Constructing Supervisory Practices and Knowledge for Social Work Education in India

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ABSTRACT: Social work education has been in India for eight decades, and there are more than 600 registered social work schools. The field practicum section of the curriculum was only formally developed at the national level in 2001 by social work educators from across India. Still, the experiences and the related empirical evidence that formed the basis of the curriculum do not appear to have been documented. New challenges emerge with changing organizational, professional and social environments in current times, while empirical studies and development of field education theory continue to be on the fringes of social work education. Supervision which is considered critical to the development of social work professionals is varied in practice across the country and has a weak theoretical and practical understanding. This article proposes to map the fieldwork education contexts and practices in India as they have evolved historically and, against this backdrop, understand the development of epistemic communities related to field education in India. This would be traced by consolidating and critically reviewing the literature produced over time in the Indian context. The article proposes identifying ways to facilitate the development of supervision theory and thereby strengthen field education and supervision in India.

Keywords: fieldwork, social work education, supervision, field education, field placement, social work practicum

Supervision in social work practice and education in India, as found in the literature, presents an awry canvas. Despite the existing constraints and uncertainties of the future, the process of reviewing supervision literature in India provided needful insights for the development of a plan for supervision research here. Additionally, characteristics of biases and trends in knowledge production within professional social work were visible. Beginning with a description of the literature on supervision and then highlighting various dimensions of supervision knowledge produced therein. An attempt is made to identify critical issues related to the nature of epistemic communities for social work education and practice in India. For knowledge to translate into meaningful change at a larger level, it is essential to examine epistemic communities with respect to factors of influence located within the larger political context.

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Authors such as Nair et al. (2020) has been used the term 'fieldwork instruction' and 'fieldwork supervision' synonymously, while others (Rao, 2020) used interchangeably with field education, placement, and practicum. Therefore, a review of literature has been conducted and the documents perused included published books, monographs, journal articles, published and unpublished seminar reports and lectures, and doctoral theses. The authors selected literature on social work education that included supervision as a significant component that has also been taken for review. A total of 84 documents were examined, out of which 26 were primarily concerned with the supervision, and 35 articles looked at the fieldwork practicum in which supervision was also discussed. The remaining documents were on social work education and practice.

The Indian scenario comprises variations in class, caste, ethnicity, culture, religions, and varied endogamous groups in a 1.39 billion population. This diversity is complicated by settlements that urbanize and modernize faster than others. Most of the schools of social work in India have a generic master's programme in which concurrent fieldwork is followed. While there has been considerable debate regarding the generic versus specialization structure, it is generally agreed that the first year of fieldwork is expected to lay the foundation for students before they undertake specialized inputs in various fields of social work. The third University Grant Commission (UGC) review committee (UGC, 2001) emphasized field supervision as critical to the development of social work professionals. However, studies indicate a considerable discrepancy in supervision practice across the country (Bradley et al., 2010). This appears to be the case within India, too, as it may be inferred from the caveat in the national curriculum framework (UGC, 2001) that curricular frameworks should be flexible enough to account for the concerned institution's mandate and social realities evolving perspectives for change.

The social work profession in India had started by American professionals (Kendall, 2000), and to date, the western influence is there in professional training and practice (Nagpaul, 1967; Mohan, 2009). Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) was the only institution that provided social work training for eleven years, from 1936-1947. Most institutions were established in the 1960s and 1970s within the university system (UGC report, 1980; Narayan, 2001). Now the social work education is being provided by many central, state and deemed universities along with private colleges and institutions with Bachelor's degree (BSW), Master's degree (MSW), M.Phil and doctoral programs (Ph.D.). There was mushrooming of private schools of social work, which were seen commercializing social work education which, of course, is against the basic ideology of the profession.

Need for a Curriculum

The objective of any professional curriculum is to prepare quality human resources to be able to achieve the goals of the profession (UGC Report, 1980). Curriculum design, accordingly, is circumscribed by time, place and the overall socio-political and cultural context. A critical approach to the syllabi for higher education was taken (Desai, 1981), and UGC Curriculum Development Centres (CDC) were created, of which 'Social Work Practicum including Fieldwork'

was an integral component. The need for up-gradation of knowledge, skills and ideology helped educators focus on enhancements of skill-building among the students. Although there was a recommendation regarding ensuring uniformity in the social work training curriculum, little efforts appear to have been undertaken in this direction for varied reasons and diversity in learning spaces. There is no doubt that an essential element of the praxis of the profession is rooted in indigenous values, knowledge and culture of the communities the students work with and through the placement agencies.

