

Students in Professional Social Workers' Associations & Kerala Social Work Student Congress

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Abstract

Social work education follows an integrated approach of theory and practice. It educates the students on the mission, vision, goals, values, and ethics of practice in the profession. Socialisation is the foundation of Social Work Practice and that can be boosted with confidence with the help of social work professional associations (Kimberly, Louise and Roe Bubar, 2013). The professional Association is an organisation of practitioners who judge one another as professionally competent and come together to perform social functions which they cannot perform in their separate capacity as individuals (Merton,1958). This article studies social work professional associations, specifically about KAPS (Kerala Association of Professional Social Workers) affiliated to IFSW(International Federation of Social Workers) through INPSWA (India Network of Professional Social Workers' Associations) with more focus on the involvement of social work students in professional association. The activities and working of KAPS Student association through Social Work student Congress is highlighted to depict the importance of a professional body for students to build their skill of networking, collaborating, innovation and expertise in social work fields that could be enriched with the help of Student Association of KAPS.

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An individual may be unique with own capabilities and skills, but it gets developed and moulded once exposed to the work environment and the professionals, that is what every professional association seeks to perform. Every profession needs an active professional association which aims at the development of the profession. Association concentrates on improving knowledge, practicing existing knowledge, testing of methods and tools in new areas, sharing of knowledge among the practitioners, training, documentation and networking. Professional social workers too have associations in places where social work training is being conducted and social work is treated as a profession.

Any individual in a professional field needs to get associated with professional associations. There are a number of benefits in joining a professional association as a social worker. It connects with others in field, and presents many opportunities to find new research and techniques through webinars, guides and classes. Joining a professional association is the ideal place to start for every professional, even if continuing education is not an intention. Many a times organization, itself, requires the members to complete professional development to remain a member. It will also fulfill unexpected need for additional training on topic not familiar with (Yeshia University).

Studies reveal that even though the evolution of social work professional associations seems to be analogous with other professional associations it is something natural to the professional development. These were not adapted consciously but the association is believed to be more integrated and with purpose for the effective functioning of any professional body. Like any other professional occupation Social work also depends entirely on skill development integrated with comprehensive theoretical knowledge (The Compass,1936), and this practice is incorporated in every social worker with the experience and opportunities that is realised from different Social work associations.

Professional social work associations in India

In the international context, the professional social workers' associations

in India are represented in the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) through India Network of Professional Social Work Association (INPSWA). INPSWA is a network of six main professional social workers associations that are functioning in India; namely Indian Society of Professional Social Work (ISPSW), National Association of Professional Social Workers in India (NAPSWI), Karnataka Association of Professional Social Workers (KAPSW), Kerala Association of Professional Social Workers (KAPS), Professional Social Workers' Association (PSWA), and Bombay Association of Trained Social Workers (BATSW). In many states of India, there are associations for professional social workers may it be for teachers, councilors, social workers in medical and psychiatric fields etc. Till 2015, India was not a member of IFSW as there was no single social work association representing the entire country. However, in 2015 six main Indian professional social work associations together formed INPSWA. This created a new area of national social work unity and India then became a member in the IFSW through the admission of INPSWA in it. There is provision for the expansion of INPSWA. The states where there is no state level social work association, can form an association for all the social workers in the state and become member in INPSWA and get affiliated to IFSW.

The member associations in INPSWA (as on Oct, 2020)

The ISPSW (Indian Society of Professional Social Workers) is one of the oldest and active professional social work associations in India. It aims at meeting challenges of social work practice and creating a platform for information exchange among fellow professionals. The Society was formerly known as Indian Society of Psychiatric Social Work, which was established in the year 1970.

NAPSWI (National Association of Professional Social Workers in India) is an organization which focuses on the promotion of standards and status of the social work profession. The main purpose of it is to promote the quality of services provided in sections like social welfare and development, and aims

to protect interests of social work professionals. Registered office is at Dept. of Social Work, Delhi University.

KAPSW (Karnataka Association of Professional Social Workers) was founded in 1978, Bengaluru. This is the association of professional social workers in Karnataka that provides a common platform for all professional social workers in Karnataka. The registered office is at Child Rights Trust, High point building, Basaveswara circle, Bangalore

PSWA is an organization that aims to identify, plan, execute, monitor and evaluate in order to develop the activities of social work education, profession and its professionals. Registered office is at Loyola College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

BATSW founded in 1989, Mumbai. This is an association of trained social workers in Mumbai that organizes activities on various social issues and on social work interventions with people. Registered office is at Nirmala Nikethan School of Social Work, Mumbai.

