MAJOR FINDINGS & SUGGESTIONS

One of the core values in professional social work education is that it is to make people independent. But the contradiction is that it doesn't make professional social workers independent. The present setup serves only to make them dependent. E.g., Professional social work educations make one as an employment seeker rather than an employment generator. It is characteristic of a profession that in professional social work education there is no adequate amount of understanding and joint ventures between and among schools of social work, social work students and teachers on curriculum content, training methodology and inter-school cooperation in training social work professionals. Unhealthy competition is seen instead of collaboration and common efforts.

While social work students put the blame on outdated course content, repetition, lack of clarity, lack of depth in topics, lack of field experience in teachers, inadequate number and types of specializations, lack of job-oriented exposures, inadequate training in project preparation, lack of recognition due to a profession and so on the practitioners and employers put it on both teachers' and students' quality, attitude and commitment. Teachers on the other hand perceive the problems relating to autonomy of the institute in selection and training.

Though there is considerable amount of consensus among teachers, students, practitioners and employees on major hypotheses there is considerable amount of
perceptional difference among professionals regarding poor quality of professional social work education. The whole attempt of professional social work education should be geared to promote and propagate independent practice among professionals rather than begging for menial jobs under non-professionals.

It is characteristic only of professional social work education that professionals are mainly trained by the non-professionals. Majority of field work agencies are headed by non-professionals who dictates and set standards by themselves for the profession. It must be always vice versa. Since the values and motives of all these agencies differs so widely, the real values and interests of professional social work education get diluted and does not serve the purpose.

Entrepreneurship being an essential condition to begin something and as professional social workers should be people to begin projects and ventures to meet the demands of society at all levels from selection and training entrepreneurship should be focused and given priority.

The report of the second UGC review committee has observed that the social realities social work professional to work with are poverty and population and their interfaces of unemployment, deprivation and exploitation.

Now we are looking ahead for the report of the 3rd UGC review committee report. I feel it is imperative for us to reconsider these three things – social realities, social work task and roles.

- Our range today is very narrow. It is limited to 8 areas
- Our horizon is too small.
- 187 -

- Our competence too low
- Our skills too inadequate
- Our attitude too poor

And people get the impression that our intervention is inappropriate.

For a social work professional sky is the limit. Every individual comes under the purview of social work. Every one from American president to Bin Laden, from cradle to grave is poor requiring some help/support. And social work is a helping profession. What do we have to offer to these people under this so wide a horizon. Time has come to project an image that the world has so much to benefit from us and we are there everywhere and with everyone in need.

This is a very big task

Contemporary social realities
(Ref: “Methodology of Social Work Education”, Murali Desai)

The emerging literature of development studies and exchange with action groups, social movements and non-government organizations shows the following analysis of the contemporary social realities. Historically, prejudicing ideologies have lead to systematic discrimination of vulnerable groups because of their sex, ethnicity, age, health, economic background, sexual orientation and such other attributes resulting in marginalisation of women, dalits, tribals, indigenous people, children, youth, older persons, the labour class, persons with disabilities, mental or terminal illness, or varying sexual orientations, and others. The socio-economic-political systems of family, community, state, corporate sector, mass media and others have
reinforced such domination and marginalisation, violating people's rights to food and nutrition, water and sanitation, livelihood and employment, health, housing, environmental sustainability and literacy and basic education.

The emerging approaches to counter these socio-economic-political forces are action groups resulting in the new social movements, the second wave feminism, and multiculturalism, aiming towards sustainable and people centered development, promoting the values of social equity, local self-governance, democratic pluralism, peoples' participation, self-reliance and peaceful collaborative social dynamics. With the resurgence of the civil society, social work profession has a very significant role to play in partnership with the people-centered ideologies and groups at the local, national and inter-national levels.

Social reality that exists in India is highly complex and quite challenging for social work which throughout history had a fluctuating focus. Social work in India has to concern itself with poverty, deprivation, unemployment, illiteracy, malnutrition, scarcity of drinking water, insanitation, non-availability of adequate shelter, discrimination, gender inequality, environmental degradation, population explosion, exploitation of consumers, neglect and abuse of children, youth and aged, debt bondage, sexual deviance, inter community clashes, inter-caste strives, atrocities against SC/ST, terrorism, AIDS, corruption, broken family issues, suicide, problems of people with differential ability, dowry, child marriage, child rights etc. (CSWE 2001).