Initial Phase

With the first UGC review Committee (1965), which reviewed social work education, a spate of writings on supervised fieldwork followed (Gangrade, 1975; Singh, 1985; Gandhi, 1998) alongside exploring an integrated approach to fieldwork (Mehta, 1986; Mehta, 1975). It was around this time that both the Indian Journal of Social Work (IJSW) and Perspectives (Nirmala Niketan), Mumbai had extensive writings on the field experiences of academicians who were closely associated with fieldwork. For the first time, the importance of 'the self' was made by Banerjee (1975) and the student evaluation criteria. Fieldwork was spelt out by Tangavelu (1975) accompanied by Desai (1975), who reinforced Banerjee's thoughts and also emphasized the importance of reflective record writing followed by her contribution to the framing of the UGC review Committee on Social Work Education (1980), which for the first time stated the fieldwork objectives.

Once Armaity Desai had laid the foundation of the field (1985), it was "an orderly progression of learning experiences and moving from the known to the unknown." It set the benchmark for a critical approach to syllabi for fieldwork in higher education. The discussion on values and ethics gained importance (Narayan, 2000; Ranade, 1987; Siddiqui, 1987). The next milestone in the first phase of this process of understanding the supervisory space came through the keynote address (Singh, 1985). He emphasized that fieldwork establishes the professional character of social work training. Others established the foundation of social work practice in the Indian context (Desai, 1985; Nanavatty, 1986; Ooomen, 1987), culminating in the creation of CDC at TISS in 1986.

Second Phase

There was a spate of writings from the beginning of 2000, including the emergence of professional bodies and journals, which began taking seriously the need for documenting and consolidating the profession in varied ways. The IJSW released a special issue in its platinum jubilee year (2011), although it had had over seven decades of documenting the potential role of social work education institutions towards indigenous knowledge building. It was Desai as Director, TISS, who had encouraged faculty to initiate Field Action Projects (FAPs), thus helping in strengthening social work knowledge and education in the Indian context through reflection, dissemination of learnings from the field. Subsequently, these FAPs became field placements for first-year and second-year students of the Masters' program of Social Work at TISS and a few other colleges of social work, including Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai, India. The trends and

terminology, of course, changed over time from ' beneficiary' to 'client' to 'people,' from 'treatment' to 'therapy' to 'healing' and 'well-being' and from 'welfare' to 'developmental' to 'rights-based and 'empowerment.' This has had implications for the role of supervision and the stakeholders, too, namely, the student, the supervisor, the placement agency and of course, the people with whom we work.

Needless to add that IJSW, along with other Journals of Social Work of other institutions, has consistently documented the experiences and research findings of field-related activities. It includes supervision, supervisory spaces related to student learning besides the four-decade-old journeys of FAPs, which have "helped upgrade practice-based knowledge" (Narayan, 2019). As a result of this mammoth effort, it has helped develop a framework for social work education and practice in the given context.

The third phase (2015 onwards)

New learning opportunity, emphasis on theory-practice linkages, questioning the methodology of progressive social work education, focus on exploring Indianization and indigenization, re-imagining future of social work practice, more focus on learner-centred approach, reconstruction of the supervisory relationship, seeing from below, Dalit and tribal perspective, the synergy between traditional and new values, bridging the dichotomy between doing and being, co-facilitation, being inclusive, acknowledging diversity, focus on practice skills, attempt to reconstruct, tribological learning were highlights of the third phase.

In more recent literature in India, authors have variously focused on the context of field instruction (Rao, 2020), supervisory functions (Narayan 2019; Sukhramani 2020), purpose and process of fieldwork supervision (Dastur, 1975; Akileswari, 2019), supervisor-supervisee relationship (Talvelkar, 2020), the extent of theory-practice integration (Desai, 2013) and learning outcomes (Sridevi & Ramesh, 2016). Apart from one study of field instruction at the regional state level (Sridevi & Ramesh, 2016) and a few Ph.D. dissertations (D' Souza, 1978; Akileswari, 2019), much of the Indian writing on-field instruction shows a prevalence of individualized, experiential accounts, as also prescriptive formats based on anecdotal evidence and individual class, workshop, and seminar notes. A broader spectrum is seen in recent edited publications on field education with reflective narratives of field instruction in India (Dash & Roy 2019; Nair et al., 2020). Prescriptions, pointers and guidelines are provided for effective field-based learning. The latter is drawn from personal experiences of roles in field education such as fieldwork supervisor, fieldwork coordinator, and on occasion drawing from experiences of colleagues within an institution. These narratives mostly come from across thirteen social work institutions in Mumbai, Pune, need Bhopal, Delhi, Tumkur (Karnataka), Chennai, and Silchar (Assam). Various aspects are touched upon from the changing social context of field instruction in these locations. These include state-imposed structures of higher education, supervisory roles, agency-supervisor-supervisee dynamics and contemporary challenges. While this literature contains extremely useful insights for field instruction, but it is inadequate for developing indigenous supervision theory.

