Chapter III: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The introduction chapter and review of literature of this study described the basic purpose behind the social work education, availability of social work knowledge and the need to develop IKB to make the training relevant in socio economic and cultural context of the country. It was found that the prevailing debates, discussions and most of the writings, research studies and critical papers on the availability of social work knowledge projected the dearth of indigenous knowledge and emphasized the need to develop contextual knowledge by the educational institutions and social work professionals (UGC review report, 1980; Desai, 1994; Siddiqui, 1999; Narayan, 2001; Balkrishana, 2006; Bodhi 2006).

For any profession, training forms the basis for practice and institutions the crucial places where knowledge base is developed (D’Souza 1978). Further, educator is a ‘key’ person involved in the profession and plays an important role in knowledge development while imparting training in social work education (Desai 1994; Shetty 1996). This chapter of the research deals with the methodology of the study on institutions of social work education and role of social work educators in developing IKB.

In order to make a gradual but systematic inquiry into the research problem, first part of this chapter presented the rationale of the study, its objectives, research questions, operational definitions and variables. In the subsequent part of this chapter research design, sources of information, research setting and sampling methods, tools of data collection, data analysis, charterization plan, scope and limitations of the study are discussed. The chapter concludes with ethical considerations of the research study.

3.2 Rationale of the Study

For any stream of education to gain professional acceptance at the national level, it is necessary that the education in that stream systematically address the issues of national importance (Shah 1981). In that, for any professional branch of education, which directly deals with the needs of the society, it is all the more important that it addresses the needs of the local people. This requirement is vital for the social work profession, which directly deals with the human issues (Vijayalaxmi 2004; Yip 2006). Furthermore, as a dynamic profession, social work education has to examine the changing conditions in the socio-economic and cultural background of the society.
and incorporate relevant changes in the syllabus so as to become more indigenous and not out of context (Shetty 1997; Fook 2000).

Social work is a globally recognized profession. In India, it has completed 75 years in 2012. Ideally, seven and half decades’ time is enough for any profession to establish and firm up. Number of institutions for social work education (ISWE) has witnessed a rapid increase in India with the passage of time. In the year 2006, the estimated number of ISWE(s) was around 200 as against 120 in the year 2001. As it was mentioned before actual count of ISWE(s) in India is not taken and documented for many years. However, in academic gatherings this number is reckoned at 300 and above (NNSWE 2012). Although the number of ISWE has increased rapidly across the country, many of them do not have UGC recognition. The programs run by some of these institutions are unplanned and the institutes are not comparable with other facets in terms of infrastructural facilities, financial resources and knowledge availability. Most of the newly formed schools or departments are said to copy the course contents followed by the older institutions without contextualizing them to suit the regional needs (Kulkarni 1994:25; Prasad 2000; Mukarjee 2003; NNSSW 2012).

The responsibility to review the direction that the social work education and practice should take in the contemporary time to deal with the issues relevant in the local context in effective and acceptable ways largely vests in the social work educator (Desai A. 1997; Pathak 2000; Desai M. 2004; Kashyap 2012). Because SWE is the principal figure and plays ‘key’ role in the social work training and practice (Osmond 2005). As a teacher, supervisor, researcher, examiner, organizer, coordinator, administrator, writer and editor the SWE gradually acquires knowledge about the theory of social work and the prevailing social realities.

