating distress, formulate and implement social policies, service, and programs that meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities, to pursue policies, services, and resources through advocacy and social or political actions that promotes social and economic justice, develop and use research, knowledge, and skills that advance social work practice and develop and apply practice in the context of diverse cultures.

Role of professional social worker in present Scenerio

Professional social workers have a strong tradition of working for social justice, and of refusing to recreate unequal social structures. Thus means reaching beyond state sponsored practices which merely cater for individual needs, in order to transform society as a whole. Social work maintains this radical kernel and today many social workers internationally have strong connections with social and political movements for the emancipation of the oppressed.

The main tasks of professional social workers engaged are case management (linking clients with agencies and programs that will meet their psychosocial needs), medical social work, counseling (psychotherapy), human services management, social welfare policy analysis, community organizing, advocacy, teaching (in schools of social work), and social science research.

These professional social workers work in a variety of settings, including: non-profit or public social service agencies, grassroots advocacy organizations, hospitals, hospices, community health agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, and even the military. In addition social workers work as psychotherapists, counselors, or mental health practitioners, normally working in coordination with psychiatrists, psychologists, or other medical professionals. Some social workers have chosen to focus their efforts on social policy or academic research into the practice or ethics of social work. The emphasis has varied among these task areas by historical

era and country, and some of these areas have been the subject of controversy as to whether they are properly part of social work mission.

Suggestions
Keeping in view the above mentioned facts I would suggest the following course of action to bring harmony among the followers of various religious and ethnic groups.

1. Eliminate all violence which take place in the name ofreligion, race or language and condemn such violence.
2. Promote positive inter-ethnic relation by including the idea of unity among ethnic groups.
3. Accept the freedom of every individual to believe, practice and live by any religion.
4. Stop the unethical religious conversion, by coercion or by force.
5. Stop all publicity, literature and audio-visual presentations, admiration and erection of heroic-memorials which create anger, hatred and retaliation.
6. Take measure to erase bad memories of past violence but learn from the past mistakes to prevent any such hatred and violence in the future.
7. Accept the fact that present generation or future generations are not responsible for what is happened in the past, and they should not suffer due to the past mistakes.
8. Ban all support and unethical publicity for any individual or group trying to create ethnic and religious based violence.
9. Uphold the unity of mankind among people of all faiths.

Social Work Education in promoting peace building, civic values and social cohesion
Encourages Governments to promote, through education, as well as the development of progressive curriculums and text books, understanding, harmony and friendship among human beings in all their diversity of religion, belief, culture and language, which will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of in harmony, and to apply a gender perspective while doing so, in order to promote understanding, harmony, tolerance, peace and friendly relations among nations and all racial and religious groups, recognizing that education at all levels is one of the principal means to build a culture of peace.

Conclusion
Social Work considers every individual to be endowed with worth and dignity, as well as having physical and psychosocial needs.
As we know, Social Work recognizes that, in making a person into a socialized individual, group process and community living has a critical role. Likewise, there are specific pronouncements in every religion stressing on collective living. It emphasizes on happy and cordial neighbourly relations. Equity, fraternity and justice are a pre-requisite for and a driving force behind group process and community living. Hindu beliefs and values enrich and strengthen the humanistic and rational approach to social work practice which enhances social harmony and social Integration. The Buddha teaches many practices which promote harmony within our self and among laymen in the society.
Finally the importance in promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among human beings in all their diversity of religion, belief, culture and language, and recalling that all States

46

have pledged themselves under the Charter to promote and encourage universal respect through observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, regardless of their race, sex, language or religion.

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