SUBJECT: SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH GROUPS

SUB CODE: GSW13   **CLASS: I MSW**

UNIT-1

SOCIAL GROUP AND GROUP WORK:

IMPORTANT OF GROUPS IN HUMAN LIFE CYCLE:

Groups play an important part in human life. An individual's bringing up, care. Personality building, education, social. Economic and psychological needs fulfillment, sense of security, love, satisfaction of emotions and culture transmission-all of these are possible through group life which tells its importance. How an individual is affected by groups? How do groups create facilities for individuals? How does an individual benefit from these. The detail of these is given below:

I.Enhancement in Individual's capacity :
In social life, many jobs cannot be done by an individual and he needs the help of others. The bringing up of children and their care cannot be done by an individual alone for whom family came into existence and this increased the individual's capacity. In agriculture. No man can do the job alone because some of heavy jobs of carrying stones is not possible for an individual where two or more persons can do this job easily. That is why; family is given importance in the society. Because this group provides manpower for agriculture and is also helpful in fighting being strong physically.

2. Fulfillment of Basic Needs:
A lonely person is helpless and this obliged him to lead a group life. A man not only is a living creature or has biological needs for his satisfaction but also he has social
and <u>psychological</u> needs. Therefore, needs can be divided into three kinds:

i. Biological needs: Hunger, thirst, sleep and sexual satisfaction.

iii. Psychogenic or Psychological needs: Love, friendship and ego passions.
The completion of all of these needs is not possible individually and only group life plays an important role for these achievement. The primary group of family does play its part in providing love, sexual satisfaction, food etc. Primary, secondary and reference groups play their parts for behaviour, tendency correction and building of personality. In-group provides recognition and self-bring. Thus, all groups play their parts according to the expectations of the society to complete the basic needs of an individual.

3. Personality Development:
A man is a clot of blood at the time of his birth. It is group life that teaches him language and tells him the ways of living. He begins his life from the primary group where he is brought up. He learns family ways and then interacts with other groups which include friends, neighbors. Their ways affect his habits and life style and his personality. Afterwards, school, college, office affects him by contact with secondary groups. His personality is improved by discipline and rules. His way of living becomes mature. Reference Group helps him to

compare his personality with those of others to make it better. Formal and Informal Group interaction gives a chance to express his personal abilities and their promotion and all of these help him to become the best of all the creatures.

4. Transmission of Culture:

Groups play a part in transmitting culture from one race to another race. Primary group as family, friends and neighbors make the individual learn norms of life, customs, traditions, values and habits. Similarly, language, dress transmits knowledge; experience through formal and informal education to a new race. In-
group and Informal Group transmit recreation, games and stories of wars to a new race which are adopted by the new race to harmonies with the culture and also to guarantee the security of the culture.

5. Social Control:

The most important function is social action in the group dynamics. Primary group is an informal manner that manages for social control. Good manners and informal sanctions make the character of an individual according to the expectation of the society and traditions. Values and customs create materiality in the expected character and there is a harmony between the trends and behaviour of the society. Secondary Group makes the individual abide by the rules and regulations. Formal Group produces some prestige in interaction through status degree. Formal Group also helps in adopting sanctions for achieve of specific objectives. In this way, discipline finds a way in life. Deviation in manners is decreased which in turn,
decreases mutual dispersion and social stability is promoted.

6. Possibility of Achievement of Collective Aims:

In social life, some human needs are such which cannot be got by individual efforts. For example, construction of houses, festivals of grief and happiness, building of places of worships are collective aims and their achievement is only possible through different groups. Recreation is a collective aim and it needs the
participation of primary and secondary group. Similarly, protecting society from crimes is a collective aim. This can be achieved by formal and secondary groups with the help of primary group. In the modern and urban life, the collective aims—electricity, water supply, roads, dams, law and order are not possible without the secondary and formal groups like Highways authority, police and administration. This shows that the collection aims are only to be achieved through social groups.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL GROUP WORK

Coyle (1937)

Social group work aims at the development of a person through the interplay of personalities in a group situation, and at the creation of such group situations as provided for such integrated, cooperative group action for common ends.

Hamilaton (1954)
Social group work is a psychosocial process and is concerned no less than with developing leadership ability and cooperation than with building on interest for the group for a social purpose.

Wilson and Rayland (1949)
We see social group work is a process and method through which group life is affected by a worker who consciously directs the interaction process towards the accomplishment of goals which in our contrary are conceived in a democratic frame of reference.

Trecker.H.(1963)
Social Group work is a method through which individual in groups in social agency settings are helped by a worker who guides their interaction in program activities so that they may relate themselves to other and experience growth opportunity in accordance with their needs and capacities to the end of the individuals, group and community development.

Konokpa (1963)
Social group work is a method of social work which helps individuals to enhance their social functioning through purposeful group experience and to cope more effectively with their personal group community problem

American Association of Group Worker (1948)
Group work is methods by which the worker enables various types of groups to functions in such a way that both group interaction and program activity contribute to the growth of the individuals and the achievement of the desired goals.

