

APPLICATION OF SOCIAL CASE WORK METHOD IN DEALING WITH THE SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND OTHER PROBLEMS OF THE SEXUAL MINORITIES COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

Social Case Work is a primary method of social work; it is concerned with the adjustment and development of individual towards more satisfying human relations, every individual reacts differently to his/her social, economic and physical environments and as such problems of one individual are different from those of another. The practice of casework is a humanistic attempt for helping people who have difficulty in coping with the problems of daily living. Sexual Minorities are a group whose sexual identity, orientation or practices differ from the majority of the surrounding society, usually Sexual Minorities comprise of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) individuals. According to a report in the Times of India, 30 May 2014, an official count puts the number of the Sexual Minorities in India at 4.49 lakh. Sexual minorities (LGBT population) are facing many problems in daily life, and treated inhumanly, unequally even though the Indian constitution assures 'equality before law irrespective of their caste, religion, and place of residence, gender and sexuality'. Hence in the present paper an attempt was made to understand and deal with the problems of Sexual minorities by using techniques of social case work method.

Objectives of the study

- ❖ To know the Perception of the Respondents about the Social Exclusion they experienced.
- ❖ To explore the importance of social case work method in helping the sexual minorities to deal with their problems.

Methodology used: This study is a mixture of Descriptive and Qualitative Experimental study. The samples for this study were 310 sexual minorities; used to find out the Perception of the Respondents about the Social Exclusion they experienced. Study also selected 05 sexual minority clients among the total 310 respondents. The case work method was conducted among the clients and outcomes are evaluated. The techniques of case work,

namely, Social study, Social diagnosis, Casework treatment, and Evaluation was applied to get the result.

Key Words: Case Work, Sexual Minorities, LGBT, CIS Gender.

INTRODUCTION

“SOCIAL CASE WORK”

(Celebrating the dignity & worth of every individual)

The concept of Social Case Work: Social work as a profession is a product of the twentieth century but social work as a helping activity is as old as mankind. Social casework is a method of helping people individually through a one-to-one relationship. It is used by professionally-trained social workers in social work agencies or organisations to help people with their problems of social functioning, problems of social functioning refer to situations concerned with social roles and their performance.

Mary Richmond's book ‘Social Diagnosis’ which was published in 1917, is considered as the first book in casework. It set forth a methodology of helping clients through systematic ways of assessing their problems and handling them.

Social Case work defined

Mary Richmond (1915) “Social Case Work may be defined as the Art of doing different things with different people, co-operating with them to achieve some of their own & society’s betterment”

Mary Richmond (1917) “Social case work is the art of bringing about better adjustments in the social relationship of individual men or women or children”

Mary Richmond (1922) “Social case work means, those processes which develop personality through adjustment consciously affected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment”

Jarrett (1919) Social case work is “the art of bringing an individual who is in a condition of social disorder into the best possible relation with all parts of his environment”.

Lee (1923) Social case work is “the art of changing human attitudes”

Taylor (1926) Social case work is a process concerned with the understanding of individuals as whole personalities and with the adjustments of these to socially healthy lives.

Case Work Process: Casework process has four different stages namely,

- 1) Social study: Intake (First Interview) Rapport Building, Psycho-Social study exploration, Investigation.
- 2) Social diagnosis: Psycho-Social diagnosis (Assessment)
- 3) Casework treatment: Intervention, Treatment (Problem-solving process)
- 4) Evaluation: Monitoring and Evaluation, Follow-up and Termination.

Casework Practice in India: In Indian culture, social case worker often has to work towards enabling the client and the members of his/her family to understand their intrinsic dignity as human beings and act accordingly. In India, Casework is practiced in many settings, but only in settings confined to urban areas. Social work agencies which provide casework services to help people in distress are social service departments of hospitals and clinics, family welfare service centres, residential institutions for children and adults, social service departments of schools, child guidance clinics, community centres, correctional institutions and mental health centres. While working with marginalised groups in society like Sexual Minorities what the caseworker can offer is a humane and understanding relationship and advocacy on his behalf to get the way to come out from the problems.