With the access and exposure to the blend of theoretical and fieldwork knowledge the social work educator is the one who can occupy in the pivotal role in the development of contextual knowledge more effectively (Shetty 1996; Desai 1994; Desai 2004; Singh 2008). As a professional involved in the teaching, practicing, and connecting the practice wisdom to knowledge development writing, publishing, and disseminating knowledge becomes an integral role of the social work educator (Desai A. 1994; Shetty 1996; Desai, M. 2004). In this background, keeping in mind the importance of these factors in the growth of social work education, the researcher felt the need to study institutions of social work education and explore role of social work educators in the development of knowledge and dissemination including constraints and challenges faced by them.
As mentioned earlier knowledge development takes place in the educational institutions by the educators. The social work educational institutions employ the social work educators and offer them the facilities to accomplish their role related to knowledge development. Hence, while studying the role of social work educators it is significant to explore profile of the institutions of social work education by studying their organizational set-up, curriculum aspects, infrastructural facilities and academic activities organized for knowledge development and dissemination. Further, the personal and professional profile of the SWEs, their interest areas, experiences, association with educational and other organizations, academic involvement and their understanding about different type of knowledge base which facilitate them to contribute in knowledge development was considered important part of this research and attempt was made to assess the role played by the SWEs’ personal and professional characteristics in enabling them to become knowledge generators of the indigenous social work education.

3.3 Objectives of the Study

1) To examine the profile of the selected institutions of social work education with regards to the following areas;
   
   a. Organizational set-up
   b. Curriculum aspect
   c. Institutional Facilities available
   d. Knowledge developed by the ISWE

2) To assess the role played by the social work educator’s personal and professional profile in enabling them to become generators of indigenous knowledge for social work education.

3) To identify the contributions made by the social work educator’s in the development of indigenous knowledge for social work education.

4) To study the constraints and challenges faced by the social work educator’s in developing indigenous knowledge for social work education in India and to consider the suggestions made by them for improvement.
3.4 Questions related to the study

Objective-1

- What is the background of the ISWE in terms of its year of establishment, location, affiliation to type of university?
- What type of curriculum pattern is followed by the ISWE?
- What are the facilities available in the ISWE for knowledge development?
- What type of knowledge is developed and disseminated by the ISWE?

Objective-2

- What is the personal and professional background of the social work educator?
- What is the area of interest and reason for the SWEs to choose social work education as their career option?
- What kind of teaching-learning material, methods were in use in the training of social work education?

Objective-3

- In what way the social work educator is involved in organizing academic activities while imparting social work training?
- What is the understanding of the SWE about different types of knowledge related to social work education and training?
- How do the SWEs contribute in the development of knowledge base such as writing, documenting and disseminating teaching-learning material?
- What contributions the SWEs made in the development of indigenous knowledge for social work education?

Objective-4

- What constraints the social work educators faced in developing the IKB?
- What are the social work educator’s suggestions to address the constraints and challenges faced in the development of knowledge base?
3.5 Operational Definitions

1. **Institution of Social Work Education (ISWE)**

Institution of Social Work Education means an institution of higher education, an affiliated college, school or department or faculty of a deemed universities, Central or State universities offering graduate and post graduate degree in social work. These institutions are the places where contextual knowledge is developed by the social work professionals to strengthen the social work profession.

2. **Head of the Institution of Social Work Education**

Head of the institution of social work education means the person who is assigned the responsibility of the post of dean, director, or principal of the school or college or department of the university. Head is the administrative in charge responsible for organizing academic activities to attain the training objectives of the educational institution.

3. **Social Work Educator (SWE)**

Social work educator means a professionally qualified teacher with a Master degree in social work appointed by the social work school /college/department/university. For this study only those SWEs who had more than two years’ experience in teaching and were involved in imparting theoretical and fieldwork knowledge and skills to the social work students for their academic and professional growth were considered as social work educator.

4. **Senior Social Work Educator**

Senior social work educators means teachers with a Masters or PhD degree in social work, with more than two decades’ experience and who have contributed in generating social work knowledge by developing teaching-learning material in the form of books, journals, articles, reports, manuals and other documents used in social work training and practice.

5. **Role of Social Work Educator**

The expression ‘role of the social work educator’ generally means all the tasks performed by the educators while discharging the responsibilities of the assigned post. The expression in particular means the tasks and responsibilities performed in relation to academic activities, field work/research related work and development of knowledge while working as a social work educator with the institution of social work education.
6. **Knowledge base for Social Work Education and Practice**

‘Social work knowledge base’ means the knowledge base derived from the allied social sciences, western social work theories, praxis wisdom and indigenous knowledge applied in the teaching–learning process to develop holistic understanding while imparting techniques, skills, methods, and interventional strategies for social work training and practice. It includes published and unpublished material disseminated in the form of books, journal articles, booklets, manuals, reports, monographs, handbooks, newsletters, audio-visuals and electronic material.

