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Models of Community Organisation

Core course-CC8-Social Work with community

1.Learning Outcome

2.Introduction

3.Major Model of community Organisation

4.Summary

1. Learning Outcome

After completing this module student will be able to :

- Understand various model of community organisation
- Identify the distinctive features
- Applicability of Community Organisation Model

2. Introduction:

A model can be taken as a framework or a medium through which social realities can be analyzed and interventions be executed accordingly. It serves as a reference for the work undertaken and gives a clearer understanding of expected intervention. A model can also be understood as a strategy or an approach for accomplishing a vision, and the appropriate steps to be followed to get there.

Various models have been propounded, some based on specific ideologies while others highlight best practices in the field.

2.1 Relevance:

Let us look into the relevance of models in community organizing and community practice. Selecting a particular model helps in identifying the conditions that require interventions, decide plan of action for intended outcome. It helps in identifying the types of roles and skills a community worker is expected to play and tasks and techniques that would facilitate in achieving the objectives. It also provides a framework for community workers to revisit their decisions and do future planning.

Models
Helps in

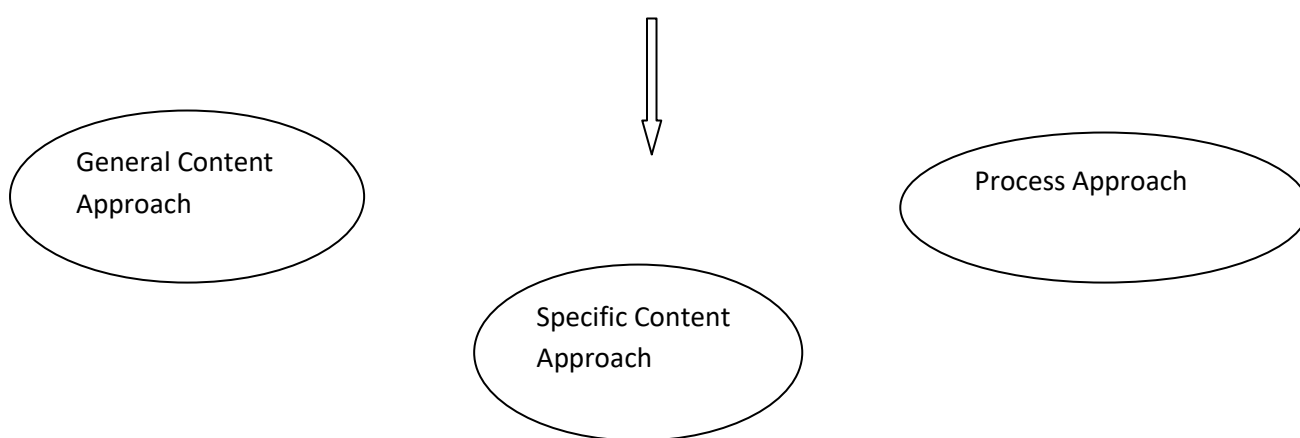
- Better understanding of problem
- Facilitating discussion and Reflection
- integrating theory into practice)
- designing intervention
- identifying roles, tasks & techniques

3. Major Models of Community Organization

A number of people have attempted to develop a classification of models of community organization.

Preferring the term ‘approach’ Murray G. Ross (1955) puts forward three main approaches to Community organization as –

Approaches by Ross



3.1 General Content Approach: It focuses on planning and organizing services needed by the community in general. It either works for strengthening of existing services or initiating new ones.

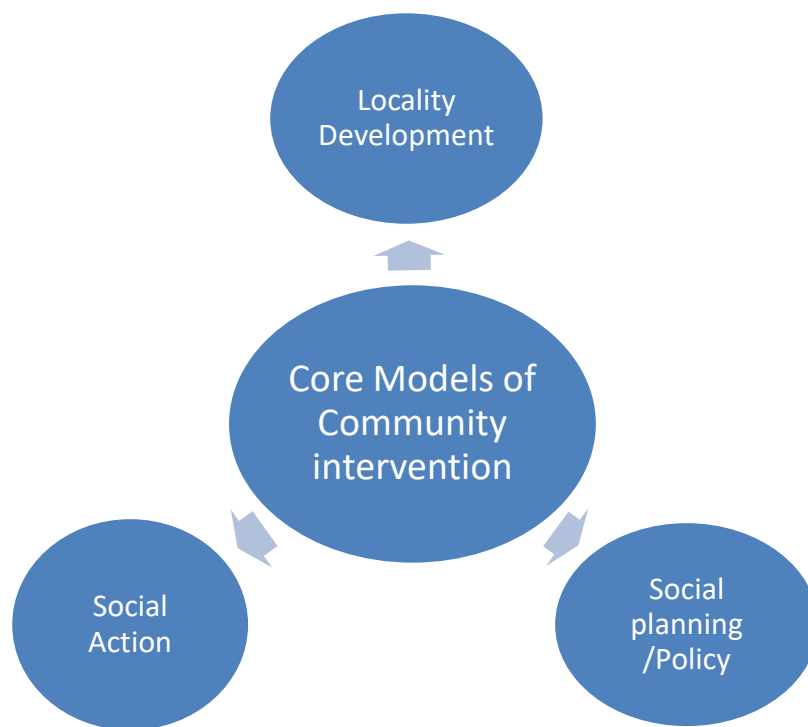
3.2 Specific Content Approach: It aims at specific issues or concerns or needs based intervention planned and executed by individual organization or the community itself.