Indian supervision Research Contours

Recently proposed approaches to supervision research advocate more broadly framed studies on supervision that include 'contextual variables,' 'supervision interventions,' and 'outcomes' (Milne et al., 2008) whilst keeping in mind the dynamic feedback between them (Lambley, 2018). Coverage of supervisory aspects in Indian literature could be reviewed using these approaches as a starting framework for sorting of substantive content. Various Indian authors have highlighted challenges that relate to the context of supervision (Tippa & Mane 2018; Rao, 2020), student perceptions, supervisory styles and practices (Nair, 2015; Sukhramani, 2020), and learning outcomes (Prasad & Vijaylakshmi, 1997; Sridevi & Ramesh, 2016).

Of the literature reviewed, none engaged in a more elaborate discussion or analysis of the definition of supervision over time. Concepts related to supervision are also defined, mainly in the few empirical studies available. For example, 'fieldwork' in social work education is defined as a "guided interactive process between a student and a social life situation and is carried out in and through social welfare agencies and communities, where the student learns skills, tests out knowledge according to an educational plan" (Tippa & Mane, 2018). The emphasis on others lies in enabling students to apply their critical thinking in social work practice and to help them in addressing issues of socio-economic justice (Johnson, & Flynn, 2021; Agnimitra, 2015). The onus is mainly on social work educators to provide continuing education opportunities to help students improve the quality of their professional practice.

The larger context for supervision in India

Current reflections on supervision challenges identify pressures of academic responsibilities arising from 'disruptive rules,' increasing number of students, shift to a semester system, poor recognition of the social work field practicum in higher education policy, etc.… (Desai 2020; Singh, 2020). Given the direct impacts of these factors on quality and outcomes of supervision, the broader systems within which supervision occurs and the need to include macro systems beyond those of the social work profession. The degree of autonomy within the higher education system is dependent on, the larger socio-political context and state policies. This has become rather apparent with the restructuring of higher education in India with the onset of neoliberal reforms. Across the globe, there are echoes (Davys & Beddoe, 2000; Ayala et al., 2018) of the pressures faced by supervisors in current times.

While discussing the role of Indian social work educators as academicians and scholars, it has been categorically stated that social work educators are required to generate knowledge. The need for producing, categorizing, sorting, concretizing and arranging the knowledge base has been flagged by several researchers in the given context (Desai, 2001; Devasia & Kumar, 2009). While literature arising from the Indian context does not depict locally developed models for supervision, indigenous work on the development of social work education and practice perspectives includes the Bharatiyakaran project (Dash & Shukla, 2018). The Dalit and tribal

perspective (Ranee, 2014) and the Samagrata perspective and framework (Narayan & Pandit, 2017) are required to integrate this perspective into indigenization and the possibility of Indianization.

The problem of negotiating or balancing the universal and the contextual/local, the objective and the subjective, and theory-practice integration recur in the supervision literature (Desai, 2020). These connections appear to inform the development of the Samagrata perspective (Narayan & Pandit, 2017), which looks at 'linkages, inter-dependence and transactional processes between persons, families, cultures, communities, organizations, policies, land and environment by focusing on the well-being of the whole.'

