

## BOOK REVIEW

Okoye, U. O., Chukwu, N. E. & Agwu, P. C. (Eds), (2017). *Social work in Nigeria: Book of readings*. Nsukka: University of Nigeria press, LTD. 246 pp, \$10, ISBN: 978-978-8527-57-2

One of the major challenges of social work practice in developing countries like Nigeria is dearth of literature. Students are often constrained with this drawback and ponder how and where to source for books, especially those with local content to give direction to their study. The book “Social work in Nigeria: Book of readings” is therefore, a timely contribution by a crop of highly qualified and enormously motivated academics in diverse areas of social work perceptively burdened by deplorable apparent disdain and despair by students and even, some lecturers to pursue rigorous research in order to comprehend and advance social work in Nigeria. The book is a compelling compendium that rummages a multiplicity of knowledge, skills and values from the diverse areas of practice and is essentially aimed at addressing the scarcity of texts on social work with local content. The profession of social work is still new in Nigeria and the few available texts are relative to developed societies. However, Social work in Nigeria: Book of readings is somewhat different. It is a diversion from the developed societies to developing societies.

The experienced lecturers in the Department of Social Work, University of Nigeria, Nsukka made useful contributions in the text which began with a discourse from a historical perspective. It emphasized the evolution of social work from traditional society to modern society with special reference to the pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial eras. The communal life style and the “we” consciousness that existed among the people made it possible for individuals, groups and communities to identify their felt-needs and device means to ameliorate them with much reliance on their local resources. The extended family, age grade, and cult groups among others provided social security and welfare services to individuals and group members of the community. On the other hand, advent of formal social work in Nigeria emphasized the importance of mass education and adult literacy programmes. It also led to the establishment of formal welfare agencies like the approved schools, remand homes and the setting up of social work schools among others. The profession of social work requires a specialized knowledge base. Therefore, a social work practitioner must acquire a sound knowledge, skills and values through long period of training. Moreover, since the practice is regulated by ethical provisions of the National Association of Social Workers

(NASWs), the practitioner must be ethically informed. Attempt was made by the book to explore some areas of social work such as schools, health care settings, communities and families. Communication in social work; interviewing and counseling as social work tools were also emphasized. In the same vein, some contemporary issues like terrorism and migration were covered.

From all indications, the text has set the pace for others to queue in. The contributors have made useful contributions as scholars in the profession of social work. Nevertheless, the book stops short of having wider coverage. It is limited to selected issues, tools and areas of social work practice. Several salient issues in the practice of social work were not addressed. In the same vein some broad areas of the profession of social work were omitted. Regrettably, some chapters in the book failed to portray social work in developing societies but rather ended up duplicating social work in developed societies. The fact also remains that whereas some chapters were extensively discussed, others were scanty. Ideally, a text of this nature should highlight social work issues within the Nigerian context.

Finally, the text will go a long way in bridging the gap in literature in the practice of social work. The use of local examples in explanations makes the book unique for students in developing societies.

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