Kerala Association of Professional Social Workers (KAPS)

KAPS is the association for all the professionally trained social workers in Kerala, formed on 9th December 2012 and has been registered as a society under the Travancore- Cochin Literacy, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act 1955. KAPS was initiated as a result of a series of discussions led by Association of Schools of Social Work in Kerala (ASSK). It was formed with the purpose of promoting quality and effective social work practices in Kerala and uniting the voices of all professional social workers. The association has been working as a professional body with all its capacities for the development and enrichment of the profession. Its registered office is in Department of Social Work, BCM College, Kottayam.

KAPS has a highly democratic organizational structure. There are State Office Bearers (President, Working President, General Secretary, Treasurer) with four Vice Presidents and four Joint secretaries in four regions of the state.

There are chapters in all 14 districts in Kerala. The governing body comprises 14 elected members from all the 14 district chapters of Kerala state along with few other nominated members, and the leaders of other social work associations in the state for specialized areas viz. Higher secondary social work teachers (PROSA), Association of Schools of Social Workers (ASSK) and Psychiatric Social Workers, School counselors etc. and from the Social Work Students association. State Management Committees (SMC) consist of President, Secretary and Treasurer from all the 14 chapters and all the members of the governing body. This association is formed with the purpose of promoting the quality and effectiveness of social work practices in Kerala. A professional association grows only when the practitioners consider association as a part of the profession itself.

Major driving objectives of KAPS

- To promote activities appropriate for strengthening and unifying the social work profession as a whole;
- To increase awareness about social work profession at various levels and to enhance the public and professional recognition and identity of social work;
- To represent and advocate for programmes and policies to meet the needs of social work fraternity and its various clientele groups
- To contribute to the development of social work knowledge and research and review the education standards for social workers;
- To advocate for the pursuit of social justice and changes to social structures and policies in order to promote social inclusion and redress social disadvantage;
- To promote and facilitate members' professional development and life-long learning;

KAPS as a professional body for all the social workers in the state take up continuing education programs for all the practicing professionals. Along with programs for development of the social work profession, KAPS has ini-

tiated three major programs for bringing the professional Social Workers and social work students together: (i) Kerala Social Work Students Congress (ii) Observation of World Social Work Day (iii) Kerala Social Work Practitioners Congress.

Student members in professional social work associations

Professional organizations or associations across the world allow students to become members. The association helps students to find employment, and they provide a way to share ideas. Many professional organizations run job boards, provide student membership discounts, and host events for early-career professionals. Many organizations host training seminars and other events that allow members to network and learn new techniques and skills. These organizations offer a lot of different resources and benefits to members. Joining a professional organization is a great way for social work students to develop professionally.

In Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW), Students enrolled in an AASW accredited BSW or MSW (qualifying) and those already eligible for AASW membership and undertaking full time Masters or Doctoral social work studies can become student members.

NASW, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) provides support to student members in many ways. NASW student member is sponsored with the support of more than 80 regular members. Regular members pay \$158-\$236, but students pay just \$60. The discounted membership is a way of welcoming students to the social work community.

British Association of Social Workers (BASW) provides student membership from £4.70/month. The association provides access to study resources and career advice. A student who continues student membership receives 50% off in membership fees for the first post-qualifying year of work. In NASW, the students are holding the position of member of the Board of Directors.

In the words of Jordan Holley, MSW, and former BSW student member, NASW National Board of Directors, "Joining NASW has molded me into a

leader and a mindful professional, and provides me with confidence in my social work profession, knowing that NASW advocates for me and social workers all around the world for pay increases, tuition reimbursement and protection for our future profession. NASW is the backbone of the social work profession, and by supporting them with a student membership, I am providing a promise to my future career as a social worker.”

In NAPSWI, the social work association in India which is a member association of INPSWA allows student membership. BSW students have to pay Rs.500 for membership and MSW students have to pay Rs.1000 for membership.

KAPS allows BSW and MSW students to become student members by paying Rs. 200. The Professional's Membership fee is Rs.1200. The student members on successful completion of BSW/MSW course can take professional membership by paying Rs.1000. There are student representatives in the governing body of KAPS.