7. **Knowledge Development**

The educational institutions and the educators, apart from imparting training to the students, carry the responsibility of knowledge development. As a part of their role, on regular basis the SWEs are engaged in preparing the class notes, research/field work reports, supervising and initiating fieldwork projects, conducting research studies, organizing academic programs like seminars, conferences, and exchanges programs. The educational institutions and the educators as their role are expected to document and disseminate knowledge in the form of books, articles, research/field reports, policy documents, audio-visuals aids and class-notes. The documentation preparation, its use in teaching–learning process by social work educator and students is referred as knowledge development in the study.

8. **Indigenous Knowledge base**

The term ‘Indigenous’ refers to local resources or knowledge. IKB in this study refers to the knowledge developed by the Indian social work educators, which is embedded in the local socio cultural and economic realities, in the form of books, articles, reports and research studies based on their classroom teaching, fieldwork supervision and research work experiences.

3.6 **Variables in the study**

**Profile of ISWE:**

Year of Establishment, regional background and type of universities to which the ISWE are affiliated are considered as independent variables to analyze the data about institutional facilities and knowledge development.

**Profile of SWEs:** For analyzing the data on profile of social work educators and their role in relation to academic involvement and contribution in the knowledge development, following variables are considered as independent variables.
Independent variables: Gender, Designations, Level of education Year of experience in Field work and in teaching, Class obtained and Medium of instruction.

The dependent variables are: Reasons to opt social work educator as a career, nature of work experience, limitations experienced while using indigenous knowledge, contribution in the form of books, articles, policy documents and field/research reports.

3.7 Indices used in the Study

Indices were prepared to score following variables to study the profile of ISWE;

- Facilities available at ISWE
- Academic activities organized by ISWE
- Type of knowledge developed by the ISWE
- Constraints faced by the SWEs in the process of knowledge development
- Suggestions offered at personal and at organizational level

3.8 Conceptual Map

This study is an attempt to examine institutions of social work education and the role of the social work educator in developing IKB to strengthen social work education. The study consists of various aspects such as profile of the institutions of social work education, profile and role of the social work educator, their academic involvement, and type of social work knowledge, SWEs understanding about knowledge base, contributions made, constraints faced and suggestions offered by the SWE for knowledge development.
Diagram: 3.1 Conceptual Map

ISWE PROFILE
(Central Places where knowledge is developed)

Organizational setup
Curriculum aspects
Infrastructural facilities
Knowledge development

Institutional facilities required to strengthen knowledge development

Library
Computer unit
Research unit
Audio Visual unit
Publication Unit

Constraints Faced

Personal and professional profile

SWE’s Role as Knowledge developer

Role Theory

Academic and administrative involvement

Knowledge Theory

Understanding about Knowledge

Critical Theory

Contribution in Development of IKB

Suggestions offered
To gain holistic understanding of each of these elements independently and in relation to the complete study, the researcher explored a host of theories. The theories associated to the topic under study were linked to the contextual framework of this research based on the research aims, previous literature and analysis of data. Theories related to research topic, such as ‘role theory’, ‘theory of knowledge’ and ‘critical theory’ was presented in section 1.14 of the introductory chapter (I). Each of these theories contributes to the understanding of the phenomenon of the study from a different perspective. Furthermore, theoretical framework to understand what influences the social work educator in the development of IKB for strengthening the social work training is discussed in the study.