Conditions for supervision

The Indian supervisory context includes full-time social work educators, agency practitioners and the third category of part-time supervisors, which appears unique to a few institutions like the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). Arrangements have changed within institutions (Singla, 2020) over time, and there appears to be no precise evaluation of which structure is better suited to learning and quality supervision. This is also due to the varied nature of placements- urban/rural/ tribal, diversity of students from multiple backgrounds, diversity in the nature and competencies of supervisors and variations in fieldwork settings. Supervision arrangements as seen, from studies outside India, are also found to vary across different countries, organizational settings, fields of practice, locations and supervisee populations (Donoghue & Tsui, 2015). In India, vast differences persist in the standards for curriculum and field practicum due to inadequate infrastructure, teachers, library and standards for field practicum combined with the approval of new social work colleges and departments without ensuring basic academic and infrastructure requirements (Kurien, 2012). The last decade has seen the mushrooming of private schools of social work (Tirmare, 2013) and the commercialization of social work education. The absence of an apex body for social work is considered responsible for irregularities and poor-quality control (Kurien, 2012). Lack of controls even sees colleges providing degrees in social work with no field practicum component (Guin, 2019).

The organization of fieldwork is seen to vary across Indian Social Work Educational Institutions (ISWEs) and within them over time. Often, ongoing response to realities on the ground saw fluidity in curriculum and fieldwork. For example, the Delhi School of Social Work was born in the violence and flames of the Partition in 1947 (Singla, 2020). Students engaged with communities caught in mass violence and riots during the day and studied at night with the urgent desire to identify alternatives to the carnage they saw around them. The structuring of days and hours for fieldwork changed with the work context until the standardization of this component led to concurrent fieldwork of 15 hours two days a week in most ISWEs. The demands on educators and the diversity of students with different learning styles in each school or institution see differences in the approach to placements in terms of interest areas and possibilities for learning.

Processes and practices within supervision

Of the nine components of social work field instruction laid out in the UGC Model Curriculum 2001, the concurrent practice learning context, found in one study, is the most significant in terms of the student learning outcomes for professional practice (Sridevi & Ramesh, 2016). Here, the weekly cycle has been identified as critical to concurrent practice learning (Kumar, 2005). It is considered imperative that the weekly cycle be maintained throughout concurrent practice learning. The 'supervision cycle' (Kumar, 2005) consists of conferences (between the faculty/supervisor and the students), work in the field by the students, record writing and submission of the records by the students, the supervisor going through the records and preparing for the conferences, the conferences, work in the field and so on. However, only a few institutions have made serious efforts in preparing their fieldwork manuals (e.g. TISS, Department of Social Work, Delhi University, Lucknow School of Social Work) which delineate the roles and responsibilities of supervisors.

Supervision Styles

Research indicates that the type of educational supervision appears to influence learning outcomes (Cooper-Bolinskey & Ketner, 2016) in terms of effectiveness in building skills, values and perspectives. Researchers here have identified different types of supervision in various ways using either the individual or group method of supervision to focus on tasks, issues, agency and theory in supervision (Nair, 2015). It is associated with teaching and learning styles linked to natural or adapted supervision (Wolfsfeld & Haj-Yahia, 2010) or approach (Sridevi & Ramesh, 2016). Concerning the latter, research indicates that a positivist paradigm of social work education tends to promote instrumental and a technical-rational model of learning rather than prioritizing human problem solving (Tsang, 2007).

Indian authors vary in their opinions regarding the degree of comfort that should be generated during the supervisory process. Some highlight the importance of creating safe spaces of comfort and gradually converting them into spaces of discomfort to enhance student learning (Sonar, 2017; Sharma, 2015; Bodhi, 2011). Others advise the use of individual conferences as spaces of comfort, conducted in a manner that would encourage students to discuss their positions, opinions and views freely. This is believed to facilitate positive dialogue with each student. Institutional (Desai, 2020) and sector studies (Desai, 2013; Nair, 2015) describe student narratives of experience with different supervision styles across different periods of their field practicum that are sometimes beneficial and sometimes confusing. Further empirical studies are needed to understand the extent to which 'the subjectivity of each supervisory style' needs protection while ensuring that the fieldwork objectives are met. Both nationally (Sukhramani, 2020; Sridevi & Ramesh, 2016) and globally (Lambley, 2018), recent researches have indicated that the evidence base for supervision is weak and underdeveloped, leading therefore to a weak theoretical base. There is little research evidence on the effectiveness of supervision in influencing practice (Carpenter, Webb & Bostock, 2013) or on what happens in supervision (Wilkins, Forrester & Grant, 2017).