All Kerala Social Work Students Association and Kerala Social Work Students' Congress

KAPS student association: Every budding professional, always seeks for a professional association for their growth in the field. In that context, KAPS Student association is the right platform for every sprouting social worker to grow together with other professionals. It gives the best opportunity to explore the implicit talents and skills via Student Congress where students from various institutions join to share their experiences and innovative ideas in the field as well as to gain knowledge.

A professional association consists of a group of enthusiasts working for the profession and experienced in the field. Joining together with such a group KAPS, Student association gets facilities to enrich the capabilities and opportunities of every student in career development. During meetings and conferences, networking with other people in the same field gives insight about various multi sectoral perspectives and rich knowledge on the subject of social

work. Also from a professional body like KAPS the students get opportunity with expert mentors and educators who can guide on the exact code of ethics of the profession to be the best in the field. The network that will be built after every workshop and conferences will be a repository of the field expertise and that can be made use of as an instrument for success in the social work field.

Another important aspect of a professional association is the skill development in terms of leadership and volunteerism which are essential factors for being a social worker. Here being with a family of professionals, every chance that comes in the way will help to explore how to mould students to a better version. This will also help to pick up passion to work for the area of interest after understanding the work environment. Most importantly a membership in a professional organization will be a resume builder being a fresher, with no or limited work experience which will definitely help us in job hunting and to build confidence to face a panel from the learning experiences.

There are many programmes by KAPS for the development of social work students through their involvement in professional association. Notable among them are (i) Social Work Students congress since 2015 (ii) Participation in Kerala Social Work Practitioners Congress (iii) giving student membership. (iv) Training programmes for students (v) providing finishing school sessions (vi) sharing of activities (vii) Providing knowledgeable webinars (viii) Mentoring for research and publications (ix) forming Human Rights and Antihuman trafficking clubs in colleges (x) involving students in disaster management activities (xi) supporting in undertaking field work (xii) providing useful sessions for migration to other countries (xiii) helps in placement (xiv) providing opportunity to become a member in the governing body of KAPS.

Earlier, the social work students in Kerala used to meet under the banner of 'Rendezvous'. This event was conducted with many competition items and was organized by Indian Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) Kerala Chapter with the association of ASSK. This event was stopped in the academic year 2012-13. Then KAPS has initiated Kerala Social Work Students' Congress in 2015 with sole objective of bringing social work students under one umbrella

and affiliate them to Professional association of Social work. It gives a wider opportunity to network with other colleges, network with professional practitioners in other colleges/institutions and other different fields, get enriched academically, enhance professional and personality development, showcase their talents, get a feeling of working with professional association etc. The series of Kerala Professional Social Work Congress has proved that the programme is trying to achieve the expected objectives. The annual editions of students congress were organized in Association with ASSK.

1st Social Work Students Congress

Social Work Students Congress was organized for the first time in Kerala on 15 Dec 2015 at Bharathmatha College, Thrikkakkara in Ernakulam District in which students representatives (President & Secretary of social work student associations from each college have participated). Mr.Nibin Jacob from LISSAH college, Kozhikode has given special address as student representative. He mentioned that students are getting to know more about the profession and professional association through such meetings and will help in the professional growth. He extended gratitude of the students fraternity to KAPS for initiating such a programme. BenoyKattayil (General Secretary, KAPS) explained the background of organizing the students Congress and reminded that the changing situation in Kerala demands social workers stand united for professional development and to demand what is due for them. Fr. Dr Varghese Kalapparambath MSW, Manager and Director, BharataMata College gave the Presidential Address which was an enlightening message emphasizing the need for strengthening the professional association and calling for a larger students congress involving more students in the coming years. Fr. Joye James, President KAPS inaugurated the programme by lighting the lamp. The students and other dignitaries also joined the lamp lighting. He appreciated the new initiative of conducting student Congress and development of the association. Dr.Ipe Varghese(Secretary, Kottayam District Chapter & Programme Officer, KAPS Secretariat), Head Dept. of Social Work, BCM College, Kottayam read out the special message by Sriganesh MV, Secretary

General, INPSWA (India Network of Professional Social Work Associations). Very Rev. Thomas Paul Ramban MSW from Ankamali has delivered the keynote address calling Social Workers to unite, strengthen and grow and also stressed the need for ongoing training in the profession. Dr. Cherian P Kurian (Vice President, KAPS & Vice President INPSWA), Director, SSW, Marian College Kuttikkanam in his felicitation message pointed to the need for strengthening the district chapters. He referred to the international situation where social work students and student organizations in the college work with professional associations. Mr. M P Antony (President, KAPS Ernakulam Chapter, President ICSW Kerala & Director, Rajagiri Outreach) shared certain recent initiatives of the government system in which Social Workers are also involved through KAPS. The entire event was led by a group of students under the leadership of HoD Dr. Sheena Rajan Philip.

