

# Performing Arts and Social Work: Initiating Creative Amalgamations

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** A multitude of events and experiences define man as a social being. Everyday experiences, technology, audio-visual media, colours, music, and our surroundings continuously affect our mental health. We use several forms of entertainment to relax during a hectic schedule. These forms of entertainment belong to the category of arts. There is immense scope for performing arts to be used as an effective strategy for social work. It has become necessary for social work professionals to be multifaceted in practical as well as educational endeavours. Social work is an evolving profession, and requires adaption of new and innovative techniques and strategies assisting individuals with existing and newly emerging set of crises, that hamper their social functioning. A multifaceted approach requires exhaustive research and creative mergers to cater the entire length of issues that disrupt social functioning. Performing Arts is a way of life for some, recreation for others and entertainment for all. Only a comprehensive analysis of different dimensions will help understand the whole picture. This article explains the importance of using role play, drama, theatre, dance, music, poetry and films in social work. The paper discusses the role of performing arts in social work practice and in strengthening individuals, groups and communities in better social functioning.

**Methodology/Approach:** Secondary data in the form of journal articles, books, and videos aids are used. Personal interview through questionnaire, and telephonic conversation are also a part of this paper to analyse the use and importance of performing arts with social work. The approach of the paper is exploratory in nature aiming towards finding new facets for enhancing the scope of social work practice.

**Findings:** Different examples of various facets of performing arts depict that such a methodology is helpful for the client at individual, group and community level and it also helps social workers in sharpening their skill set. Role play acts as an important technique to strengthen counselling among social work students whereas dance movement therapy acts as a non-verbal cue to unexpressed emotions and on the other hand music is a blend powerful enough to evoke feelings as well as subside them. Art making therapy sessions give a colourful, playful and secure environment resulting in positive outcomes with a good mental health.

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## Introduction

Human well-being is wider than we perceive it to be, and is a product of a healthy mind. The broad concept of human well-being encompasses health, relationships, career, recreational activities, social, political and economic environment. Human well-being is the very foundation of human psyche, an entire physical being is a reflection of the unconscious, the subconscious, and the conscious mind. The Human psyche is versatile and therefore, the key to unlock the totality of minds of various individuals is also versatile and diverse. Everyday experiences, technology, audio-visual media, colours, music, and our surroundings continuously affect our mental health. Religious, cultural, social systems surrounding us continuously affect our behaviour forming a reciprocal relationship. A multitude of events and experiences define man as a social being. Performing Arts plays an important role in our day to day lives. Forms of entertainment we run to, to break through a hectic schedule belong to the category of art. Performing arts is also used as a strategy by various corporate organisations to market their product. Art in the form of music, dance, murals, drama etc. has always played an integral part in the lives of human beings. It is a two-way process embracing the performer (artist) and the spectators. Not just a source of entertainment, but these various facets of performing arts also act as an important factor of human well-being. Even though the technology is at par nowadays, dance, street plays, theatre, music, and puppetry are the most traditional form of visual and audible media available to mankind. Over the years, these forms are used for conveying folklore, native stories, cultures and traditions. Performing Arts is rather a social forum engaging people in masses and in various lengths, creating an unconscious effect on their minds. Therefore, it necessitates social workers to fashion competent response techniques. Also, it becomes necessary for social work professionals to be multifaceted in their practical as well as educational endeavours.

Social work is an evolving profession, and requires adaption of new and innovative techniques and strategies assisting individuals with existing and newly emerging set of crises, that hamper their social functioning. Social work draws its theoretical base from social sciences like psychology, sociology, political science, etc. to offer assistance at individual, group and community level. Different methods, theories approaches, models assist at micro, mezzo, and macro levels to rectify social functioning. Not only social functioning, but social work prepares individuals to realise their needs and empower them to bend the administrative, legislative structures in fulfilling their demands. Apart from traditional six methods, a vast range of specializations like psychiatric social work, human resources, family and child, geriatric social work, criminology, rural and urban community development merge under the parlance of social work. An extensive discourse, like social work, requires continuous upgrade to assist individuals, groups, communities coming from varying

backgrounds. Performing arts is one such dimension. Social Work should encourage these alignments in theoretical and practical use for its sustenance. A multifaceted approach requires exhaustive research and creative mergers to cater the entire length of issues that disrupt social functioning.