Having the Navayana Buddhist framework Bodhi (2011) mentioned the need for creating alternate fieldwork frameworks for learning and emphasized the provision of opportunities for practising techniques that stimulate a high level of understanding. He attempted to dwell on the need to move from linear to circular processes of observing and analyzing concepts, issues and situations. Having experienced teaching and practising with students from diverse backgrounds, he wrote of the need for examining students' 'unpreparedness' for the field by "enabling them to negotiate power equations, harness skills of networking with people from diverse backgrounds and nurture conflict resolution skills."

It is the integration of theory and practice that occurs at the field practicum that shapes and reshapes the professionals in social work (Paracka, 2014; Subedhar, 2001). Since the primary responsibility of Supervisors is to see that the standards laid out in the UGC Model Curriculum (2001) are followed, it remains to be seen what efforts are possible in doing so given that there is no legal, statutory body or licensing authority to regulate the same. The passion for learning and reflective practice modelling and creating an educational environment to support students' learning remain spaces for further research & study.

More recent work (Akileswari 2019) elaborate on the processes, procedures, educative, supportive and administrative aspects of the supervisory process. The need to focus on the competencies of the facilitator (Desai, 2001), the self and roles require further empirical study. Efforts towards the latter coming from more managerial approaches that emphasize efficiency, predictability, calculability and control have often been accused of contributing to the McDonaldization of social work (Dustin & Davies, 2007) and the proliferation of the 'inefficiency of efficiency' (Carey, 2009). This trend is particularly visible in contexts where ideology, universalism, the nation-state, and social class are dismissed, to be replaced by the growing influence of 'postmodern' discourse with its emphasis on fragmentation, choice, consumption, and participation (Taylor-Gooby, 1994). The focus on socio-political changes brought on by shifting social welfare contexts in the neoliberal era has, however, overlooked the way social work supervision has responded. Studies from different countries show that supervision is socially and personally constructed (O'Donoghue & Engelbrecht, 2021). While researchers argue the benefits of systemic versus procedural and transactional practices in social work supervision (Dugmore et al., 2018), there has been little attempt at identifying and understanding the nature of supervisory practices in the Indian context at large.

Models of supervision

From the late 1990s, considered the 'embryonic stage' (Tsui, 1997) of supervision research, to the current state of supervision research, which has been considered foundational (O'Donoghue & Tsui, 2015), several models of supervision have been developed. Although some supervision research (Tsui, 2005; Carpenter et al., 2012) has aimed at the development of supervision models, this process and supervision research per se has been fraught with inadequate empirical evidence and weak methodological rigour (Milne et al., 2014; Goldman, 2013; Lambley, 2018). The supervision research literature indicates that these models have not been based on sufficient evidence or subsequently empirically tested, indicating the need to develop empirically-based supervision theory.

The role of supervisors within indigenous models of social work practice and education has received some attention in the case of both Dalit and tribal social work (Bodhi, 2017) and in the Samagrata framework (Narayan, 2020). In the former, more dialogic, critical pedagogies, the use of culture circles, facilitating reflection on structures, challenging oppression, and facilitating processes of unlearning and new learning are proposed (Bodhi, 2019). In the latter, the supervisor's role is informed by the three core values of compassion, social justice and respect for life that the supervisor manifests in the roles of role model, educational role and facilitator and mentor (Narayan, 2020). Fieldwork in social work education requires a 'period of unlearning' and 'period of relearning' respectively, which has the possibility of emancipation within the supervisee-supervisor relationship (Bodhi, 2017). These processes are yet to be researched and evaluated in the Indian context.

While reviewing conceptual frameworks (Lambley, 2018) in supervision research, it was found that many social science theories are drawn upon. Research focusing on the student social workers' context draws considerably on learning theories. At the level of supervisor-supervisee interface, factors identified (Cheung, 2015) in influencing learning outcomes include the time factor, the exercise of pedagogical practice wisdom by supervisors, supervisor-supervisee relationship and student competencies. Students' learning needs, styles and the supervisory inputs in the supervisor-supervisee dyad have also been a focus of several studies (Knight, 2000; Cheung, 2015). An ongoing concern has had to do with the quality of field education. There appears to be tension between the need for variation in response to different fields and/or supervisor-supervisee contexts, with the need for standardization in social work education and practice outcomes. Good quality supervision has often been seen (Hafford-Letchfield & Engelbrecht, 2018) as a potential pivot that can maintain the integrity and excellence of learning outcomes. Nair et al. (2020) identify the supervisor's competence as critical in the process that could turn any field placement setting into a fulfilling one for the student learner.