Social work education is becoming increasingly challenged by the need to reorganize, modify and strengthen its educational curriculum to respond to social realities. The report of UGC second review committee on social work education
therefore ask to make through change at institutional, country and personal levels to
pledge ourselves to fulfill our social obligation. These then are the social realities to
which social workers must respond and social work must design a responsive
curriculum which has relevance for the type of manpower required for these
conditions. Regional variations should be taken into account in developing such
curricula. Majority of our curricula show emphasis on social and individual problems
of the few rather than on the masses in our society. These curricula do not reflect our
society’s major needs. The committee emphatically expresses its concern in the
following words. “It is indeed dismaying to note that social work education is not
responding as quickly as it should in making curriculum changes in training students
to be more competent to tackle myriad social, cultural, and economic dimensions of
social problems”

Conventional social work education more suited for pre-reform period is
not of any relevance now for use in India. The curriculum should undergo drastic
change to meet the changing conditions to include courses addressing the issues and
also to equip the students with the necessary skills so as to make social work education
more relevant and meaningful in the changing scenario(Curriculum Development
Cell of UGC 1987)

The teachers imparting theoretical knowledge and the trainers imparting
practical training work basically in association with various organizations and
institutions. It is therefore surprising that even in spite of constant touch with the
society around, the social work curriculum has not been developed.
One of the major complaints about professional social work education is the inadequacy of indigenous literature in social work without which it is very difficult to maintain the standard of social work education (Chowdary Paul 1992 – Reflections on social work education). The contributions of social workers through research is more to social science discipline than to social work. The existence and triumph of social work profession rest with the standard of social work education. The more standardized the training the more value additions to this profession (Armaity Desai 1994 – A Study of Social Work Education in India).

It is however seen that during the last 65 years, enough attention has not been paid to incorporate newer theoretical and practical knowledge in to the course (UGC 1990 – Report of curriculum development Centre in social work education).

Inspite of several Indian scholars in professional social work education acquiring national and international reputation, the theoretical content and practical training of the course remain basically unchanged (Nanavathy, Meher 1985 – Social Work Education and Professional Development).

Skill is the capacity to make appropriate judgement in selecting from the available theoretical knowledge the theory that is most appropriate to the problem to be solved. Skill depends upon the practitioners range of theoretical base. Skill is the ability for differential application of theoretical input to individual situations. Skill can be better learnt in and through practice. Along with the changing society the methods of resolving the social problems must also change. Traditional untrained social workers tried to resolve social problems according to their capacity and skill and even succeeded to a great extent. It earns them reputation, social image and
prestige and people need for their continued service. In brief, the society clearly sees their effort and contribution in the resolution of social problems. On the ether hand it is seen that the trained and knowledgeable individual social workers and social work institutions working in the arena of professional social work have not been successful in effectively resolving the social problems so as to attract people's attention. The 'professional' in the professional social worker has not come out markedly visible (Steven Shardlow, Mark Doel 1996 – Practice Learning and Teaching).

Professional social workers should have the skill to manage problems related to ethnic diversity, human migration, conflict resolution, individual, group and community based issues, empowerment etc. But unfortunately professional social workers are at a loss as how to manage issues like Aids, suicide, broken family issues etc. Experimentation is very dangerous at a point when people come after being affected by these issues and when the problem is in full blown.

Attitude implies spirit and commitment. Professional social work education is based on the hard core of value system. It is spirit of social work when supplemented by the scientific method, becomes professional social work. Profession involves high degree of responsibility and strong sense of obligation. There is a sense of loyalty or honor expressing itself in a code of ethics in the field of mutual relationship between the client, the worker and the public. Social workers are guide, enabler, therapist, specialist, and coordinator, all rolled in to one (Abraham Flexner 1995). Social workers should express their genuine concern for the marginalized, oppressed, disemboweled, destitute, exploited, abused, unsupported, weaker and vulnerable sections of society. It has also to prove that it is unique in terms of its mission, vision
and goals. Professional social work education is wedded to prepare committed change agents pledged themselves to alleviate poverty, oppression and discrimination with a sense of sacrifice (Council on Social Work Education 1994).

That field experience is relevant to social work is a truism, asserts R.R. Singh in his paper 'Relevance and scope of field experience in social work education, 1989, for skills can be better learnt in and through practice. Such learning also facilitates inculcation of human values and development of professional attitude. In addition it adds to knowledge and imparts a perspective to deal with human problems. Field experience must be socially relevant, educationally structured and theoretically aided so that the profession become socially responsive. All useful experiences may not be socially relevant, educationally sound and professionally appropriate. Any agency may not provide such relevant experience unless agencies are with good determination, educational goals, integration of perspectives and vision of the human service profession.

Lack of professionally oriented institutional structures as field work agencies, lack of adequate supervision, lack of established norms for field work, emphasis on mastering skills around methods, etc are some of the prevailing concerns (Social Work Education, Emerging Concerns (ed) Georgre Joseph, P.O.George –1997). It is field work what adds practical wisdom to social work profession. In many social work institutions this most important component get under rated (UGC, Curriculum Development Cell). Without effective result- oriented field work professional social work education can not get a glowing image. It has become an urgent necessity to impart qualitatively richer, skill-developing and useful field training to the students of professional social work education. By and large the field work training in many
schools of social work fails to fetch practical wisdom to the trainees.