Performing Arts is a way of life for some, recreation for others and entertainment for all, but something skips our attention. We may feel elevated after watching a movie or sad while listening to a song. Certainly, these affect us. Temporary exposures alter our emotions temporarily, permanent experiences alter them permanently. One of the most common examples is the type of clothes we wear, is generally influenced by the films we watch and the dressing style of the leading actors. This example counts as one of the visible cues. Similarly, our lives are influenced in various invisible measures. Therefore, only a comprehensive analysis of different dimensions will help understand the whole picture.

This paper will therefore discuss the role of performing arts in social work practice and in strengthening families, groups and communities in better social functioning.

## Confluence of Role Play, Drama and Theatre with Social Work

Role play, drama and theatre are important tools to strengthen the skills of social work students. Role play acts as an important technique to strengthen counselling among social work students, it allows to sharpen the skills in working with groups and understand family dynamics. Even though the text relating to the usage of role play is less, it is a widely used technique. In a study conducted by Dennison (2011), role play acted as an interface between social work students and theatre students, where theatre students performed the role of clients. This interdisciplinary interface helped students from both disciplines to sharpen their skills. MSW (Master of Social Work) and BSW (Bachelor of Social Work) students felt the entire exercise to be helpful in analysing real-life practice. The exercise initiated an analysis of strengths, weakness and skill set among the social work students (Dennison, 2011). Role play has a history of being used as an educational, as well as a practical tool. In another study, structured role play was used in field training. The research was conducted by The University of New England School of Social Work. In all, five structured role plays were recorded and presented as case studies. The evaluation of the process generated positive results, the general opinion was an enhancement of supervisory techniques and skills (Cohen & Ruff, 1995).

Augusto Boal was a Brazilian activist, theatre director and playwright. Through his writing 'Theatre of the Oppressed' published in 2000, he advocated theatre-based pedagogy, social work, therapy models to assist the marginalized, and

empower them in collaborative yet creative problem-solving methods (Halonen, 2018). Image theatre, from the Theatre of the Oppressed, is a method where participants present themselves in the form of a statue, depicting oppression of some form. In this process, participants analyse, align their personalities with different characters, critically evaluate and exhibit creative responses. Forum theatre is described as community-based theatre in 'Theatre of the oppressed'. It is usually performed by the members of the community confronting problems like oppression, marginalisation etc. In this form, the entire play is performed numerous times asking spectators to pin-point and freeze scenes where they see oppression. Invisible theatre is enacted at public places to invoke maximum intervention and provocation by the onlookers. Readers theatre, on the other hand, is where the actor reads lines from poems, short stories to depict oppressive life realities close to him/her.

Dana Ranguay, a social worker, after her training in playback theatre in New York, established "Red Threads of Peace Project" and used playback theatre techniques to treat patients with cognitive disabilities, victims of severe trauma, bullying using creative response for problem solving (Halonen, 2018). Playback theatre, a form of theatre propagating real life-based performances is spontaneous in nature. In Cuba, in March 2000, playback theatre was relatively new and an effective community building tool. It motivated people to share and reflect upon their experiences and promote social change. Playback theatre acts as an answer to the feelings of depression and anxiety arising from isolation and rejection from society (Fox, 2007).

Street Plays popularly known as *Nukkad Natak* in Hindi are an important ingredient in social work. It is a creative technique performed at public and community platforms, and is useful in depicting various societal conditions and social messages. A group of 5-10 people accumulate together at a market place or a busy complex and use catchy phrases to attract the crowd, thereafter a prepared act is performed illustrating a social message. It is a time taking process requiring dialogue preparation and extensive practice.