Characteristics of group work
Various other definitions given by different social scientists have emphasized on the various aspects of a group in various definitions. Based on these one may arrive at the quintessential characteristics of groups:

Interpersonal Interaction - A group is defined as a collection of individuals interacting with each other;
Individuals are not a group unless they are interacting with one another (Bonner, Stogdill, and Homans)

Perceptions of Membership - A group may are defined as a social unit consisting of two or more persons, who perceive themselves as belonging to a group. Its members define themselves and are defined by others as belonging to the group. Accordingly, the persons are not a group unless they perceive themselves to bepart of a group (Bales and Smith)

Interdependency - Group may be defined as a collection of individuals who are interdependent. Usually, individuals are not a group unless an event that affects one of them affects them all. It is Questionable that a group could exist without its members being interdependent. (Cartright and Zander, Fiedler, and Lewin.

Goals - Group may be defined as a collection of individuals who join together to achieve a goal. According to this definition, the individuals are not a group unless they are trying to achieve a mutual goal.

The primary defining characteristic of a group is the craving of its members to achieve a mutual goal (Deutsch and Freeman).

Motivation - Group may be defined as a collection of individuals who are all trying to satisfy some personal need through their joint association. Thus, individuals are not a group unless they are motivated by some personal reason to be part of a group (Bass and Cattell).

Structured Relationships - A group may be a collection of individuals whose interactions are Structured by a set of roles and norms. They share norms concerning matters of common interest and participate in a system of interlocking roles. Therefore, individuals are not a group unless their interactions are structured by a set of role definitions and norms (McDavid and Harari, and Shel and Sherif).

Mutual Influence - A group may be defined as a collection of individuals who influence each other. Accordingly, individuals are not a group unless they are affecting and being affected by each other (Shaw).

Not all these characteristics are equally important and although it is impossible to gain consensus among social.

Social Group Work in India

Group work as a method of social work came to India with the introduction of professional social work education in 1936, a decade after it was acknowledged as formal method of practice in the West. Even though there is evidence of the group approach being used in various contexts – in delivering charity services, imparting religious education through oral tradition, in mobilising people for the freedom struggle against the British, in social reform strategies as in the Sarvodaya and Bhoodan movements. However, there is very little documentation or hardly any theorisation based on it. All the schools of social work in India teach a course/paper in social group work (alternatively titled as "social work with groups") at both the graduate and the postgraduate levels. There was a brave attempt to develop some indigenous materials in group work by the then United Nations Social Welfare and Development Centre for Asia and the Pacific and the Association of Schools of Social Work in 1979. Compared to casework and community organisation, contributions in developing indigenous materials on group work could be traced back to the 1960s.

The Association of Schools of Social Work jointly with the Technical Cooperative Mission (USA) laid down minimum standards for group work practice acted a benchmark to the developments in India. VD. Mehta (1987) and Helen Joseph (1997), two social workers who attempted to trace the historical development of group work in India, agree that the theoretical perspective taught in the schools of social work in India and the practice models are primarily American as in the case of social work itself. The practice of social group work in India is generally limited to correctional and other residential institutional setting, hospitals and so on in the urban areas. The general activities undertaken were recreational, educational and cultural in character. Group work method was also practiced in community work, as in the case of *mahila mandals* and *yuvak mandals*, but it was

primarily recognised as community work. Practice of group work is also given emphasis through the fieldwork programme in some schools.

Students placed in agencies and open communities work with groups of children, youth, adults and elderly who are either 'sick' or healthy in urban and rural areas. For instance, the student of social work in Kerala placed in open communities are engaged in organizing groups for children (*balasamithi*s) and also for adult women (*kudumbashree* self-help groups) in the disadvantaged neighborhoods. Such groups have a combined objective of socialisation, structured recreation, functional literacy, awareness generation on diverse issues such as effective parenting, health and hygiene, environment and local self governance as well as other socially relevant issues. In the recent years, groups of adolescent girls and boys too have been organised in the villages to deal with issues pertaining to life skill development including home management, reproductive and sexual health, sexuality, family planning methods, etc., considering the social reality that majority of themwill be getting married at an early age.

This brief review of historical trends in group work practice is intended to enable you to understand current trends in group work practice from a broad perspective. At present, a remedial approach focusing on improving the functioning of individual group member continues as the preferred method of practice. This model of practice is based on problem identification, assessment, and treatment. The emphasis on mutual aid characteristics of group work also continues, where the worker's role is to mediate between the needs of group members and society. Mutual aid and shared, reciprocal responsibility are appropriate in such settings such as short-stay homes and *nari niketans* that are designed to helping women in distress to live together, to support each other and to cope with distressing life events. It is also useful in community groups like *mahila mandals*, youth clubs and other community groups where reciprocal sharing of mutual concerns and the giving and receiving of support are central purposes. Professional social workers are also involved as consultants or facilitators of self-help groups that emphasise the mutual aid characteristics of a group.