Who are sexual minorities? Sexual Minorities are a group whose sexual identity, orientation or practices differ from the majority of the surrounding society, usually Sexual Minorities comprise of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) individuals. (PUCL 2001).

Sexual minorities or Sexual minority community: Refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered/transsexual persons as well as persons with other identities (such as Kothis and Hijras) as a minority group in a predominantly heterosexual total population.

LGBT: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender; an inclusive term for groups and identities sometimes also grouped as "sexual minorities."

Lesbian: A person who identifies as woman and has significant (to oneself) sexual or romantic attractions towards another woman, or who identifies as a member of the lesbian community. In India, this term is used to indicate bisexual women also.

Gay: A gay person is one who has significant (to oneself) sexual or romantic attractions primarily to members of the same gender or sex, or who identifies as a member of the gay community. One may identify as gay without identifying as a member of the gay community and vice versa. Though 'gay' is a common term for all homosexual persons, it is often used to describe people who identify as men who are attracted to other people who identify as men. Self-identified gay men do not necessarily have sex only with men, but occasionally may engage in sex with women.

Bisexual: A person who is attracted romantically/emotionally/sexually to both men and women.

Transgender (TG): It is a broad term for all people who do not identify with or choose not to conform to the gender roles assigned to them by society based on their biological sex. Transgender are those who transgress the social gender norms of the society they belong to; TG is often used as an umbrella term to mean all the people who defy rigid, binary gender constructions, and who express or present a breaking and/or blurring of culturally prevalent/stereotypical gender roles. This includes a wide range of identities and experiences, including but not limited to: pre-operative, post-operative and non-operative transsexual people; male and female cross dressers (sometimes referred to as "transvestites", "drag queens", or "drag kings"); intersex individuals; and men and women, regardless of sexual orientation, whose appearance or characteristics are perceived to be gender atypical. (A male-to-female transgendered person is referred to as 'transgender woman' and a female-to-male transgendered person is referred to as 'transgender man') (CHLET 2012)

RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Social Case work with Sexual Minorities should take a stance of an affirmative model that assists individual in asserting their equal, healthy and ethical place in society, rather than a pathological stance that once regarded homosexuals (Sexual Minorities) as mentally ill. The task of the case worker is to understand and accept these sexual identities and to assist the client to deal with any problems that may accompany or simply coexist with his particular sexual orientation.

From the previous studies like, research study titled: Sexual Minorities and Social Exclusion: A Study of Dharwad District in Karnataka. It has been proved that, sexual minorities are

treated inhumanly by the heterosexuals (cis gender: denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex) in the society; and sexual minorities excluded from the mainstream society, which is dominated by the heterosexual. Sexual minorities also face social, economic, political and health care problems in their daily life. They are the victims of social exclusion and discrimination even though the Indian constitution assures that 'equality before law irrespective of their caste, religion, place of residence, gender and sexuality' this inspired my deep concern about the issue and motivated to undertake this study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Prothoma (2007) author said that Sexual Minorities/non heterosexuals (be they lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender) are located at the margins of a democracy. Marginalization by the social and political mainstream, they are always cast out of the mainstream by the majority therein, treated as inferior, incomplete people having unnatural sexual inclinations who are invariably suffering for some sin that they committed earlier, in this life or previous births. The sexual minorities, in contrast, continue to suffer from no recognition of their existence, not to speak of their rights, under the pervasive hold of the idea of sexuality itself being a taboo in society.

Anitha Chettiar (2015) Sexual Minorities in India commonly known as the Hijras are one of the hardly researched, abused, scorned, and callously neglected groups in Indian Society. They face several health problems and also problems related to harassment, unlawful penalties, sexual abuse, violence and deprivation of human rights.