In order to understand the importance of street play in social work, the opinion of two social workers were taken using a questionnaire.

Respondent A is a professional social worker and has worked in various lengths as an intern and a volunteer with different organisations. She shared the following on the importance of street play in social work.

*"From my personal experience as street play performer, I believe that art is a form to connect with people using characterisation. Since marginalised communities do not have access to internet and television, they are not aware of government schemes, laws and their rights. Therefore, street plays can be helpful*

*for creating awareness. I believe that as social workers we are working for the upliftment of people, hence are obligated to adapt creative arts or every possible approach needed to do the same."*

Respondent B pursued her master's in social work from Lucknow University and presently aspiring for a National Exam. She has worked as a volunteer with well-known organisations.

*"As a street play performer, myself I am assured that street plays are the most creative and interactive way to spread awareness, it acts as the easiest tool to convey the message by engaging the target group. I feel that street plays offer a way of engaging the target group with social worker making the entire process hassle free. Ditching the traditional pen, paper method and engaging the target groups through street plays will touch them personally and aid them in their liberation."*

The above description represents the pros of using street play with social work. It develops a personal understanding between the groups involved, whereas the target group is continuously encouraged to perform, leading them to introspect their own circumstances.

## Relevance of Dance, Movement and Music in Social Work

Dance is an art form close to almost every civilization, festivals, marriages. Any kind of celebration feels incomplete without dance. Colourful dresses, music, extensive use of body and face is capable enough to express joy, fear, disgust or anger. Various folklore and native tales are often communicated through dance, almost every nation has a national dance. Therefore, such a brilliant and an exuberant facet of performing arts is at the disposal of social

workers to enhance their practice and initiate better human understanding.

Dance Movement Therapy is often used as a therapy which uses dance and movement to help people having physical and mental health issues. "Dance Movement Therapy is based on the premise that thoughts, feelings and the experience of self are expressed through the body and the movement. It is a relational process that integrates the emotional, cognitive, physical and social aspects of self."<sup>1</sup> Dance is an amalgamation of music with bodily movements. Dance movement therapy acts as a non-verbal cue to unexpressed emotions.

In a study conducted by Nancy Toney (2008), among Egyptian Muslim women, uses dance movement therapy, the conclusive results depicted expression of intense emotions, memories, experiences and stories. Various social interactions, and experiences are emotionally analysed and portrayed physically using cognitive creativity (Toney, 2008).

<sup>1</sup> www.dmtac.org accessed on 06/07/2020



Sarah Roche through her personal experience as dancer, and a teacher shares that dance and movement act as a supplement to physical expression and helps in increasing the possibilities of expression (Roche & Heinonen, 2018). A spectacular example is of a case study done by Akhila Vimal C (2017), with Ability Unlimited Foundation. This foundation is based in New Delhi, where an Indian classical dance form Bharatanatyam is performed by 'differently abled.' Performances are choreographed where wheelchair male dancers perform the rigorous steps while the deaf female dancer take visible cues to perform their part. On stage dance programs are organised to boost the feelings of an individual identity, self-worth, and self-confidence among participants (C., 2017). In another example, flamenco, a well-known Spanish dance form, has therapeutic benefits when used with victims of trauma. Different facets of flamenco work on the acceleration, directness of movements. A research study was conducted among 32 patients of trauma, in which 16 were included in the experimental group and 16 in the control group. The first session of intervention revealed positive outcomes in terms of health, interpersonal resonance and the intensity of physical pain. Due to a small sample size, the overall results are only suggestive but flamenco as a therapy was successful in evolving self-efficacy, strength, self-worth, while working on themes of positive body image and gender identity. It aided the victims of trauma to become self-aware (Koch et al., 2019). Another similar example was set in a research study conducted on 120 participants suffering from minor depression. The experimental group (dance training group<sup>2</sup>) and the control group were divided uniformly with equal number of male and female participants. The participants from the experimental group received dance and movement therapy for a period of twelve (12) weeks. The results of the study presented positive development among the participants of the experimental group. The dance and movement therapy also induced positive results on the physical and psychological health of the individuals suffering from minor depression. The author of the article also believes that dance and movement therapy is helpful in curing nervous breakdown, severe pain, post- surgery pain, anxiety, trauma and depression (Akandere & Demir, 2011). Hannah Beach is a social worker actively using dance with differently abled youth and children. She helps them come-up with their own choreographies, and helps them explore their identities, values, beliefs and also stereotypes (Roche & Heinonen, 2018). Flash Mob is a famous notion particularly used in the context of dance, usually performed at community forums. Diverse themes of women empowerment, gender identity, racism, discrimination can be conveyed through flash mob performances.