The objective of professional social work education is to prepare competent and qualified social workers. Professionalism involves use of intellectual operation and possession of techniques to the knowledge for the benefit of the community. It is seen that trained and knowledgeable social workers fail to resolve problems which traditional untrained workers are capable of resolving. Professional social workers should have the skill to manage problems related to ethnic diversity, human migration, conflict resolution, individual, group and community based issues, empowerment etc. But unfortunately professional social workers are at a loss as how to manage issues like AIDS, suicide, broken family issues etc. Experimentation is very dangerous at a point when people come after being affected by these issues and when the problem is in full blown.

Competence building has been under rated by many professional social work institutions. Unless professional social work education makes itself an independent and dynamic discipline that respond to changing social scenario and moves away from a defined definition of a structured university course, it will have to struggle hard for survival (Powell, Brewer and Lait 2001)

Like any other profession, social work has to be socially relevant, demonstrating its competence to serve its users. Professional social workers assume ‘Managerialisam’ and keep themselves at a high pedestal of ‘Knowers’ and ‘Givers’ and at the same time are unable to meet any need of the clients group. The changes in Indian social structure and the roles and responsibilities of professional social workers are of great importance. In the first place the social work education has to act as a reservoir of trained manpower to provide social service organizations the
potential opportunities in a dynamic, versatile and fast changing social environment.

In the second place the content of social work education need to be restructured keeping in mind not the number of social work students we train but incapacitation to enable them to meet the challenges of social obligations. In the third place social work students should be equipped with skills of environmental scanning so as to realize the implications of fast changing social, economic and political milieu.

The tools and techniques used by a doctor or engineer is unaffected by socio-political values. But a social workers decision is affecting the society in a far reaching way and hence he has to be keen to the changes of values and structural changes in the system which is imperative for survival and growth of professional social work as a profession.

Social reality that exists in India is highly complex and quite challenging for social work which throughout history had a fluctuating focus. Social work in India has to concern itself with poverty, deprivation, unemployment, illiteracy, malnutrition, scarcity of drinking water, insanitation, non-availability of adequate shelter, discrimination, gender inequality, environmental degradation, population explosion, exploitation of consumers, neglect and abuse of children, youth and aged, debt bondage, sexual deviance, inter community clashes, inter-caste strives, atrocities against SC/ST, terrorism, AIDS, corruption, broken family issues, suicide, problems of people with differential ability, dowry, child marriage, child rights etc (CSWE 2001).

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therefore ask to make through change at institutional, country and personal levels to pledge ourselves to fulfill our social obligation. These then are the social realities to which social workers must respond and social work must design a responsive curriculum which has relevance for the type of manpower required for these conditions. Regional variations should be taken into account in developing such curricula. Majority of our curricula show emphasis on social and individual problems of the few rather than on the masses in our society. These curricula do not reflect our society's major needs. The committee emphatically expresses its concern in the following words. "It is indeed dismaying to note that social work education is not responding as quickly as it should in making curriculum changes in training students to be more competent to tackle myriad social, cultural, and economic dimensions of social problems."

Modern era is particularly marked by problems of Marital disharmony, Parent youth conflict, Laxity in family control and deviant behavior, The widespread of sexual problems, Aids and HIV, Abuse and neglect of elderly, Substance abuse in children and adolescents, Selection of spouse, Problem of dual earning member, Romantic love, Parent youth conflict, corruption, Medicalisation of human body, Increased suicides, Increased mental problems among children and youth etc.

Following are the new avenues, directions and deliberations of the professional social worker through which he could prove his professional performance and get the profession of social work recognized by the society. Institutions, individuals and professional associations should realize the new roles in addition to the usual supporting function in the form of guide, enabler, therapist, specialist, and coordinator, all rolled in to one (Abraham Flexner 1995). The institutions, individuals and
professional associations should come down from the high pedestal of 'Managerialisam' 'Knowers' 'Givers' and get involved with down to realities as 'Doers'. That is how the untrained social workers gain reputation and glowing image for the work they do and make people ask for their continued service.

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Professional social work field is comprised of trained professionals, professional social work students, teachers and a large majority of nonprofessionals. One major role of professional social workers is to organize common platforms where all those in the field could share their common concerns, anxieties, current issues, strategies and approaches to be adopted in the field. Such attempts are at its peripheral limits now which needs to be strengthened. Professional social work institutions in Kerala are slowly comprehending this role and has initiated some steps to form an association of schools of social work in Kerala, to organize platforms where professionals and non-professionals could meet together for discussions and deliberations, to [provide training for field work agency personnel and to think of incorporating current social issues in to professional social work education system to make it more relevant, meaningful and effective.