Some insights may also be derived for the Indian context from doctoral research such as Desai (2017) and Nair (2015). The former focuses on the theory-practice relationship in field education in the context of social work with street children and the supervisor's role in this aspect. Nair (2015) examines the role of supervision across a range of supervisory contexts at the second-year level of a single Master's programme specializing in social work with the criminal justice system. The study is mainly based on an analysis of fieldwork recordings that senior educators have analyzed as being limited in their scope to represent either the extent of student learning or the actual fieldwork process (Singh, 2012).

'Indigenous knowledge' implies that the knowledge has to consider the socio-economic conditions and culture of the region in which it is applied. Kinduka (1987) had written that:

> *"the knowledge base of S.W. is a composite of knowledge produced indigenously in the local, socio-economic and cultural context of social work professionals and the knowledge derived from other disciplines by professionals after analyzing it and evaluating it with reference to their own practice experiences."*

The attempts at Bharatiyakarn, including Samagratha as a possible approach for

teaching-learning and talk of moving from 'vigilantism to nurturance' are indications of the need for focussing on transformative learning in the Indian context.

In the Nyingmapa School, which is the oldest tradition of Tibetan Buddhism (to which Patrul Rinpoche belonged), there are two kinds of transmission. The oral lineage (kalima) transmitted from teacher to student over centuries and the direct lineage of Terma or Spiritual Treasures. This, when extended into the social work profession, can prove intriguing in the teaching-learning process and for the development of 'Bodhichitta.' The development of Bodhichitta or mind of enlightenment entails an attitude of unconditional love or compassion which is the basis of the Mahayana school of thought. It utilizes practices for purification of all negative thoughts through visualization techniques and mantra specific to the Vajrayana approach. This is possible in the emancipatory approach being propagated by Bodhi (2011, 2017) and his plea to revisit the supervisory relationship.

Finally, 'guru yoga' entails uniting one's mind with the mind of the teacher. Guru Yoga is the root of Vajrayana; wherein there is an emphasis on the purity of the link between the teacher and the disciple. Within this framework is included the practice of 'Phowa' or transference of consciousness. The values exhibited by the student learner and the mentor practitioner in the teaching-learning spaces of the field are of relevance here.

In the Tibetan tradition, the inner journey is mapped with precision, and for each stage, there are oral explanations and exploratory texts. Vajrayana is the science of the mind in which an expert trainer teacher fully understands the significance of each experience and the solution for each error. Indigenous social work practice, as it is being envisaged now, has lessons to learn from this practice and design a revised supervisory model for fieldwork.

For those who doubt the authenticity and scientific approach to the data, it is essential to point out that the teachings preserved in the lineages of Tibetan Buddhism are contained in the sacred literature of that tradition. The Kangyur, consisting of more than 100 volumes, includes the scriptures originating from the time of the Buddha and is divided into Vinaya, dealing with ethics and discipline, Sutras which deal with meditation and Abhidharma, which deals with the Buddhist philosophy. This does provide a theoretical basis for extension into the social work profession and requires testing and openness to evidence-based practice.

Conclusion

Additionally, there is a need to understand the secular mindfulness meditation practice being linked to the origins of mindfulness meditation from the Pali Cannon. More recent research on developing wholesome states of mind such as compassion, self-compassion and loving-kindness in consonance with mindfulness practice needs to be understood compared to canonical texts of early Buddhist thought. These were the foundations from Asian writings that somehow got lost and are now being attempted to be revived through Indianisation and Indigenisation of the profession.

Tribal Social Work (TSW), however, was a theoretical product of the team in the School of Social work in the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Linked with the TICI that has its own academic journal, the framework of TSW is an epistemological equivalent to decolonial social work rooted in the Indian context. Fundamental to TSW is posited as "perspectives from within' around two conceptions of the nature of social reality – diversity and dialogue."

Stepping into a supervisory role in social work involves a shift of status, perspective and identity. Several associations of social work have sprung up in the country as non-profit and non-political organizations dedicated to the promotion of standards and status of the social work profession. Prominent among them are the National Association of Professional Social Workers in India (NAPSWI), Indian Society of Professional Social Work (ISPSW), Bombay Association of Trained Social Workers (BATSW), Kerala Association of professional social workers (KAPS), Karnataka Association of Professional Social Workers (KAPSW), Professional Social Workers' Association (PSWA), and India Network of Professional Social Workers' Associations (INPSWA).

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