Performing Arts is often used by social organizations as one of the tools for social change. For example, Neha Bhatnagar is an Indian classical dancer trained in Bharatanatyam.

<sup>2</sup> Experimental group is referred to as dance training group in the article.

She is using Arts for social change since 2012. Through performing arts, she is working on wholistic development of girls from urban slums in New Delhi and Gurgaon. Sarvam Foundation offers more than ten (10) dance forms including folk dances like Chau, Bhangra etc, and promotes Indian Classical forms of dance and music. Over the years Sarvam foundation has succeeded in empowering the girls and offer them opportunities to portray their talent. Apart from performing arts, tuition classes, and diets plans are conducted to meet the educational and nutritional needs of girls. The Shakti initiative led by the Sarvam Foundation gave the beneficiaries an opportunity to perform on an international stage. Through Milapfest, these little dancers showcased their talent in Poland and Georgia. They got an opportunity to learn different cultures, histories and behaviour.<sup>3</sup>

Performing arts has played a major role in enhancing self-worth and confidence among these girls, it has given them a sense of identity, dignity, and disciplined their lives as an individual.

Girls are now aware of social and environmental causes of gender equality and preservation of water; they feel driven towards having a career. Overall, this foundation has helped in development and strengthening of these girls as individuals.

From the aforementioned examples, it is quite visible that dance as therapy is now gaining momentum, practitioners from multiple fields are taking initiative towards social change using this art form. The Dance/Movement Therapy shows that creative and innovative prospects applied using the correct technique could mould individuals. Dance Movement Therapists closely observe the movements of their patients and help them bring the unconscious to their conscious level while recording their relationships, choices, and desires etc. during the therapy sessions. Dance Movement Therapy is also widely used in hospitals to assist patients improve their health and reduce physical pain.

Dance and music are closely related. A slight vibration in a mundane surrounding has the ability to alert our brain. Music, same as dance, also has a cultural, regional, and national history, indigenous hymns and rhythms. Music therapy is an amalgamation of lyrics and musical instruments like guitar, violin, drums etc. Different sounds evoke different emotions therefore, music therapy is a creative blend of scales, sentiments and lyrics accompanied with instruments, to shape a composition. Indian form of music also signifies a dynamic use of various 'ragas' (scale) and 'rasa' (emotion.) This blend is powerful enough to evoke feelings as well as subside them. Some specific scales are believed to control the systolic and diastolic blood pressure, reduce stress, anxiety, and amplify

<sup>3</sup> Based on a telephonic conversation. Data gathered from [www.sarvamfoundation.in](http://www.sarvamfoundation.in) and <https://www.facebook.com/milapfest/videos/1327857027410283/> - accessed on 12/07/2020

satisfaction, and optimism (Hedge, 2017, p.31). There are different types of genres, and compositions which have the ability to attune the environment accordingly. "Music is known to engage brain areas such as the mesolimbic area and the nucleus accumbens, the reward centre of the brain, which is known to be involved in real-life emotional experiences. Music alters psycho physiological parameters such as pain perception, relaxation, blood pressure, and respiration and heart rate" (Hedge, 2017, p.32).