World Bank: This article stipulates that, In India it is estimated that 700,000 *Hijras*, or Sexual Minority people, generally get little or no schooling, their families often reject them, and they join marginalized and feudal communities where their employment options are sex work or ritualized begging.

Suresh Bada Math et al. (2013) in their article intent to bring to light the violation of basic human rights of Sexual minorities, and need for provision of equal opportunities and protection of rights like any other law abiding citizen. Authors say that, Sexual minorities are at high risk for developing sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS. They are

also high-risk victims of physical, sexual, economical and emotional violence from the so called normal community.

Muhammad Ahmed Abdullah et al. This group of people is socially excluded by the general community, in terms of attainment of an opportunity for a socially productive life, often this sort of deprivation forces these individuals towards professions like sex trade, in pursuit of sustenance, which as a consequence places them as a key block in the puzzle of an impending generalized HIV epidemic.

The available Literature review on Sexual minorities and all dimensions related to the life of Sexual Minorities shows that, They are not generally accepted in societies cutting across nations, and they are the disadvantaged groups in society, hence in this study a prompt attempt was made to know their problems by applying the social case work method.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the Perception of the Respondents about the Social Exclusion they experienced.
2. To explore the importance of social case work method in helping the sexual minorities to deal with their problems.

METHODOLOGY

Design: mixture of Descriptive and Qualitative Experimental study. The major purpose of descriptive method is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present, and to know, what is going on this descriptive method is used to meet the first objective of the study i.e. to know the Perception of the Respondents about the Social Exclusion they experienced (using scale) and Qualitative Experimental method is used to meet the second objective which is to explore the importance of social case work method in helping the sexual minorities to deal with their problems, with special focus on determining the effectiveness of social casework in dealing with the problems of sexual minorities which is focused on determining the effectiveness of social case work method in dealing with the problems of sexual minorities.

Sample: The samples for this study were 310 sexual minorities; used to find out the Perception of the Respondents about the Social Exclusion they experienced. And study also selected 05 sexual minority clients among the total 310 respondents, who are the part of the

research study titled: Sexual Minorities and Social Exclusion: A Study of Dharwad District in Karnataka.

Methods for data Collection: Social Exclusion scale is used to know the Perception of the Respondents about the Social Exclusion they experienced and Social case work method was conducted among the clients and outcomes are evaluated. The techniques of case work method, namely; Social study, Social diagnosis, Casework treatment, and Evaluation was applied to get the results.

PART – 1. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Perception of the Respondents about the Social Exclusion (Using Scale)

STATEMENTS	MEAN	Standard Deviation	FREQUENCY (N)					PERCENTAGE (%)				
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	1.11	.313	276	34	0	0	0	89.0	11.0	0	0	0
2	1.15	.362	262	48	0	0	0	84.5	15.5	0	0	0
3	1.32	.468	210	100	0	0	0	67.7	32.3	0	0	0
4	1.50	.501	156	154	0	0	0	50.3	49.7	0	0	0
5	1.41	.492	184	126	0	0	0	59.4	40.6	0	0	0
6	4.74	.438	0	0	0	80	230	0	0	0	25.8	74.2
7	1.41	.743	232	30	48	0	0	74.8	9.7	15.5	0	0
8	4.63	.485	0	0	0	116	194	0	0	0	37.4	62.6
9	1.22	.414	242	68	0	0	0	78.1	21.9	0	0	0
10	1.84	1.129	154	100	32	0	24	49.7	32.3	10.3	0	7.7
11	1.32	.468	210	100	0	0	0	67.7	32.3	0	0	0
12	1.51	.913	212	68	0	30	0	68.4	21.9	0	9.7	0
13	1.19	.391	252	58	0	0	0	81.3	18.7	0	0	0
14	1.34	.475	204	106	0	0	0	65.8	34.2	0	0	0
15	1.18	.385	254	56	0	0	0	81.9	18.1	0	0	0
16	1.06	.234	292	18	0	0	0	94.2	5.8	0	0	0

Statement-1. Out of the 310 respondents, 89.0 % are Strongly Agreed and followed by, 11.0% respondents Agreed with the statement of 'I feel cut off from other people' which means respondents don't want to continue their relationship with cis gender people, as they experienced discrimination from them, they want to stay away from the cis gender people.