KAPS has organized an essay competition for the Social Work students on the topic 'Human Dignity and Social Work'. The prizes (Memento, Certificate and Cash Prizes) were distributed for the winners during the function. Dr. Anish KR (General Secretary, ASSK), Rajagiri College, Kalamassery has taken the seminar session on the topic 'Promoting the worth and dignity of Peoples'. Students made presentations on the topic. The programme involved presentations by student representatives from all the colleges on their important activities for professional development. Dr. Ipe Varghese moderated this session. Later on colleges from each district have discussed in groups (district wise) regarding observation of World Day of Social Work on the third Tuesday of March 2016. KAPS district chapter office bearers from each district have led this session. Fr. Dr. Prasanth Palakkappillil (Principal, SH College, Thevara) delivered a motivating message about Social Work and KAPS. Students from different colleges evaluated the programme as the most successful and motivating one. All the participants together demanded organizing such programmes every year. Vote of thanks was done by student representative, Bharatham College and KAPS representatives. The programme was closed with national anthem.

II - Kerala Social Work Students Congress

The second edition of the students congress was organized at St.Mary's College Thrissur on 10 Dec 2016. Dr. PrasanthPalakkappalil, President KAPS (Principal, SH College, Thevara) inaugurated the programme and the programme was presided over by Dr. Sr Mary, Vice Principal St Mary's College, Thrissur. Yadhu Krishnan (MSW), Member, Thalikulam Block Panchayat, Dr.IpeVarughese, Gen. Secretary, KAPS, Dr.Anish K.R, (Treasurer, KAPS and Gen. Sec ASSK), BinoyKattayil, Vice President, KAPS, Kerala, Jineshlal R. V (District President, KAPS Thrissur Chapter), Ms.SimmyJijo (Head, Dept. of Social Work, St.Mary's College, Thrissur), have shared valuable messages. In the inaugural address, the speaker motivated the delegates to inculcate professionalism among the students and work for the development of the profession. He told to acknowledge the knowledge base of social work and share the best practice models in various schools for replication.

Dr. Joseph Sebastian, led the thematic presentation on the topic 'Sustainable communities: challenge before social workers' which is highly interactive and resourceful. Evidence based theories were discussed with the background of practical examples from the speaker's own projects in different parts of India. More than 250 delegates participated from different colleges in the state. The presentation helped the students to know about various opportunities for Social Work students to practice professional social work methods in the field and also enhanced the capacity of the students to work on the theme in the future.

Thematic presentations were done by students from each school of social work through audio visual means. The schedule was effective as it helped to chalk out many best practice models from different social work schools. An essay competition was arranged and prizes were distributed to the winners in the session. Another highlight of the day was Flash Mob conducted by students from six colleges from Thrissur and Palghat districts. More than 150 social work students from Vimala college, St Mary's college, St Thomas College, St Joseph college, Christ College and Mercy College participated in the

event held at ThekkinkaduMaidan, Thrissur. It really helped in conveying the message of social work among the public.

III Kerala Social Work Students Congress

The third edition of the student congress was organized at Holy Cross College, Kozhikode on 16 Dec 2017. The theme of the congress was – Human relations as the key for sustainable community. The student coordinator - Denova Edward of Holy Cross College initially shared a welcome note followed by the introduction of the Program by Dr. IpeVarughese- General Secretary of KAPS. Dr. Sr. Shiny George (Principal of Holy Cross Institute of Management & Technology) gave the Presidential Address and Dr. Fr. PrasanthPalakkappillil (President of KAPS) conveyed the message regarding the Congress. Smt. SreelaMenon N (Member of Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights) inaugurated the programme by giving a speech on the importance of human relations and how it is getting deteriorated in the present generation. The meeting honoured Dr. M.P. Antony (Member of Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights) who also was the resource person of the day. The first issue of KAPS Newsletter – “KAPSTAN’s VOICE” was also released on the occasion.