Writing of lyrics enhances verbal skills, and communication patterns. The therapeutic effect of music therapy provides an effective way of dealing with a behaviour problem, feelings of fear, isolation and withdrawal. Music Therapy soothes the mind and helps children having the aforementioned issues. Combined use of social work and music therapy portrays a significant example of success in a hospital setting. It has helped distant family members of cancer patients to become more sensitive and support each other. In one such case study, combination of social work techniques with music therapy, helped the father to become more responsive to his daughters. It also helped a young boy to express his feelings of insecurity towards his parents (H.Slivka & Magill, 1986). A number of instances claim the benefits of music therapy when used with patients dealing with chronic diseases. Promising results of music therapy has motivated various mental health professionals and social workers to use music therapy in their practice.

## Integrating Paintings, Art, Murals, Drawing with Social Work

Writing and drawing techniques also have a part to play in expressing underlying feelings. Often, when words fall short to express underlying feelings, paintings, and drawing make the process easier. Painting and drawing sessions are successful in attracting children. Such sessions are widely used by social workers, especially while working with children.

To analyse the mental health of children, a school-based art therapy was conducted with 45 children over a period of three years. Various portraits were made by children during the session. The results stated that art therapy helped them with feelings of anger, sadness, stress, and allowed them to feel more calm, confident, secure, relaxed, and be happy. Art Therapy improved their behaviour and helped them to manage anger. Participants shared that art therapy helped them think, express, share, be confident and learn. The art therapy sessions gave a colourful, playful and secure environment resulting in positive outcomes with an improve in their mental health. These sessions assisted children to overcome antisocial behaviour, excessive anger, dissatisfaction. Thus, the significance of art therapy is well established. It is a silent expression of emotions (McDonald, Holttum & Drey, 2019).

Placards, banners, often used during protests, belong to the art making category of expressive arts. Art making is a collaborative effort of initiating communication, awareness and education. In various instances stigmas are represented using this method. Don Stevens is an art therapist; he employs a group work practice of creating visual art with clients experiencing health-based issues (Heinonen, 2018).

David Moxely, a social worker states that art making strategies has helped people facing oppression, survive and become reliant (Heinonen, 2018). Michaelle Jean Foundation on the other hand, uses art making to increase community mobilising, social change and creativity. Similarly, art making activity is used by various community organisations to construct a friendly environment, healthy relationships, bring social advantages through justifiable changes, mobilising collective efforts (Heinonen, 2018). Paintings and art making are rather a popular method used by various non-government organisations. The session is generally arranged in the form of a competition inspired by a social theme for different age groups. The drawing is thereafter studied to analyse the emotional state of the participants. This technique yields successful results when used with children.

A well-known case of sexual assault was widely reported by various media houses in the year 2017. According to the Times of India article, a ten-year-old girl made a desolate sketch, containing an abandoned house, a child holding a balloon and a dress lying aside. The sketch helped the authorities identify that she was sexually assaulted by her uncle. The little girl hails from a broken family in Kolkata and was living with her aunt in New Delhi. According to her lawyer and the child right activist, the girl is now living in a children's home and attending school.<sup>4</sup>

In the aforementioned case we saw how a simple sketch helped in bringing justice to a child. Similarly, different facets offer different avenues to express feelings. It is a two-way process of learning and teaching. Designing such programs is also a work of art, it requires a creative mind to bring expected results. Activities organized by various practitioners should therefore align with the creative skill set in assisting versatile set of individuals, groups and communities.

## Role of Films, Poetry, Books in Social Work

Reading books, poems, watching films or even a short movie affects our life. Often in school, short stories are told to children as a way of teaching moral science. In a similar exercise several films, books, poems like 'To Kill a

<sup>4</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/delhi-10-year-olds-sketches-send-rapist-uncle-to-five-years-in-jail/articleshow/59134712.cms>  
<https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/rape-sexual-harassment-kolkata-girl-sketch-sends-uncle-to-jail/63176>



Mocking Bird', 'American History X', 'Joni', 'Man's Search for Meaning', 'Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone' came into focus. Some students expressed an increased sense of resilience, inner strength, some developed an upgraded perception of the role of women and the entire concept of women empowerment, some highlighted the importance of music and the role it plays in harnessing hesitant emotions.