Statement-2. As long as the statement 'I would like to have more social contact' is concerned, majority of the respondents, 84.5% Strongly Agreed and followed by, 15.5% respondents Agreed with the statement, which means respondents want to mingle with cis gender people, but they faced rejection from them.

Statement-3. Out of the 310 respondents, majority of the respondents 67.7% are Strongly Agreed, and followed by, 32.3% respondents Agreed with the statement of 'I want an agency help for job/finding home/legal problems etc' which means respondents showing their helplessness, without the help of others they can't survive in the society, they want someone to become their voice in the society.

Statement - 4. As long as the statement 'I experienced the fear of others seeing me as the wrong sex' is concerned, majority of the respondents 50.3% are Strongly Agreed, and followed by, 49.7% respondents Agreed with the statement, this shows that respondents experienced cis gender people seeing them as non-human beings in the society.

Statement - 5. Majority of the respondents 59.4% are Strongly Agreed, and followed by, 40.6% respondents Agreed with the statement of 'I experienced bad comments from the people in the society because of my sex' which means people in society are treating sexual minorities as wrong sex, and respondents are abused badly by the cis gender people in the society.

Statement - 6. As long as the statement 'I am living my life with dignity and respect in the society' is concerned, majority of the respondents 74.2% are Strongly Disagreed, and followed by, 25.8% respondents Disagreed with the statement, this shows that respondents are treated inhumanly by the majority cis gender people in the society.

Statement - 7. Majority of the respondents 74.8% are Strongly Agreed, and 9.7% respondents Agreed with the statement of 'I think that Indian society is very much rigid in the matter of sexual role of a person' which means the Indian society is still having the traditional stereotypic environment where only male and female sex are recognised, society expects the assigned sexual roles, hence sexual minorities treated as non-humans in the society. However, remaining 15.5% respondents neither agreed nor Disagreed with the statement.

Statement - 8. Out of the 310 respondents, majority of the respondents 62.6% are Strongly Disagreed, and followed by, 37.4% respondents Disagreed with the statement of 'In society there are many people with whom I can have a good conversation' which means respondents are having very less social contacts, they have very less number of people in their life with whom they can share their feelings.

Statement - 9. As long as the statement 'I feel the need of advocacy to get my rights' is concerned, majority of the respondents 78.1% are Strongly Agreed, and followed by, 21.9% (N=68) respondents Agreed with the statement, this shows that respondents are the mute people in the society, they don't have strong voice to protect themselves. Hence, they feel to have someone to talk on behalf of them.

Statement - 10. Out of the 310 respondents, 49.7% respondents are Strongly Agreed, and 32.3% respondents are Agreed with the statement of 'I suffered from the police atrocities' which means respondents are experienced harassment by the police men, The IPC section 377 which criminalises same sex relationship which has become a threatening tool for the police men against sexual minorities. However, 10.3% respondents neither agreed nor Disagreed with the statement, and a less number of respondents i.e. 7.7% are Strongly Disagreed with the statement.

Statement - 11. As long as the statement 'I feel that my culture is different than the others in the society' is concerned, majority of the respondents 67.7% are Strongly Agreed, and followed by, 32.3% respondents Agreed with the statement, this shows that, respondents are having different cultural practices from the majority cis gender people in the society.

Statement - 12. Out of the 310 respondents, majority of the respondents 68.4% are Strongly Agreed, and followed by, 21.9% respondents Agreed with the statement of 'I believe my gender identity should be kept private and not revealed in public' which means respondents feel that their gender identity should be kept private, so that they can live their life as male or female person, this again shows the non-recognition of sexual minorities people in the society. However, a less number of respondents 9.7% disagreed with the statement.