Biju V, Environmentalist and Founder of Evergreen Solutions (Secretary of NGO – EARN), Jijesh M (HOD, Department of Social Work, Holy Cross college), BenoyKattayil (Vice president of KAPS) spoke during the occasion and Swathi N– Student Coordinator of MES College expressed vote of thanks. Dr. M.P Antony took a session on the topic ‘Human relations as the key for sustainable community’ and was hosted by KAPS Calicut Chapter Vice President, Smt. Mini. The SMC meeting was conducted in a separate venue. Dr. P.M. Mathew led the session having interaction and exposure. Student representatives from all the colleges presented the college proceedings and activities contributions towards social work. It was a very good platform to get a thorough knowledge about the social work colleges and their activities across the state. The main attraction of the session was the Oath taken by every social worker that was presented there and the oath was read out by the student

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coordinator - Mr. Denova Edward of Holy Cross College. The session was followed by an entertainment session in which students presented dance items and songs.

Social Work Students congress could not be conducted in 2018 owing to the highly disastrous Kerala floods 2018.

IV Kerala Social Work Students Congress

The IVth edition of Social work student Congress was held at Assumption college, Changanassery, Kottayam district on 6th December 2019. The theme for the IVth KSWSC was 'Engaging Communities to Sustainability through Social Work Partnership'. Student representatives from almost all the colleges across Kerala State participated and marked its success. Ms. Sikha Surendran IAS (Sub Collector, Kottayam) inaugurated the event which was presided over by Principal Assumption college. Dr. Joseph Sebastian (Working President KAPS), Dr. Ipe Varughese, Dr. Jose Antony (President ASSK), and Sr. Salini (HoD) gave meaningful messages. Dr. Prasanth Palakkappillil (Former President, KAPS) took a session on 'green social work practice'. The participants actively participated in the 'open mike forum'. A photography competition on 'environment sustainability' was part of the event and an instant open quiz on Cohoot platform was led by Dr. Anish KR. The event aimed at showing the strength of our profession and our responsibility towards the government and thereby to society as well. As a part of this a state wide survey was done on the 'Efficacy of Panchayat Jagratha Samithies in Kerala'. The study was done in different panchayats across Kerala. The students from few institutions have done presentations based on the survey. There was group wise discussions and presentations by students on different topics. All the programmes were led by students themselves. All the activities were guided by the student leaders Ms. Malavika and Ms. Dina Sabu from Assumption college. Ms. Akhila V R and Ms. Nivya Joseph were elected as the President and Secretary of the Kerala Social Work Students' association for the year 2019-20. It has also been decided that the Student representative from the hosting institution of KAPS Kerala Social Work Students Congress and the institution which decide to host the

event in the coming year will be the Secretary and President of student association. Both the secretary and president are the members in KAPS governing body. Ownership of the students and guidance by Professionals made the event meaningful and success.

The Vth Social Work Student Congress has been planned at Central University of Kerala at Kasaragod in 2020. The young Social workers always show the same enthusiasm and vibrance to be in the professional family every year to strengthen themselves and grow together.

Significance of a professional body for students

Students perception on the impact of Kerala Social Work Students Congress – study based on opinion from students

“Belonging to professional associations and attending professional meetings has been promoted as an important aspect of career development (Cottrell, Girvan, & McKenzie, 2009).

Students used to share their opinions about the student congress during the time of the evaluation session in all the events. In the fourth Kerala Students Congress held at Assumption college, Changanachery. 160 Students representatives from different Social Work institutions across Kerala have participated. The opinions about the student congress were collected in three methods. (i) by distributing the evaluation form to 100 students ensuring it covers all the social work institutions (ii) Inviting students to openly share an evaluation on the platform (iii) Collecting opinions/comments of the students individually.

The individual opinions shared by student participants were proving that the event was highly influential for them.

“Every budding professional, always seeks for a professional association for their growth in the field. In that context, KAPS Student association is the right platform for every sprouting social worker to grow together with other professionals. It gives the best opportunity for us to explore implicit talents and skills via Student Congress where students from various institutions join

to share their experiences and innovative ideas in the field as well as to gain knowledge”.

“We understand that KAPS have been working at National and state level for bringing all the growing professionals in the field of social work with the sole of objective of profession’s and individuals growth. During the training period itself the students must be inculcated to develop a culture of working associations. The students must also be anticipated on how to expand and do for his/her profession. Social Work Student Association must always lead by experts in the field of KAPS and ASSK”.