Quoting a native example, a student emphasised on the use of poster, murals, paintings and its role in winning votes in favour of a political party while others improved upon understanding of human growth and their role as a social worker (Cadell, et al., 2005). The entire process helped students realise the role of arts and the part it plays in shaping our day to day actions.

Creativity and imagination assist in exploring experiences of trauma, illness, anxiety, confusion and enables them to be communicated. Art based techniques are helpful in behavioural approaches. In another exercise, social work students were expected to write poems about their field work experience with children. The aim of the exercise was to analyse the level of attachment, experience, emotions and enable them to be self-reflective. The entire exercise became an insightful and a learning journey for the students (Furman, Coyne, & Negi, 2008).

Art in Recovery (Air), a project gives a total of 210 examples of employing expressive arts with social work. This collaborative process engages the community to come together in production of creative pieces conveying common struggle, oppression, and exhibiting their decision-making power through supportive group work. (Moxley, Cannigan, & Washington, 2012). Leaving Homelessness Intervention Research Project (LHIRP) started in 2000 and ended in 2010 made extensive use of arts to recover the trauma, loss and struggle confronted by women in Midwestern USA. The project made use of photographs, photovoice images, poetry, songs music, portraits, collages, and story-telling to initiate recovery, wherein later these women presented themselves at community forum to share their experience (Moxley, Cannigan, & Washington, 2012).

Books, films and poetry are available in different genres from fictional, comedy to autobiographies. The autobiographical element represents a personal experience or a private event. Writing a personal event in the form of a metaphor is known as poetry therapy.

"Poetry Therapy is the use of the written or spoken word having therapeutic goals to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, couples, or groups. A type of expressive arts therapy, poetry therapy promotes growth and healing through expressive writing activities and through the reading and facilitated discussion of literary material. The term, "poetry therapy" encompasses interactive bibliotherapy,

journal therapy, therapeutic storytelling, film, as well as performance poetry."<sup>5</sup> Poetry therapy instigates the clients to see their life in different perspectives, to characterise themselves in a way they want to. In one such example of a state hospital setting patients were introduced to a poetry therapy session. The first session was to impart basic mechanics of poetry writing, the second phase included selection of mutually accepted themes and the third session included writing, reading, reflecting poems congruent to their circumstances. One gentleman through this session realised that dependency on other patients and hospital staff has become a personality trait. As the session progressed different individuals experienced self-realisation which helped them express their feelings in a better way. The session created a mutual understanding among the patients and also with hospital staff.

## Implications of using Performing Arts in Social Work

A multitude of examples from drama and theatre, to poetry and films, portray a diligent use of Performing arts with social work. Dance and music therapy, films, poems, paintings, books and different forms of theatre, drama and role play imply a strength based constructive approach, by exploring various avenues of expressing anxiety, oppression, fear, isolation. Working towards the development of individuals and communities by introducing diverse techniques of expression using an arts-based skill set. Different forms of art propagate group activities leading to strengthening of interpersonal relation, group activities develop a sense of team work and unity among its members therefore, group work and community work acts as a connecting link between the two. Socially driven art is a powerful asset for captivating the marginalised communities in expressing their adversities. In one such article the author views the use of poetry, dance, drama, drawing and music therapy with the patients suffering addiction. Among the various assets, catharsis took the centre stage as one of the benefits of group activities. Author tracks the stages of development among the individuals and opinions that creative arts provides an aesthetic front to the feeling of shame and disgust among the addicts. It is way of going closer to self-understanding and transforming oneself to an asset from a liability (Johnson, 1990). Another article on a similar theme exhibits a natural relationship between creative arts and therapy. The author believes that expressive arts with therapeutic approaches stimulates growth, catharsis, confidence by initiating risk-taking. It helps connecting to the unconscious leading to the development of new insights and conflict resolution. Most of all, the author points to the flexibility of using creative arts with all age groups from primary to old age. The employability of creative arts is with children as well as with adults (Talerico, 1986). "Traditionally understood as a form