Professional social workers are challenged with the responsibility of extending the work from agency oriented remedial approach to deal with the large social issues that retard social progress, to work for bringing structural and institutional changes and acceptance of social change, social action and social development as the prime focus of social work profession in the 21st century. The new role set involves working in the real social situations rather than theorist change agents, and to adopt militant approach to deal with changing situations in the 21st century. The profession has
been challenged not merely to bring about welfare and development but with peace and social justice. ‘Shanthi’ is the challenge facing the world today. Peace is the concern deep in the heart of every one and for social workers it is a challenge of personal introspection and professional response. The UGC second review committee report commented that in the face of hard realities of human life the challenge faced by the social work institutions and professional social workers in India is to fight the dreadful disease like AIDS, corruption, child labor, women empowerment, poverty, exploitation in 21st century.

Thus, as we all aware, social work is a profession of action ranging from individual counseling, group activity, community development, social advocacy and policy changes to research. Social workers, by and large, are known as champions of underdogs, they are also doing goobers, activists, demonstrators, lobbyist-shakers and makers of policy.

**Faculty involvement in training methodology.**

In any educational process, the educator or teacher becomes the role model and his/her actions are under the constant scrutiny by the student community. The knowledge, attitude and values they reflect assume great significance in the learning process. The social work education system in India has failed to find or produce an adequate number of educators who have succeeded in molding students into workers who act as advocates for social change on behalf of the less fortunate and underprivileged. Most teachers rely only on textbook material for teaching. Lack of field involvement, lack of regular interaction with practitioners and lack of enough research by faculty tells upon the consequent poor attitude of the students during and
after training.

It is universally accepted for any profession, its professional status is largely determined by the extend to which it exhibits the characteristics of professionalism. For any profession training form the basis for practice, as this is what moulds an individual into a professional making him / her distinct from others. So if the social work profession has failed to make strong footing India, it can be attributed to the failure of education system to bring about the expected standards of performance in its students to meet the need of the time. This in turn calls for a radical change in the social work education system.

It has been a matter of great concern for educators as well as practitioners for quite some time and there is a growing consensus that the need of the hour is to develop a pattern responsive to the social realities. In the Indian context this would mean producing workers who can act as agents for social change in a developmental milieu with a heightened sense of commitment and social consciousness.

ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Role of professional social work is defined by the needs of society in which we live. Deprivation, exploitation and poverty were the causes, which social workers fought with from its inception in India. Accordingly the role was to ensure social and economic justice in society and to play a supportive role for better adjustment of individuals and to bring the downtrodden to the main stream of national life. But today the needs are drastically of different nature. The societal issues as prioritized
by the respondents in this study are

1) Poverty

2) Unemployment

3) Sexual harassment

4) Suicide

5) Corruption

6) Broken family issues

7) Geriatric problems

8) Prostitution

9) Environmental issues

10) Natural calamities

11) Child abuse

12) Dowry

13) Drug abuse and alcoholism

14) Aids

15) Terrorism

16) Environmental issues
Goals of social work profession

Promote the values of human dignity and self worth of every person, social equity, local self-governance, democratic pluralism, peoples' participation, self-reliance and peaceful collaborative social dynamics.

Critique the ideologies that led to systematic discrimination of vulnerable groups because of their sex, ethnicity, age, health, economic background, sexual orientation and such other attributes resulting in marginalisation of women, dalits, tribals, indigenous people, children, youth, older persons, the labour class, persons with disabilities, mental or terminal illness, or varying sexual orientations, and others.

Identify the dynamics of human development. The socio-economic-political systems of family, community, state, corporate sector, mass media and others have reinforced such domination and marginalisation, violating people's rights to food and nutrition, water and sanitation, livelihood and employment, health, housing, environmental sustainability and literacy and basic education.

Analyse the roles played in the society by the state, political, legal and judicial systems, and welfare and development policies and schemes from local to national levels, influenced by international institutions.

Work for democratization of the socio-economic-political systems aiming at empowerment of vulnerable groups to promote their basic rights to food and nutrition, water and sanitation, livelihood and employment, health, housing, environmental sustainability and literacy and basic education and relief and rehabilitation of victims of emergency situations such as substance abuse, crime, trafficking, displacements, collective violence and disasters.
Develop and use culture sensitive methods of social change, within the generalist, clinical and social action approaches of social work, administration of voluntary organizations, policy and program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, participation in people's movements, non-formal education and participatory training, networking, legal aid, advocacy and public interest litigations.