“ We have less knowledge about Professional associations and its importance in our career development. In student Congress we could meet different students who are unique, innovative and experts in one or the other and bringing together help us to exchange and gain knowledge on diverse topics in which one may be well-versed. Uniting with diversities we could find commonality to learn, relate, grow individually and collectively with the involvement of the professionals in the field to guide and motivate us through the richness of the profession”.

Another significant advantage for students in such a professional meeting is the time with their mentors and possibility to network with eminent personalities in the field who have played a critical role in the development of the Social work profession. From hectic and academic pressures, Social work events like this always revive with a different ambience, different ideas, innovations, multisectoral perspectives built up with experiences.

“I could personally talk to few professionals here which helped me to understand how far I can grow in the profession. Our teachers also guide us. But this gives us a different experience”. “It’s a matter of enjoyment also to meet many others and mingle with them”.

“In college we see only few professionals as teachers, here we could experience the diversity of our profession. It really brings confidence about our career”.

“The caliber of individuals when brought together can make good changes. We never thought of working together with students of other institutions. But this brought us new energy and joy, now we feel that we can do many things together. We could witness our personal and professional development in a nutshell”.

“The survey done in as part of this event was an eye opener. Right from the beginning of being a trainee social worker there is a lot more to do in terms of studying the society, bringing up light, working for its requirement through a professional association, so that we as social workers in association not only have benefits for ourselves but also could justify our profession.

“Before coming to this event I have read about the student members in professional social work associations. This get together gave me opportunity to read more about it and really experience it. One problem I share is there are few institutions that miss this event due to any reason. This should be made compulsory to all the institutions. This event is not like any other students meet. It gave us to real professional experience. Thanks to KAPS visionary leaders and our teachers who helped us to participate.

Greatest advantage of being in professional bodies is networking and the beauty of which is that we don't need to wait until we have a graduation certificate to benefit from it. This is by virtue added to our pool of resources along with the knowledge we gain out of our professional course. Definitely this will boost National and International level exposure and experience that is reflected in our activities and work. This standard of the profession must be given back to the society as professionals once we become Practitioners in different field. As students we have a greater role to intervene with the society and bring it to the notice of the concerned people for its better functioning and result.

“We get to know the students from other colleges and their activities. Many activities can be replicated which will become learning for students and useful for the community”.

“It’s an excellent event to share knowledge and get guidance from professionals from association”.

“We feel proud and feel ourselves as professionals now. Thanks to KAPS and our teachers. We wish the event should continue every year with more participation.

“ We feel highly satisfied. We got many new friends here. More of our friends wanted to participate but there was restrictions in number. We wish more people should be allowed to participate in future.

“This is a different experience we see in the professional association. Unlike the politically affiliated organization, we could see the objective of development of person in profession.

The evaluation form distributed also shows similar findings. The findings show high satisfaction of students about the programme. The suggestions also give statements similar to the personal reflections on the effectiveness of the programmes and also suggestions for improvement. The suggestions included the need for participation of more students, conduct the event for two days with more programmes, give more publicity for the programmes, bring practitioners from different fields for sharing in the programme, provide opportunity for using technology more like quiz competition. Limited availability of time is a problem shared by few participants. The need for more sessions on different subjects by the association was also projected by the participants.

Conclusion

Professional associations are organisational bodies of competent and potential experts in field, along with others who join together under one umbrella to build and organise a professional body for its effective functioning, to gain & share knowledge, to experience and navigate the power of professional social workers. It is the best interest of all professionals to have a professional body to grow themselves. The united efforts of an association helps to mould the social workers have a unitary standard and thereby to uphold the dignity

and worth of the profession. These associations are means through which we can raise our voices for concerns regarding our problems and needs. Being united as a whole is the strength of every profession and we keep up the motto to grow together.

Social Work Professional associations help us to network among the peers in our field with individuality and uniqueness in their ideas and expertise. It gives the opportunity to explore common platforms and meetings for academic discussions and sharing experiences. It paves the way for social work research for many young aspirants and publishing in established journals for their career development.

In the past few years the social work education discipline is increasing remarkably. This shows the evident work of the profession that has brought into the society. It is expected the same trend will continue in the future years for sure. The importance of social work professional associations also will be an important component in the growing trend. The initiative of KAPS by providing opportunity for the students to get involved in association was commended as a good model. This will be a common platform to highlight the opinions of students, the challenges faced and also a better opportunity to mould a social work professional within themselves.

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