<sup>5</sup> <https://poetrytherapy.org/> - accessed on 06/07/2020

of personal or cultural expression, it may seem obvious that art is inherently social, and that documentary, in particular, is socially engaged. Thus, collaboration between artists and social workers would inevitably strive to contribute to social change, albeit through different strategies” (Wehbi, McCormick & Angelucci, 2016). Socially engaged arts encourages creative thinking, empowerment at individual and community level, consciousness-raising and critical reflection among beneficiaries leading to a shift in social and behavioural attitude. In a process of using art-based techniques with the Sure Smart programme, engaged women who were mothers. The women in the group expressed their personal lives by performing and telling stories. The entire process was perceived to be rewarding and cheerful by the group of women (Foster, 2012).

Social Group Work is one of the primary methods of social work. Social Workers use group work to identify several qualities like leadership, risk-taking etc. among the members. Group work also holds immense importance in community organisation. Generally, a peer group is formed by the practitioners to inflict desired outcomes. Various workshops and training sessions are conducted with the selected group to equip them at managing extreme situations.

From all the instances mentioned throughout the article, it is quite evident that expressive art therapies are a potent tool for conducting group therapies. Performing Arts has proved to be an important element of human well-being. Being a group activity, an earnest effort to align performing arts with group work will breathe life into both arts and social work. Group therapies develop a sense of respect, empathy for other members in a group. It improves interpersonal relations among the members and the therapist, provides gainful insights, and develops the feeling of trust.

## Conclusion

A wide variety of art forms have an important part to play in human well-being. Any paradigm of performing arts allows the people fluent manifestation of their choices, frustrations, and emotions. Dance, theatre, drama, music, etc should also be used by social workers for helping their clients in professional practice. The emotional expressions of various individuals experiencing low self-esteem can be studied only if the practitioner uses the right kind of approach. Awareness about different laws, rights, lacks among numerous communities. Themes, feelings of anxiety, isolation, self-worth can be realised using arts with communities to affect desired change. People living below poverty line are best suited target group for social worker to inflict change using this creative platform. Influencing minds and hearts of people requires a skill set which social workers are best equipped with, therefore the use of creative arts acts as an asset to engage communities. Either social workers can take up the role of therapists or collaborate with creative arts

therapists to broaden the horizon of social work practice. An entire range of people involved in this helping vocation and those getting professional training can benefit themselves. It is an effective tool for proactive strengthening of people. Use of creative arts is not only beneficial for the service users but also for social workers, it instigates critical thinking among the practitioners urging them to plan activities serving the required results. It is a method that probes social workers to achieve their target employing different techniques. Everyday professional case work or community practitioners come across numerous clients and situations seeking separate solutions. They expect to find answers to their problems, a century old approach will not seek a satisfactory solution. Various art teachers are harnessing themes of community engagement, group and personal development, social justice and social action through art. Whereas, the art therapists are initiating healing using art-based strategies. Even though social workers hold a centre stage in such processes but the lack of linkage and practice techniques between the two, often holds back social workers to contribute at art-based platforms. Therefore, a continuous modernization is required to cater modern problems. One must look for the role of social work, both as an academic discipline and as a professional practice, in such captivating endeavours. Social work practitioners can become the light bearers and initiate such charismatic amalgamations.

The classroom education and field work practice have to continuously align different dimensions to the professional practice. Creative arts are not only a dimension but an entire discipline in itself. Various countries even India offers courses and degrees in performing arts. Nowadays, performing art therapies are widely used by psychologists and counsellors as a part of their practice. It is high time for social workers to identify the importance of creative art therapies and include them as part of the curriculum. It is an effective tool to enhance their skill set and develop a versatile perspective to the number of situations they face. Social Work practice should welcome such novel approaches to preserve and sustain its professional pace, and to help it grow and develop. The aim of social workers is best served when the horizon of their approach to help the needy broadens. Therefore, the social work response force is suggested to look forward towards initiating this amalgamation to help its diverse range of clients and the sustenance of the profession.