3.3 Process Approach: It emphasizes the process by which community’s capacity is built to work in a collaborative and coordinated manner so as to institutionalize people’s participation. Content or activity taken up is secondary. Community organizer adheres to self determination of the community, its indigenous plans, people’s willingness to change; and working at community’s pace.

Jack Rothman introduced three models of community organization. These were

1. Locality Development
2. Social planning
3. Social action

These three models construct were revised and refined by him in the year 2001(Rothman, 2001), taking into account the change in practice and conditions in communities. Instead of referring to the three approaches as ‘Models’ he preferred referring to them as the ‘Core model of Community Intervention’



3.4 Mode A: Locality Development: Based on the principle of “helping people to help themselves” this model is strongly ‘people oriented’. It focuses on building community’s competency to solve problems on self-help basis and develop and maintain harmonious inter-relationships among different ethnic and social class groups. It

involves participation in community actions by wide range of people. This model is based on the belief that community people should be involved in planning, implementation and evaluation on matters that effect them. Usage of democratic practices, voluntary cooperation, self-help and development of local leadership are the key themes of this model. It implies that a community has certain specific needs and interests and once people realize this need and work together democratically they can take appropriate steps to improve the quality of their life. Here, the role of community organizer is to enhance the involvement of the people in identifying and resolving their community's problems in collective and concerted manner and thereby institutionalizing people's participation. However, this model has received criticisms by Khinduka and others as being a 'soft strategy' for achieving change and its preoccupation on 'consensus as modus operandi' may lead to slow paced progress.

3.5 Mode B: Social Planning/Policy: This model is characterized by a rational, deliberately planned, technical process of problem solving with regard to key social problems faced by the community people. Here, the focus is on solving social problems like health, education, housing, child development, etc., through technical and scientific process of planning and implementation of services. In this model, active participation of the community is not a core ingredient. Agencies working in the community, government or NGOs, make use of data, collected empirically or based on secondary sources, to assess the magnitude of the problem at hand chalks out plans and executes them. The agency undertakes the exercise of evaluating welfare and civic needs and the existing services in the area and develops a possible blueprint for a more efficient delivery of services. Level of community participation varies depending upon the nature of problem and circumstances. Community planners and organizers work in greater capacity with the government for provision of services. This approach is essentially task driven and relies on need assessment,

problem analysis, evaluation research and other sophisticated statistical tools. And, building community's capacity or fostering radical or fundamental social change is not a major goal of this model.

3.6 Mode C: Social Action: This model focuses on redistribution of power and resources and rightful participation of marginalized social groups into decision-making power. According to Friedlander (1963) "Social Action is an individual, group or community effort within the framework of the social work philosophy and practice that aims to achieve social progress, to modify social policies and to improve social legislation and health and welfare services". According to Rothman, social action is a strategy used by groups or sub communities or even national organisations that feel that they have inadequate power and resources to meet their needs. So they confront with the power structure using conflict as a method to solve their issues related to inequalities and deprivation. This model rests on the values of social justice and human rights. Social work practitioners aim to empower the poor and the oppressed by coming in conflict with the rich oppressors who control resources and power. This model has been used as a means to redress the social problems of the marginalized communities, redistribute the resources and power to the poor and powerless. Key themes in this model are social justice, redistribution of power, resources and shared decision-making coupled with institutionalization of democratic norms in the community. This model is based on the assumption that a disadvantaged section of the community needs to be organized to demand increased resource share and dignified treatment. Confrontational tactics like demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins, marches, boycotts and other disruptive or attention seeking acts have been employed. Community organizer may take up various roles like that of an advocate, activist, agitator, broker or negotiator, depending upon the situation and stage of the process of social action.

4. Summary:

Several educators and practitioners of social work profession have postulated various types of models of community organization. These models highlight three basic practice frameworks - first one is task oriented where focus is on providing deficit civic services or strengthening the existing ones; second one stresses on people's participation and collaboration to solve their community's problems through shared action and local leadership; and the third type focuses on redistribution of power and resources so as to uplift and empower marginalized groups.