Organise social work knowledge, as an integration of knowledge and action, based on a critical inquiry into practice wisdom, practice-based and participatory research, documentation of best practices, policy analysis and multi-disciplinary and applied social science knowledge: and

Train qualified social work personnel for social work practice, administration, education, training and research, by imparting social work knowledge, attitude and skills, through a process of critical inquiry, via student-centred classroom teaching and learning, self study, field practicum and practice-based research.

**Overall aim of social work education**

The overall aim of social work education may be to integrate social work knowledge, attitude and skills, through a process of critical inquiry, via student-centred classroom teaching and learning, self study, field practicum and practice-based research to train qualified social work personnel for social work practice, administration, education, training and research.

**Overall knowledge objectives of social work education**

The knowledge objectives of social work education may be to critically evaluate multi-disciplinary knowledge, with reference to the following aspects.
through a value based study of alternate view points:

Dynamics of human development and psychology

Roles played by social systems of family, groups and community,

Roles played by the state, corporate sector, mass media, state, political, legal and judicial systems, and welfare and development policies and schemes from local to national levels, influenced by international institutions.

Overall attitude objectives of social work education

The overall attitude objectives of social work education may be to develop critical self-awareness, with reference to the following ideological and ethnical requirements of social work profession through direct intellectual processes;

Attributes such as honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, creativity and optimism

The values of human dignity and self worth of every person, social equity, local self-governance, democratic pluralism, peoples’ participation, self-reliance and peaceful collaborative social dynamics and

Sensitivity to marginalized and vulnerable groups such as women, dalits, tribals, indigenous people, children, youth, older persons, the labor class, persons with disabilities, mental or terminal illness, or varying sexual orientations, and others.

Overall skill objectives of social work education

Overall skill objectives of social work education may be the following

To develop life skills such as

Reflections on self-awareness and self self-confidence

Reflections on ones own family and other sources of socializations
Skills for physical and sexual health

Skills for emotional competence and critical thinking

Skills for enrichment of communication and relationships

To obtain people-centered skills for culture sensitive methods of social change, within the generalist, clinical and social action approaches of social work, administration of voluntary organizations, policy and program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, participation in people's movements, non-formal education and participatory training, networking, legal aid, advocacy and public interest litigations aiming at democratization of the socio-economic-political systems, and empowerment of people to promote their basic rights.

**Premises Underlying Social Work Education**

- The purpose of social work education is to prepare competent and effective social work professionals who are committed to practice that includes services to the poor and oppressed, and who work to alleviate poverty, oppression, and discrimination.

- Social work education is based upon a specific body of knowledge, values, and professional skills. It is grounded in the profession's history and philosophy. Education for the profession promotes the development and advancement of knowledge, practice skills, and services that further the well-being of people and promote social and economic justice. Social work education is responsible.

- For the production and application of research and scholarship aimed at advancing social work practice.
- Programs of social work education are offered at the baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral levels. Doctoral programs are not accredited by the Council.

- Programs of social work education maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners and with groups and organizations that promote, provide, or seek to influence social policies and social work services. Responsibility for initiating these relationships rests with social work education programs. Effective programs develop and maintain a systematic process of communication with these individuals and groups.

- The effectiveness of any profession depends on the active engagement of its members in continuous learning. Programs of social work education strive to promote continuing professional development of students and faculty. Programs seek to teach students how to become lifelong learners who are motivated to continue the development of knowledge and skills throughout their careers.

- Effective social work education programs recognize the interdependence of nations and the need for worldwide professional cooperation.

- Social work education programs must assume a leadership role within the profession by offering curricula that are at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and its supporting disciplines.

- The professional foundation prepares students to apply a generalist perspective to social work practice with systems of all sizes. Foundation practice content emphasizes professional relationships that are characterized by mutuality, collaboration, and respect for the client system. Content on practice assessment focuses on the examination of client strengths and problems in the interactions among individuals and between people and their environments.
Foundation practice content must include knowledge, values, and skills to enhance the well-being of people and to help ameliorate the environmental conditions that affect people adversely. Practice content must include the following skills: defining issues; collecting and assessing data; planning and contracting; identifying alternative interventions; selecting and implementing appropriate courses of action; using appropriate research to monitor and evaluate outcomes; applying appropriate research-based knowledge and technological advances; and termination. Practice content also includes approaches and skills for practice with clients from differing social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual, and class backgrounds, and with systems of all sizes.

The purpose of professional social work education is to enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice. The achievement of this purpose requires clarity about learning objectives and expected student outcomes, flexibility in programming and teaching to accommodate a diverse student population, and commitment of sufficient time and resources to the educational process.

