The development of professional social work in China

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June 26, Paris
1.1 A brief historic review of social work development in China

1.1.1 The import of professional social work at early stage (Before 1940s)

1.1.2 The non-professional social work system under the “planned economic system” (1950s-1970s)
1.2 The gradual development of professional social work in China (1980s-2000s)

1.2.1 The new needs in professional social work after the economic reform

- The changes of social administration systems in both urban and rural areas after the economic reform,
- The early development of the new kinds of social work services: community services and social organizations (NGOs).
- The emerging needs in professional social work to meet higher needs and deal with more complicated social circumstances
1.2.2 The emerge of the new social work education in later-1980s
   – Several universities set up social work education in later-1980s

1.2.3 The slow development of professional social work in 1990s)
   – The background:
     • 1. Rapid marketization in economic system and there were much more emphasis on economic development and much less on social development among governments’ public policies
     • 2. There were commercializing trends in many areas of social services.
1.3 The development of professional social work in China (2006-)

1.3.1 The background: The new politic environment from the early 2000s
   - The introspection of development strategy of previous decades
   - The new orientations of “harmonious society”
   - More emphasis on social development and people’s well-being

- 1.3.2 The political decision of the CCP’s central commission to develop “a grand social worker team” in China (2006)
• 1.3.3 The orientation of the “professional social work”

• The discusses of “what are the professional social work and professional social workers”

• The decisional to develop professional social work system
II. The institution building of China’s professional social work and the problems
2.1 Two kinds of professional social workers in China currently

2.1.1 Social workers by higher education

2.1.2 Social workers from the official professional examinations: national and local
2.2 Social work education system

2.2.1 Several tiers of higher social work education in universities/colleges

– The three-year junior professional training programs in the high-technological colleges: about 50 programs currently

– The four year undergraduate programs (BSW) in universities: about 330 programs

– The two-three-year MSW program: 105 programs currently

– PhD social work programs in several universities
2.2.2 Teaching models

- The international knowledge / methods and the localization process
- On campus teaching hours and placement / internship
2.3 The official social work examination system

2.3.1 The national social work examination system: The examination for social worker’s professional level evaluation

- Starting from 2006
- Two levels of diplomas currently: Junior level and middle level, and the senior level will be set up soon
- Three courses: social work theories and skills / social work practices / social work legislations and policies
- More than 300k people take part the national examination a year recently, and
2.3.2 The local social work examination systems

- Different kinds of professional examinations in different places, usually with lower professional requirement and thus lower qualification.
2.4 Different working places of the professional social workers

2.4.1 Local communities

2.4.2 Professional social work services (NGOs)

2.4.3 Government-affiliated organizations: trade union, youth league, women federation, disabled people federation, etc.

2.4.4 Other employers: social work services in enterprises, hospitals and schools, etc.
2.5 The coordination of the social workers in different organizations

2.5.1 The different characteristics of social workers in different organizations

2.5.2 The coordination and cooperation between the social workers in community organization and professional social work services (NGOs)
• 2.6 The current tasks of social work’s institutionalization

  – 2.6.1 The development of legislation system
  – 2.6.2 The national and local standards for social work services
  – 2.6.3 The professional regulations for different trades
  – 2.6.4 Internal management system
  – 2.6.5 The professional evaluation system
III. The competence building and the problems
3.1 The current situation of social worker’s professional competence

– 3.1.1. For individual social work

• The measurement of social worker’s competence
  – Social work theories
  – Professional skills
  – The understanding and application of laws and policies
  – Capacity to communicate
  – Social work values and ethics

• The achievements of and challenges to social worker’s competence
  – General situations
  – For different kinds of social workers
• 3.1.2 For social work organizations
  – Too much non-professional work for the community social workers
  – The weak capacity in professional and administrative authority for the social work institutes (NGOs)

• 3.1.3 For social work education
  – The weak professional background for the faculties
  – The lower professional supervision capacity in the placement
3.1.4 For the total social work profession development

- The number of professional social workers is still very small

  - By the end of 2016, the total professional social workers with national diploma were just nearly 300,000, and the total social workers were about 760,000 if non-national diploma holders included. Professional jobs were more than 200,000, and social work services (NGOs) were about 6600.

- The imbalance between urban and rural and among different regions
3.2 The main factors hindering social work development

3.2.1 Less public expenditure on social work
- Causing the lower pay for social workers
- Causing a high job changes among social workers as a result
- Further causing the weak competence of social work institutes

3.2.2 The “competition” from non-professional workers
- From the community workers who don’t have higher education
- From the non-professional workers who have higher education, but not in social work
3.3 The goals to increase social work competence

– 3.3.1 The target of social work development
  • 1.45 million social workers by the year of 2020
– 3.3.2 To improve social work education

• Curriculum development
• Better placement/internship
• More researches on local practices
• More international exchanges
• More focus on the top (PhD) and bottom (three-year diploma) levels of social work higher education
• 3.3.3 To improve professional examinations
  – To have a better examination knowledge/skills
  – To have senior level examination/evaluation

• 3.3.4 To reinforce the on-the-job training program for the social workers

• 3.3.5 To develop two kinds of competences: general practitioners and specialists
Thanks!