Role theory, in general refers to the everyday activity performed by an individual to discharge her/his workload in a given situation. This theory is an important theory, because it is about interactions of an individual with others and how their expectations and reactions cause to a response in characteristic ways (Perlman 1968; Robbins and Sanghi 2007). As per the ‘role theory’, performance of the SWE such as teaching, supervising, guiding, directing and initiating field action projects (FAP) or research work depends upon their personal and professional characteristics (Singh 2008). The characteristics such as gender, level of education, class obtained, medium of instruction, designation, year of experience in teaching and field work were considered significant variables to assess educator’s role in academic activities.

As per the UGC Review Report (1980), and National Standards for Assessment of Quality in Social Work Education (2003), the role of SWE also relates to their involvement in other
academic activities like organizing and attending seminars, workshops, conferences, staff development program, association and membership with UGC, university and other professional organizations, developing and modifying curriculum, preparing proposals and policy drafts and also writing and publishing papers, articles, books to generate knowledge base (UGC Report 1965:37, UGC Report, 1980, National Standards for Assessment of Quality in Social Work Education, Seminar Report, 2003:46; Desai, M. 2004) leads them in knowledge development.

With regards to social work profession in India, much of the tacit knowledge is available as observations and experiences of academicians, researchers and practitioners. The challenge to the professionals is to organize this informal knowledge in systematic manner to develop theory and models for indigenous practice. As per ‘theory of knowledge ’ complete knowledge or knowledge in the fullest sense involves construction of a systematic hierarchy of valid syllogism, which demonstrates and explains the truth of its conclusions on the basis of general premises known to be true (Kaplan 2003).

An important issue in epistemology concerns the ultimate source of knowledge. There are two traditions: rationalism that is primarily based in reason and empiricism which holds that the knowledge is primarily based in experience. Kant agrees with empiricism that all knowledge arises with perceptual experience. However, the fact that it arises with perceptual experience does not entail that all knowledge derives from perceptual experience (www.wou.edu/las/humanities). As per rationalism true knowledge or the most important knowledge is essentially independent of sensory experience. Empirical knowledge is about reality which is discovered by empirical research by observation, generalization, and experimentation and not by reason operating independently from sense perception. (http://www.wou.edu/las/humanities/cannon/know.htm).

For social work training and practice a synthesis of the two traditions is more plausible than either of them individually (www.theoryofknowledge.info.). Because while accomplishing their role, the social work educator has orientation to both rationalism and empiricism. Combinations of rationalism and empiricism are possible (Aristotle and Kant in Kaplan 2003). The primary idea related to knowledge theory is that learning of new knowledge is dependent on what is already known. In other words, construction of knowledge begins with our observation and recognition of events and objects through concepts we already possess (Ibid, www.spjc.edu/SPG/Science/Lancraft/cmapping/cmapping.html).
Further, the role of social work professionals/educators is to question the very institutions and societal structures that cause the oppression and which prevent humans from fulfilling their creative potentials in life. According to Gramsci, (1971) true education is a critical approach to knowledge tied to praxis. It is a creative exercise through spontaneous and autonomous learning with the teacher as a guide. Critical theory (section 1.13.3 of chapter I) asks important hidden and subtle political, social, and economic questions underlying the area being researched to allow a new critical consciousness to emerge and appropriate social action to take place during and as a result of the research process (Ingram & Simon-Ingram in Kaplan 2003).

Application of theoretical framework based on these theories will enable to analyze social work educators’ role in development of contextual knowledge which questions the socio-economic and cultural, regional realities of the society.

3.9 Research Design

This research study is descriptive because in the first place it attempts to obtain and describe the information about organizational set-up, curriculum contents, and infrastructure facilities available and the knowledge base developed by the ISWE(s) while organizing academic activities in the form of published and unpublished work for social work education.

It is implicit that the role of social work educator consists of imparting knowledge, teaching theories and interventional skills, developing appropriate attitudes in students for working with people and establishing linkages between theories and praxis wisdom within the socio-economic, political and cultural context in which they are embedded. This research study attempts to study the role of the SWEs as far as it relates to the development of IKB for the growth of profession. This objective is achieved by studying the personal and professional profile of the SWEs, their academic involvement at different levels from classroom teachings to participation in academic activities, their understanding about the types of knowledge base and the contributions made and challenges faced by them in the process. Aiming to gain more insights and knowledge about the ‘role of the SWE’ this study is exploratory in nature.