Two levels of social work education are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education: the baccalaureate and the master’s. The baccalaureate level prepares students for generalist social work practice, and the master’s level prepares students for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. These levels of education differ from each other in the depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skill that students are expected to synthesize and
apply in practice.

- Both levels of social work education must provide the professional foundation curriculum that contains the common body of knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. This common base is transferable among settings, population groups, and problem areas. The master's level of social work education must include the professional foundation content and concentration content for advanced practice in an identifiable area.

- Professional social work education at the master's level takes place in accredited colleges and universities. It requires the equivalent of two academic years of full-time study and leads to a professional degree at the master's level. Entry into the MSW program does not require completion of the BSW degree.

- All master's social work programs must:
  - Provide content about social work practice with client systems of various sizes and types.
  - Prepare graduates to practice with diverse populations.
  - Provide content about the social contexts of social work practice, the changing nature of those contexts, the behavior of organizations, and the dynamics of change.

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• Provide content about the social contexts of social work practice, the changing nature of those contexts, the behavior of organizations, and the dynamics of change.

• Infuse throughout the curriculum the values and ethics that guide professional social workers in their practice.

• Prepare graduates who are aware of their responsibility to continue their professional growth and development.

• The master’s curriculum must be based upon a liberal arts perspective and must include the professional foundation and one or more concentrations.

• The master’s curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole.

• Graduates of a master’s social work program are advanced practitioners who can analyze, intervene, and evaluate in ways that are highly differentiated, discriminating, and self-critical. They must synthesize and apply a broad range of knowledge as well as practice with a high degree of autonomy and skill. They must be able to refine and advance the quality of their practice as well as that of the larger social work profession. These advanced competencies must be appropriately integrated and reflected in all aspects of their social work practice, including their ability to:

• Apply critical thinking skills within professional contexts, including synthesizing and applying appropriate theories and knowledge to practice interventions.

• Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with
an understanding of, and respect for, the positive value of diversity.

- Demonstrate the professional use of self.

- Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the strategies and skills of change that advance social and economic justice.

- Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.

- Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.

- Apply the knowledge and skills of advanced social work practice in an area of concentration.

- Critically analyze and apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems (i.e., families, groups, organizations, and communities).

- Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies and demonstrate skills for influencing policy formulation and change.

- Evaluate relevant research studies and apply findings to practice, and demonstrate skills in quantitative and qualitative research design, data analysis, and knowledge dissemination.

- Conduct empirical evaluations of their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.

- Use communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations.
colleagues, and members of the community.

- Use supervision and consultation appropriate to advanced practice in an area of concentration.

- Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.

- Duplication and redundancy of content mastered at the baccalaureate level must be avoided in master’s programs. Specifically, BSW graduates who enter MSW programs should not repeat professional foundation content in the master’s program that has been mastered in the BSW program. In order to verify mastery and to prevent unproductive repetition, master’s programs must develop explicit policies and procedures relevant to admission, course waivers, substitutions, exemptions, or advanced placement. Credit for advanced placement can be granted only for content in the professional foundation. Advanced placement signifies mastery of required content but does not necessarily signify exemption from credit hours. The program must clearly explain specific policies and procedures for advanced placement.

Curriculum content

The general impression is that the content of professional social work education is like the Elizabethan skirt. It is on the subject, around the subject but not touching the subject or knowing the subject. Specializations are traditional ones not catering to the needs of the day. Theoretical base being the body of a profession curriculum should go deep into topics providing worms eye view of the areas covered.
Accumulation of knowledge by means of research and publication is inadequate. Lack of field experience of teachers and irrelevant specializations produce obsolete products unsuited for 21st century.

Attempts are always to fit the existing curricula to the emerging concerns instead of building the curricula based on identification of problems faced in society and the tasks to be undertaken and then locating the subject matter to suit the tasks to be performed. The theoretical base rooted in western culture and the lack of culture based modification makes the application of theory irrelevant bringing down the effectiveness of practice. In specialization programs there is no agreement as to the number of specializations or the number of papers to be offered. There is no consensus as to what constitute a generic program. Majority of institutes offer specializations whereas the students do not necessarily take up a job in the area of their specialization. This might mean training a person for a specific field making him ill-equipped to take up a job in another field. The selection of subject matter follows a set pattern without any attempt to integrate new topics or relevant issues corresponding to local needs or on a wider perspective. This does not help the students to acquire knowledge pertaining to the needs of the time or futures concerns and leave them grossly unaware of important issues they are going to face in their current field practice or in their future operations. The social work curriculum tends to be more in terms of information accumulation and transmission using the traditional methods of teaching. Lack of integration of creative and activity based methods of learning makes the education pattern largely ineffective in initiating and promoting the capacity of the students for self-learning and realizing their own creativity.
The curriculum at the master's level must include both foundation and concentration content. The professional foundation includes content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum. Concentration content includes knowledge, values, and skills for advanced practice in an identifiable area. Master's programs must achieve integration among these content areas. Curriculum areas do not need to be taught in discrete courses, but mastery of the curriculum must occur through classroom experiences and field practice. The master's social work curriculum must cover; but is not necessarily limited to, the professional foundation and the concentration content.