Statement - 13. As long as the statement 'I wish I were not a Sexual Minority Person' is concerned, majority of the respondents, 81.3% strongly Agreed, and followed by, 18.7%

respondents Agreed with the statement, which shows due to the social exclusion of sexual minorities they wished to be born like male or female rather than a transgender person, this indicates the pathetic condition of transgender people in the society.

Statement - 14. Majority of the respondents 65.8% are Strongly Agreed, and 34.2% respondents agreed with the statement of 'I feel that I am discriminated by the law' which means respondents feel that, the laws of the country are not in favour of sexual minorities. Even though the Indian constitution assures that, 'equality before law irrespective of their caste, religion, and place of residence, gender and sexuality' Sexual minorities (LGBT population) are treated inhumanly, unequally.

Statement - 15. Out of the 310 respondents, 81.9% are Strongly Agreed and followed by, 18.1% respondents Agreed with the statement of 'I feel that I am culturally separated from the society' which means sexual minorities are having their own culture, which is different from the majority cis gender people, and generally the *Hijra* culture is not accepted by the larger cis gender people who dominate the culture of a society, hence respondents feel that they are culturally separated from the society.

Statement - 16. As long as the statement 'I feel that I am excluded' is concerned, majority of the respondents, 94.2% strongly Agreed, and followed by, 5.8% respondents Agreed with the statement, which clearly says that, sexual minorities having a feel that they are excluded from the larger society.

From the above Table and Interpretation of social exclusion statements scale, we may conclude that, Society never accept any form of sexual behaviour apart from the dominant form of heterosexuality (male and female) and hence any other form is deemed deviant and against the order of nature. In addition to this, the popular beliefs like Homosexuality is not productive and in essence it challenges certain inherent structures in the society are fuelled by ignorance and phobia attached to the sexual minority community, which in turn unleash itself in the form of violence, stigmatization and oppression which further leading to the social exclusion of sexual minorities from the mainstream society.

PART – 2. CASE VIGNETTES

Case-1

Case study: Raki (Name Changed) aged 28 years, belongs to Hindu religion, this client was the victim of child abuse during the school days, an average student in school, silent nature, presently working in a private company as assistant, unmarried, identified oneself as Hijra, and joined the community as member in 2015.

Social diagnosis: The client lacks awareness on the programmes and services available for the development of sexual minorities by the government. Client doesn't want to discuss the doubts with other person, doesn't share the feelings and the personal matters with anyone.

Casework treatment: Provided client a safe place to communicate the problems, doubts motivated client to open up and discuss with others. Helped the client in getting the information about the programmes and services available for sexual minorities, Provided psycho-social support, made the client to think about ill effects of his behaviour (using transactional analysis), tried to strengthen healthy peer group (in working and living place), provided the counselling service.

Evaluation: The client started to open up slowly with others; the client seems to be more happy and pleasant. Shows interest to participate in follow-up.

Case-2

Case study: Veera (Name Changed) is a 33 year old person, belongs to Hindu religion, migrated from rural place to urban, left the family because of gender identity, below average student in school, involved in prostitution and begging (A traditional occupation of Sexual Minorities) unmarried, identified oneself as Transgender, and joined the community as member in 2013.

Social diagnosis: Client is not conscious about his health, family relationships, occupation etc. Separation from the family created negative impact on client and has no trust in relationship.

Casework treatment: Provided psycho-social support to the client, made to think about the family, and responsibilities toward them, helped the client to think more about his health, occupation and to become more engaged in other work to reduce the sexual urge, tried to strengthen healthy peer group, provided the counselling service.

Evaluation: follow up is continuing, client started talking with the family members, gradual change in behaviour taking place, positive response from the client.

Case-3

Case study: Halsi (Name Changed) aged 29 years, belongs to Hindu religion, good in studies, completed the 12th class, wants to study further, a dancer and commercial sex worker, unmarried, identified oneself as Kothi, and joined the community on 2016.

