ELearning Forum Asia

Online Professional Development Courses for Social Workers through the Global Institute of Social Work:
Ethical and Pedagogical Issues and Strategies in the Delivery of Effective Training

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10 YEARS eLearning Forum Asia

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Introduction

- Online social work training is a more recent phenomenon
- Poised to take off (Kurzman & Maiden, 2013).

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Case of Global Institute of Social Work (see: www.thegisw.org)

Discuss:

▶ reflection, questions on ethics

▶ issue of intellectual property

▶ pedagogy for effective online instruction and training

Global Institute of Social Work

Vision of the Global Institute of Social Work is to deliver quality social work training where they are needed, but especially to social workers in third world nations (GISW, 2015).

- inequitable distribution of resource and social work training, in the different regions and countries
-Social work education and professional upgrading has increasingly become unaffordable
-GISW provide universal access to social work knowledge.

Online Strategy

- Training curriculum and approach more and more progressive

- ride on new technology and change the mode of delivery

- process of continuing education and development: ensure delivery of timely and useful knowledge, active engagement in application of ideas

  and effective strategies and skills shaping a more fair and just world.

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GISW

▶ GISW is essentially a virtual center with global access through its website and training portal http://training.thegisw.org/

▶ Future global centers and training hubs, different languages, for specialized social work training and consultation

▶ Need to contextualize and disseminate knowledge

Ethical and Pedagogical Issues

Three main issues in integrated fashion:

1. Universalization of knowledge.

SW knowledge and skills should be available to all?

- knowledge is a universal right and should be freely available. =

- developing the technology and specialized knowledge and expertise, intellectual property.

- perhaps a balance in this matter is warranted –

- ethical imperative to share what must be universal rights

- reserved private right to maintain what is unique or specialized domain knowledge, as personal to holder.

2. Skills training and online format?

▶ ethical concern over delivery of skills training virtually

▶ training of skills require practice, feedback and supervision

"Can virtual settings can also be as effective in honing skills and attitudes"

▶ intensive online education asserts = "no back row" (2U)

▶ use of scenarios and case studies

▶ carefully crafted online material (personalized training of skills and strategies)

▶ online supervision is augmented by grounded field supervision

3. Cross cultural and contextualization issues

▶ cross-cultural and contextual argument: "Can local training benefit international participants?"

eg "Can Western knowledge, technologies and textbooks be useful in Asian society?"

▶ Are there truths for some that are half- truths for others?

- in the application and relevance of specific knowledge

- whether one approach is more appropriate in a specific context

- present challenges for the indigenization of local practice.

"What kind of training is more suited for an online platform?"

- cross-cultural training

- collaborative and interactive

= suit the different needs of the consumer and be useful for the learner.

Strategies for Effective Online Training

▶ What makes effective delivery of social work knowledge

▶ GISW training portal and platform.

GISW

1. Universalization of social work knowledge

▶ quality and cultural appropriateness reviewed by two peers and edited before uploading

▶ content is vetted for universality and where the concentration on specific fields

▶ common principles is mooted with goal of achieving greater generalizability.

▶ GISW modules - use of the training material be free, or at minimal cost, but users have to sign up as members

▶ provides feedback, follow up and evaluation of training outcome

2. Developing a network and discussion of

collaborative learning strategies provide better assimilation and application of knowledge and skills (Macdonald, 2003).

▶ requires learners to discuss application issues for the local context through the discussion boards, social media platforms that rigorous debates

▶ use of social media and discussion forum will thus be necessary future development for the GISW platform.

3. GISW's practitioner's network and collaboration with various organizations

▶ collaboration between individuals, collaboration amongst organizations,

▶ local as well as international,

▶ IFSW, Interuniversity Consortium for Social development, International association of Schools of Social Work,

▶ Commonwealth Organization for Social Work, United Nations Development Program, government bodies and their private or indigenous counterparts,

Development of a community of practice and the use of social media

▶ more informal contexts for knowledge

▶ exchange of ideas of what works in the different contexts.

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4. Quality control and checks on application of content

▶ quality of the training and rigorous review

▶ provides quality control of the training material

▶ technical support = video and the quality of the presentations, ensure positive learning outcomes.
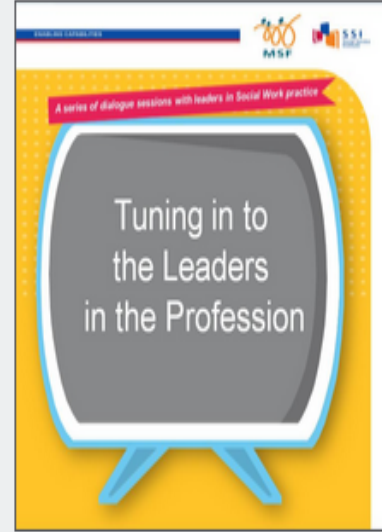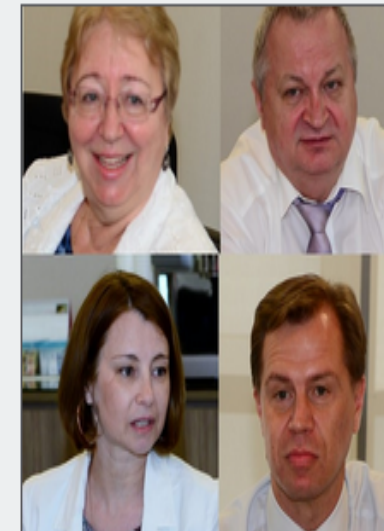
5. Operational strategies

▶ governance and operational aspects of delivery of content

▶ International Advisory Board is appointed

▶ policies and processes of organization and training platform

▶ Board consists of prominent people in international social work community

▶ courses focus on the contextualization and application to achieve the imperative of sharing social work knowledge globally.

Discussions

▶ global training forum to succeed - need for strategizing for collaborative learning and exchange of knowledge.

▶ More contributors from different cultural contexts or the diversity of content.

▶ Need for the generation of useful basic knowledge, skills and values to share universally.

▶ New pedagogical approaches should be explored to hone skills and practice knowledge.

▶ goal is also for the development of indigenous material to be shared in the different contexts.

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Conclusions

▶ challenge of the Global Institute of Social Work is to provide readily available, cost-effective, culturally appropriate training of that is of quality, in various fields of social work, for social workers worldwide (GISW, 2015).

▶ social workers to unite in sharing knowledge and expertise so as to enhance the skills and techniques

▶ world's best has a moral responsibility to share knowledge and skills with those who need it most

▶ we have become a smaller world through technology and social media and this does augur well for all if we can each

▶ the dictum of "all for one and one for all".

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Thank You

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http://thegisw.org/

http://training.thegisw.org/Browse