The curriculum design of each program must identify a coherent approach to selecting the research and theories offered. Every part of the master's curriculum must strengthen the student's understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for the delivery and evaluation of practice. Content provided in each curricular area must be relevant to the objectives, philosophy, and mission of the individual program and must facilitate the student's understanding of how the knowledge relates to social work practice.

New advances in practice knowledge, as well as the accumulated knowledge of social work education and the social work profession, determine the specific content required for the professional foundation. The professional foundation curriculum must include content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum.
Competence

The purpose of professional social work education is to prepare competent, effective, social work professionals who are committed to practice that includes services to the poor and oppressed and who work to alleviate poverty, oppression, and discrimination. Social work education is based upon a specific body of knowledge, values, and professional skills. It is grounded in the professions' history and philosophy. Education for the profession promotes the development and advancement of knowledge, practice skills, and services that further the well-being of the people and promote social and economic justice. Social work education is responsible for the production and application of research and scholarships aimed at advancing social work practice.

Hence competence in:-

- Interpersonal behavioral control
- Judgment and decision-making
- Contracting and goal setting
- Selection and application of change methods and
- Assessment of outcomes
- Is a must for professional social workers.

Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence. Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics. Social workers
should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics.

Our competence now is the competence of a front line worker. What is now taught at post graduate level should be taught at graduate level to prepare young students for front line work if they prefer to be so. At post graduate level, one has to become a specialist or super specialist / or a consultant. Unfortunately even at PG level we become so dependent, a contradiction to the basic values of this profession. We need to become employers rather than employees.

Social work is master profession of all other professions. All professional and the setting in which they work are our concern areas. We need to feel the pride of this fact and project such an image to the society at large. We are supposed to provide the conceptual frames and methodological tools for professionals employed in other occupations and programmes for the effective discharge of their obligations. Unfortunately these master professional are now trained by non-professionals. Most of the field work agencies are headed by non-professionals who dictates and set standard by themselves for the profession. It must be always vice versa. Since the values and motives of all these agencies differs so widely, the real values and interests of professional social work education get diluted and does not serve the purpose.

Skill development through fieldwork.

Though extension programs and demonstration projects like community centers, family welfare agencies, foster care etc have been organized in some of the institutes, majority do not have any such programs which can act as skill labs for the
students. The institutes of social work education should set up extension/community outreach programs which should be action-oriented, around particular problems. This will allow opportunities for the students to put in to practice their knowledge and skill. The social work institutes should also take up training for paraprofessional frontline workers. The social work educational institutions should be alert to the emerging social issues and should be prompt in analyzing and responding to them.

The need for indigenous elements of social work education in terms of its philosophy, principles, approaches, theories and study materials can not be over emphasized because working with people, studying social problems and administering social welfare programs calls for indigenous orientation and skills to make education and training more relevant and effective. Professional social workers need to be empowered with general skills such as:

- Assessment
- Interviewing
- Intake/referral
- Service planning
- Case management
- Crisis intervention
- Service provision
- Problem solving
- Program evaluation
- Community outreach
- Advocacy
- Research
Networking

And life skills such as

- Reflections on self-awareness and self-confidence
- Reflections on one's own family and other sources of socializations
- Skills for physical and sexual health
- Skills for emotional competence and critical thinking
- Skills for enrichment of communication and relationships

Co-curricular skills like

- Skills for use of literature
- Skills for writing reports and documentation
- Skills for making presentations
- Skills for job selection
- Skills for interviewing
- Skills for participating in interdisciplinary teamwork

 Marketable skills like

- Policy analysis
- Program development
- Training
- Project preparation
- Project evaluation
- Crisis management etc
Attitude formation through social involvement.

The social worker is very often called upon to organize people, formulate plans of action for them and mobilize resources to implement them. He is sometimes the only person working towards coordinating several activities. All programs need not appear to be supportive of the main goal. Planning, coordinating and organizing functions which do not lend themselves too much coordination are the unenviable task of the social worker. Making meaning out of an apparently meaningless situation can be seen an opportunity or as a dead end. The professional social worker is one who posses the attitude and aptitude to lend meaning and content to such a situation. Hence professional social work education has to play a more militant role of working in the real social situations than a theorist change-agent. The role has changed from one of individual change agent to one of becoming a political agent; from one of welfare and development role to change in the established norms by promoting civic awareness to social issues; from remedial to deal with large social issues that retard social progress; to work for bringing structural and institutional changes; social action and social development as the prime focus of social work profession in the 21st century.