Quantitative techniques were used to study the profile of the ISWE and the SWEs. Qualitative data was used to support quantitative data to find out SWEs’ understanding about knowledge, contribution in knowledge development and dissemination. The researcher-collected data from multiple sources using various techniques, which included observations, informal talks, taking field notes, interviews and use of documents available with the institutes.
The researcher collected information for this study from the ISWE(s) comprising five zones from all over India. The heads of the selected ISWE were the primary source of information to get data about the ISWE. Other staff that was in charge of various units of the institution like library, computer, audio-visuals, and field action projects were also contacted to get detailed information about the concerned unit.

The major source for this study was the social work educator with more than two years’ experience of teaching from the selected ISWE. Senior most well experienced social work educators those who contributed in developing social work knowledge were also considered as special source of information. According to Heritage (1997) the institutional realities also exist in and as documents, buildings, and campus of the institution. Secondary data such as the documents like institute prospectus, syllabus, annual reports, field work manual, research/term paper manual, orientation manual, NAAC report, and other special program and activity reports were collected and used by the researcher for detailed information. Websites, up-dated profile of the ISWE and SWEs on the internet was used to get all basic details about them.

3.10 Universe and Population

All the schools, colleges and departments of social work education of the central, state and deemed universities in India constituted the universe of this study. All the heads of the ISWE(s), social work educators, working as well as retired from these institutions constituted the population of research.

Sampling

Purposive-sampling method was used for selecting the ISWE(s). This sampling method was applied to those situations where the researcher already knows something about the specific sample and deliberately selects particular ones because they are seen as instances that are likely to produce the most valuable data. Purposive sampling is also considered desirable when the universe happens to be small and a known characteristic of it is to be studied intensively (Denscombe 1998:15).

The reason for choosing purposive sampling for this study was that the researcher had an idea that the selected older ISWE(s) were well established with proper infrastructural facilities and engaged in developing knowledge as compared to newly established ISWE(s). A nationwide study undertaken by Desai, (1994) giving list of 34 ISWE has existed in 1976-77and a list of the
ISWE prepared by SWEPC, TISS (2001) was browsed to select regionwise ISWE. The largest part of the universe that is over fifty was located in the western region (Menechery and Mohite, 2001). Consequently, maximum seven out of 15 ISWE(s) were selected from this region. Besides these, three ISWE from southern, two from northern region, and two from eastern states were chosen based on their year of establishment. One ISWE selected with specific purpose for the regional representation to ensure geographical representation of the north-east was the oldest from that region established in 1990.

The heads of the ISWE(s) were the respondents to get insight on the profile of the selected (15) ISWE(s). Permanent and full time social work educators with more than two years’ experience in teaching and fieldwork supervision from the selected ISWE(s) available at the institute during data collection were considered as respondents. Based on their presence and willingness to participate in the study, they were interviewed to collect data on their profile, role, contribution, and understanding about social work knowledge, constraints and challenges faced by them in the development of knowledge for social work education in India.

Well-known social work educators were interviewed to understand their profile, inspiration and contribution in knowledge development for social work education. To choose these well-known social work educators’ names of the eminent SWEs who made noteworthy contributions were browsed while preparing bibliography for literature review of this study. Besides this, the respondent (SWEs) of the study were requested to make a list of minimum five well-known SWEs who they think are senior and contributed in developing knowledge for social work education. Frequently and commonly appearing names of the well-known social work educators, listed by respondent SWEs and appearing in the bibliography prepared by the researcher were finalized. These respondents were then approached for interview using interview guide.