Social diagnosis: The client is anxious about her gender issues, and believes that her desire and activities are wrong, unable to handle peer pressure, so that faces difficulty in leading the life, client has a desire to change.

Casework treatment: Provided psycho-social support, made client to derive alternatives to reduce negative peer influence, helped the client to make priorities such as education, occupation, family etc, connected to counsellor for further clarification and counselling.

Evaluation: The client is now able to make his own decision, gradually decreased or avoiding contacts with unnecessary ones, active participation in case work process shows the benefits to client.

Case-4

Case study: Lingu (Name Changed) aged 36 years, belongs to Christian religion, left the family because of gender identity, an average student in school, involved in prostitution and begging (A traditional occupation of Sexual Minorities) unmarried, identified oneself as Hijra, and called as Guru in the community, has the responsibility of maintaining the whole group.

Social diagnosis: Client has no beliefs in the family relationships, client is not conscious about the health, occupation etc. Separation from the family created deep negative impact on

client, but treats the group members as own family members. Client experienced social discrimination/exclusion from the heterosexual population in the society.

Casework treatment: Provided psycho-social support to the client, made to think about the family relationships, helped the client to take care of health issues, and to think more about the occupation, tried to strengthen healthy peer group, motivated to lead the life without any worries, provided the counselling service.

Evaluation: Tried to develop self-dignity in client, follow up is continuing, client started talking with the family members, gradual change in behaviour taking place, positive response from the client.

Case-5

Case study: Sadhu (Name Changed) aged 22 years, belongs to Hindu religion, good in studies, studying B.A (External), unmarried, identified oneself as Panthi, and joined the community as a member on 2016.

Social diagnosis: The client is ashamed of his gender identity, and believe that his desire and activities are wrong, scolded by family members because of peculiar behaviour, unable to handle peer pressure, so that faces difficulty in concentrating the future studies, client has a desire to change.

Casework treatment: Provided psycho-social support, made client to derive alternatives to reduce negative peer influence, helped the client to be strong, made to accept the realities, connected to counsellor for further clarification and counselling.

Evaluation: The client is now able to make his own decision, gradually developed positive thinking within, and actively participated in counselling process.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

From the above on-going discussion we can draw the following results and conclusion;
From the previous studies like, research study titled: Sexual Minorities and Social Exclusion: A Study of Dharwad District in Karnataka. It has been proved that, sexual minorities are treated inhumanly by the heterosexuals in the society; and sexual minorities excluded from

the mainstream society, which is dominated by the heterosexual. Sexual minorities' also face social, economic, political and health care problems in their daily life.

Clients are facing the problems like; lack awareness on the programmes and services available for the development of sexual minorities, they are the victims of child abuse, dropout from the school, involved in prostitution and begging (A traditional occupation of Sexual Minorities) unmarriageable, peer pressure, stigmatization, social discrimination/exclusion, lack of recognition in society. etc.

- ❖ Sexual Minorities who joined the community to share the feelings, and to face the society.
- ❖ The case work process shows positive changes in the all clients who participated in this study.
- ❖ The Social case work method makes their living more adaptable and low risky life.
- ❖ Enabled the clients to aware more about themselves and their challenges in life.
- ❖ Clients exhibited their desire to change and to be like a heterosexual.
- ❖ Enabled the clients to ventilate their feelings and comfortable in seeking help.
- ❖ Made them to be more self-dependent in making right choices and also coping with stress.

Social Case Work is concerned with the adjustment and development of individual towards more satisfying human relations. The practice of casework is a humanistic attempt for helping people who have difficulty in coping with the problems of daily living.

Sexual Minorities are a group whose sexual identity, orientation or practices differ from the majority of the surrounding society; Sexual minorities (LGBT population) are facing many problems in daily life, and treated inhumanly, unequally. The present study attempted to understand the problems of Sexual minorities by applying social case work method. All the clients actively participated in the study, which made our way to reach the objective of social case work study successfully.

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