1. Though the respondents are very clear about the needs of the day, they have not tried to relate the role of professional social work education with those realities.

2. The respondents are confused as to the meaning of the term role of professional social work education. It tells about the lack of clarity on social work concepts.
3. Only 10% of the respondents have heard and read the UGC review committee report on professional social work education and the reports of COUNCIL of social work recommendations.

4. Even those have read the above said reports have never seriously thought about whether or not professional social work education is incorporating their recommendations into its system.

5. Only when the majority shares a discontentment, it becomes a subject of talk and gradually a wave to bring about desired change in any field. In the professional social work education though majority shares a discontentment about the incongruence of NEEDS of society and role of professional social work, that discontentment is not widely spread because only a negligible number of the total population are engaged in this field in the state of Kerala compared to other professions.

Field work

Contributing most to the satisfaction of students were students’ perceptions of the quality of field instruction, the desirability of and involvement in the agency, and didactic explanations from the field instructor. It highlights the importance of accessible, supportive supervision, active learning, feedback and conceptual input into student learning. Field practicum experience should help the student to:

- Consciously bring selected knowledge to the practice situation
- Develop competence in performing practice skills
- Learn to practice within the framework of social work values and ethics
Develop a professional commitment to social work practice

Evolve a practice style consistent with personal strengths and capacities

Develop the ability to work effectively within a social agency

During field practicum a student begins to function as a beginning professional social worker under the guidance of an agency supervisor and faculty instructor. This is a time for practice and learning. It is designed to provide one with opportunities for:

- Learning about social work skills and practice in a service setting
- Practicing social work in a real life-setting
- Integrating academic preparation with professional social work practice

Field practicum enables one to try one's wings at practice with support, encouragement, guidance and assistance. Bridging the gap between classroom and field to build confidence in the beginning professionals is an important goal.

The field practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. It engages the student in supervised social work practice and provides opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting.

Field education at the master's level requires a minimum of 900 hours in field practicum.

Each educational program must establish standards for field practicum settings that define their social work services and practices, field instructor assignments and activities, and student learning expectations and responsibilities. Individual programs may organize their practice in different ways but must ensure educationally directed,
coordinated, and monitored practicum experiences for all students. All programs must provide:

a. Placements based upon the objectives of the educational program and the learning needs of each student.

b. Structured learning opportunities that enable students to compare their practice experiences, integrate knowledge acquired in the classroom, and expand knowledge beyond the scope of the practicum setting.

c. Support for field practicum instructors by:
   1. Sharing pertinent information about practicum students.
   2. Providing information about the organization and content of the educational curriculum, emphasizing the interrelationships among human behavior, social policy, research, and practice content.
   3. Providing information about the sequencing of course content.
   4. Articulating clear practice and evaluation goals for the field practicum and for each individual student.
   5. Offering orientation and training programs.

Emerging fields

The following are some of the latest emerging areas in professional social work education which need to be included in the professional social work education curriculum.

- Aging services
- Child and adult day care centers
- Children and youth services
Community action agencies
Criminal justice agencies
Domestic violence programs
Family service agencies
Homeless shelters
Home health programs
Legal services agencies
Mental health services
Developmental disabilities services
Nursing homes
Residential treatment facilities
School social work
Substance abuse programs

Whether professional social work education responds to societal needs

Response in this study means answering to the needs/demands of society or dealing with societal issues. For a professional to deal with an issue, knowledge, skills, and attitude are the crucial factors.

The involvement of individual professional social workers in every day social issues is either absent or negligible. Professional social workers have not been able to make their presence felt in solving burning social issues. Professional social workers are not fully alive in the society so as to catch the attention of society when nonprofessionals very successfully do the job. The reasons pointed out includes status of professional social workers, ego problems, preference for comfortable jobs in

- 221 -
structured settings resulting from wrong orientation during training period and confusion as to whether an issue comes under the purview of professional social work.

Unless and until professional social work educational institutions and professional bodies plunge themselves deep in society, it can never impart an attitude for the same in students and professionals. Unfortunately professional social work educational institutions still remain to be merely educational institutions just like any other educational institutions. Community partnership, which ensures learning by doing process, must be the hallmark of professional social work institutions. Society is the real lab of training for professional social work. Only intensive involvement with current social issues will impart practical skills to deal with similar issues once the student becomes a professional. The traditional fieldwork pattern is quiet inadequate to produce competent professionals.

In the light of the above findings the researcher is here forced to accept all the three hypotheses of this study.