**Sample size**

1) Head of the ISWE  
2) Social work educators  
3) Senior SWEs  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of the ISWE</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work educators</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior SWEs</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows distribution of the selected ISWE according to their year of establishment, and total number of SWEs selected for the study.
Table: 3.1 SWEs and SWEs selected for Data Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Establishment &amp; no of ISWE</th>
<th>No. of SWEs Appointed by the ISWE</th>
<th>SWEs Selected for the Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-50 (4)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-70 (9)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-90 (2)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total -15</td>
<td>98(42)</td>
<td>121 (58)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note: The figures in the parenthesis are percentage)

Type of University and SWE selected= 3 Central-18 SWE, 10 State-70SWE, 2 Deemed-217SWE, Total=105
Region wise representation of the ISWE= North -2, West-7, South-3 East-2 North –East-1 Total=15

3.11 Tools for Data Collection

The data for this study was collected from multiple sources using multiple methods such as interviews, field notes, documents available with the educational institutes and researchers’ observations. The tools utilized for data collection were the questionnaire administered to the heads of the ISWE, in-depth-interview schedule applied to the SWE and the interview guide used to obtain information from well-known social work educators.

- **Questionnaire**
  
  To gain an insight into the factual information about the ISWE like its profile; organizational background, curriculum aspect, infrastructural facilities and knowledge developed by the ISWE, questionnaire was prepared and used by the researcher to collect data from the heads and other staff of the short listed institutions.
• **In-depth Interview Schedule**

The SWEs with more than two years’ experience of teaching and fieldwork supervision from the selected ISWE(s) were interviewed using in-depth interview schedule. Majority of the questions in this study were open-ended as they are more useful in explorative research.

• **Interview Guide**

The well-known social work educators listed by the respondent SWEs were selected and interviewed by the researcher using interview guide.

3.12 Data Collection

Background information on the ISWE(s) short-listed for this study and further up-dates of the ISWE was collected from the web-sites of the institution. Information about the heads and the faculty members of the ISWE(s), their addresses, location and phone numbers were noted down separately for developing further contacts for fixing appointments and meeting with them to conduct interviews.

At initial stage, the researcher introduced herself to the heads of the ISWE through telephonic talk, explained them the topic of the research study and sought their permission to visit the institution for data collection. As desired by the heads, background note and details of the study plan explaining purpose of the study (Appendix- II) was forwarded to them by the researcher. Based on the convenience of the heads of the ISWE, the researcher prepared her travel plan and visited them for data collection.

During visit to the institution, the researcher took appointment of social work educators who had more than two years’ experience in teaching and fieldwork supervision for conducting in-depth interview. Purpose of the study was explained once again to each respondent SWE to make the topic easy and clearer. The time taken for each interview ranged from two to three hours. It sometimes was extended even beyond that and for more than one- two sittings. Realizing that, it was difficult to conduct the interview at one go due to SWEs pre-occupation with their academic activities the researcher stayed at least for one week’s time at each ISWE to complete the data collection. To overcome time constraint, extended, follow-up, on-line or telephonic interviews were also conducted to get further details about the respondent.
In order to explain the purpose of researchers visit to the institution some of the heads of the ISWE(s) arranged faculty meeting/half day workshop. The researcher was introduced to the teaching and non teaching staff and explained about topic of her study.

Heads and other faculty members also helped in locating the address of selected retired well-known social work educators from the vicinity. With this help the researcher was able to visit and complete data collection from the well-known SWEs of the respective region.

3.13 Data Processing and Analysis

The data collected on the profile of the ISWE(s) from the heads, using questionnaire, were entered in an excel sheet on the computer on day to day basis after giving region and university wise code numbers to the ISWE. This regular treatment of data gave the researcher an opportunity to introspect and become more focused while collecting data from the ISWE and respondents of the other (remaining) ISWE. This data was bifurcated based on the ISWE’ year of establishment and type of universities to which they were affiliated (D’Souza 1978). The ISEWs were broadly classified in four stages since inception of social work education in India explaining significance of the concerned stage to analyze profile and infrastructural services and knowledge developed by the concerned ISWE [Initial stage (1930-1950), middle stage (1951-1970), later stage (1971-1990) and 1990 onwards stage].