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The Editorial Board had used the Urkund – a Swedish anti-plagiarism software tool which is a fully-automatic machine learning text-recognition system made for detecting, preventing and handling plagiarism and trusted by thousands of institutions across worldwide. Urkund is GDPR compliant with privacy by design and an uptime of 99.9% and have trust to be the partner in academic integrity. <https://www.orkund.com>] tool to check the originality and further affixed the similarity index which is {4%} in this case (See Above Annexure-I). Thus, the reviewers and editors are of view to find it suitable to publish in this Volume-13, Issue-1, January-March, 2021

## Annexure 1

Submission Date	Submission Id	Word Count	Character Count
15-Feb-2021	D97621900 (Urkund)	6451	43003

**URKUND**  
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[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290523021\\_Socially\\_Engaged\\_Art\\_and\\_Social\\_Work\\_Reflecting\\_on\\_an\\_Interdisciplinary\\_Course\\_Development\\_Journey](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290523021_Socially_Engaged_Art_and_Social_Work_Reflecting_on_an_Interdisciplinary_Course_Development_Journey)  
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<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/A-Challenge-to-the-Social-Work-Profession-The-Rise-Kim/cfc313fb895783458dd6bb3536eea577aac01565>  
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Instances where selected sources appear: 20



**Reviewers  
Memorandum**

**Internal Assessor Statement:** The is based on an appropriate theme as a very less number of studies are available on theme. The paper is vital in nature providing views on the chosen theme. But inclusion of first-hand data would have further improved the relevance of the study.

**External Critic (National):** The paper has cited a good number of references, which will be helpful for the reader in case of in-depth study in domain. The paper provides the basis for the further study in the area by using primary data.

**Outer Reviewer's (Global) observation:** The title of the paper is quite interesting and unique as it discusses the role of performing arts in social work practice and in strengthening individuals, groups and communities in better social functioning.



Vidushi Srivastava and Sayantani Guin  
"Performing Arts and Social Work:  
Initiating Creative Amalgamations"  
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<https://doi.org/10.18311/gjeis/2021>  
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 **Conflict of Interest:** Author of a Paper had no conflict neither financially nor academically.

**Editorial  
Excerpt**

The article has 04% of plagiarism which is the accepted percentage as per the norms and standards of the journal for the publication. As per the editorial board's observations and blind reviewers' remarks the paper had some minor revisions which were communicated on a timely basis to the authors (Vidushi and Sayantani) and accordingly all the corrections had been incorporated as and when directed and required to do so. The comments related to this manuscript are noticeably related to the theme "**Performing Arts and Social Work**" both subject-wise and research-wise. This article explains the importance of using role play, drama, theatre, dance, music, poetry and films in social work. The approach of the paper is exploratory in nature aiming towards finding new facets for enhancing the scope of social work practice. The findings revealed that a wide variety of art forms have an important part to play in human well-being, for instance Role play acts as an important technique to strengthen counselling among social work students whereas dance movement therapy acts as a non-verbal cue to unexpressed emotions and on the other hand music is a blend powerful enough to evoke feelings as well as subside them. Overall, the paper promises to provide a strong base for the further studies in the area. After comprehensive reviews and editorial board's remarks the manuscript has been categorised and decided to publish under "**View Point**" category.

**Acknowledgement**

The acknowledgment section is an essential part of all academic research papers. It provides appropriate recognition to all contributors for their hard work and effort taken while writing a paper. The data presented and analyzed in this paper by (Vidushi and Sayantani) were collected first handily and wherever it has been taken the proper acknowledgment and endorsement depicts. The author is highly indebted to others who had facilitated in accomplishing the research. Last but not least endorse all reviewers and editors of GJEIS in publishing in a present issue.

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