To measure the standard of the institutional services, ‘indices’ were prepared based on quantitative and qualitative data and observations made by the researcher during her personal visits to the institution. Facilities available in the ISWE for knowledge development were measured on a scale ranging from ‘poor’ to ‘excellent’. Besides this, information culled from the descriptive data gathered from the concerned ISWE annual reports and activity reports were discerned to illustrate the academic activities organized and the contributions made by the ISWE in knowledge development.

The data collected using in-depth-interview schedule from the social work educators on their personal and professional profile and the role played by them enabling them to develop knowledge for social work education was analyzed using simple frequency, cross tabulation, and chi-square, t test and ANOVA to comprehend different point of views with the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Graphs and tables were used to represent data. All responses to the open ended questions were sorted according to the core themes and attempted to analyze in the framework of role theory, knowledge theory and critical theory.
Likewise, the data collected from the well-known social work educators that inspired them to develop knowledge for social work education and the contribution made by them in the knowledge development was used to develop case studies and then classified thematically. Commonalities that emerged from these themes were analyzed and highlighted in the chapter. This chapter concluded with presentation of massages given by the well-known social work educators to the up-coming generation for knowledge development to strengthen the profession.

3.14 Scope and Significance of the Study

This study made an attempt to understand the work done by the ISWE and SWE(s) for knowledge development. The researcher did not come across any specific research study carried out earlier on this topic except Desai’s almost 30 years old nationwide study (1994) on social work education in India. The present study had covered broad areas related to knowledge developed by the institutions of social work education, social work educators and expert professionals like senior social work educators. The study offered some insights in the context of development of IKB for social work training and practice. This study may help all the stakeholders of social work profession like heads of ISWE, facility unit heads (library, computer, research, publication and audio-visual), social work educators, practitioners, scholars, students, and associate members of professional organizations in getting insight into the present profile of educational institutions, role of the educators in training and practice and their contribution in knowledge development.

The study will motivate and inspire the SWEs and especially the younger generation of the educators, to develop passion for writing, publishing and disseminating knowledge based on their theoretical and fieldwork experiences to record social work interventions and strategies as a contextual knowledge. Moreover, management, trusts and authorities (directors/principals) of social work schools, colleges and departments can refer this study as a means to assess the conduciveness of their organizational set up and to improve it for the development of professional skills and competence of their faculty members to develop the contextual knowledge base to strengthen the training.

The inferences drawn from the study will offer ideas to draw new schemes and amend the existing schemes for grant of scholarships and fellowships for publications, research studies, develop theoretical models and other activities directed towards development and dissemination of knowledge base. Thus, the social work training will have its own indigenous ‘models’ and
cumulative body of knowledge, which is a significant area to strengthen the training for getting appropriate recognition.

3.15 Chapterization of the Report

Chapter-I: Introduction. This chapter deals briefly with the social work profession, social work education and explains the meaning and importance of the type of knowledge applied for social work training in India. Conceptual framework of the study and the theories associated with the topic under study were presented in this chapter.

Chapter-II: Review of Literature chapter reviews the type of social work knowledge presently available in the form of books, journals, reports, encyclopedia, manuals and handbooks, other creative regional literature and research studies related to social work education conducted in India and abroad. This chapter also highlighted drawbacks and gaps found in the social work knowledge available in India at present.

Chapter-III: Research Methodology deals with the rational and objectives of the study, theoretical framework, research design, sampling, data processing, analysis and scope of the study.

Chapter – IV: The chapter on profile of ISWE and knowledge development is developed based on the first objective of this study and discussed in detail the profile of the ISWE in terms of their organizational set-up, curriculum aspect, infrastructural facilities and knowledge developed for social work training and practice.

Chapter –V: Social Work Educator: Profile and Academic Involvement linked to the second objective of the study to present personal and professional profile of the respondents SWEs and their academic involvement and understanding about social work knowledge.

Chapter –VI: Development of Indigenous Knowledge: Contributions and Constraints faced ‘covered type of indigenous knowledge used in teaching, contributions made by the SWE, constraints faced and suggestions offered by the SWEs.

Chapter VII: Senior Social Work Educators Inspiration and Contribution in Development of Indigenous Knowledge

Chapter –VIII: Discussion, Summary and Recommendations. For discussion purpose, major findings of this study were broadly classified in following three main areas;
ISWE Profile and knowledge development
Profile, academic involvement and SWEs’ understanding about social work knowledge
Contributions made, constraints faced and suggestions offered and by the SWEs.

This is concluding chapter, summarized the study and suggested areas for further improvement to strengthen social work education and profession.

3.16 Limitations of the Study

The study focused on oldest ISWE(s) located in the urban settings. Data from the relatively newer ISWE(s) as also from the ISWE located in the rural settings was not collected. This, to some extent, restricted the understanding about the profile of new ISWE, consequently their contributions in the knowledge development could not be considered.

Furthermore, as the SWEs were the only respondents in this study profile and contributions of the other associates of the profession such as researchers, fieldwork practitioners, social activists, and students, who are also important stakeholders in the knowledge development, was not covered in this study. Besides this, the study investigated different forms of published and unpublished knowledge contributed by the SWEs albeit without its content analyses, which could be a separate subject for research.

3.17 Ethical Considerations

The data for research was collected using a non-judgmental approach of inputs in terms of knowledge developed by the institutes and respondents. Principles of confidentiality were adhered to and data collected was confined to the research that too for the limited purpose of analysis alone.

3.18 Experiences during Data Collection

For the purpose of data collection the researcher personally visited 15 ISWE that were selected from across the country to attain the regional representation. In the process, while interacting with social work professionals like ISWE heads, social work educators and senior SWEs, the researcher had following different experiences;

Firstly, due to the planned academic schedule of the ISWE it was difficult to get prior appointment of the heads for data collection. Second difficult task was to arrange researcher’s
travel plan according to the academic schedule of the ISWE. However, in spite of this the heads of some ISWE extended warm welcome to the researcher, organized formal meetings with the teaching faculty and introduced the topic of her research study. Heads of the ISWE from the southern region (2) and western region (2) organized half day workshops for their faculty members to interact with the researcher to understand the importance of the research topic and to reflect on.

The insights gained by the researcher in these interactive workshops held in the course of data collection enabled the researcher to get border idea of the selected ISWE and SWEs to understand their profile and knowledge development practices in better manner.

Researcher experienced that the SWEs were quite preoccupied with academic activities like teaching, research work, supervision, examination, field action projects, organizing and attending conferences, seminars, exchange programs and NAAC evaluation. Due to this they could not give sufficient time at one stretch for the interview. In all such cases second round of interview was arranged either across the table or telephonically depending upon the convenience of the respondents. While some SWEs were co-operative and took interest in the subject matter of the study however some other respondents found this process little burdensome.

As regards senior SWEs, it was difficult to find out their residential addresses as their updated address or contact number was not readily available anywhere and was consequently required to be ascertain through the acquaintances. However, it was quite inspirational to have dialogues with them and the best part of interaction with them was that they were enthusiastic to share their experiences and gave maximum time to the researcher to understand their involvement in the profession and contribution in knowledge development.

3.19 Conclusion

This chapter made brief attempt to sketch the methodology used in this research study. Rational of the study clarified the reason for choosing the topic of the study. This explanation followed the statement of objectives of the study and the questions related to the study. The listing of variables was followed by operational definitions and explanation of research design. Detailed description of the sampling procedures used both as regards selection of the ISWE and SWEs was presented. Furthermore, the tools for data collection, processing and analysis of the data, scope and limitations of the study were explained in brief. The following chapter of the study will present the analysis and discussions of the findings on the profile of the ISWE.