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## Social Work Education in Malaysia and Indonesia: History and Development

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### Abstract

This paper gives an overview of the brief history and current situation of social work education between Malaysia and Indonesia. This paper highlights social work education practice, issues, needs, and challenges in those two countries. The issues identified to be regarding the development of social work program in Malaysia and Indonesia includes western influence, professional, colonization, multicultural, and governance issues. The issues and difficulties raised in this paper provide insights to implement further input to develop and improvise social work education programs in Malaysia and Indonesia. Both countries faced similar issues and challenges with social work education programs. However, they also have two separate disputes to overcome. Therefore, it is vital for both countries to work and focus to overcome the problem according to their necessity.

**Keywords:** Social Work, Social Work Education, Social Work Practice, Education, Malaysia

### Introduction

#### *Social Work Education*

According to the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) (2014), the definition of social work is a practice-based profession and academic discipline that promotes social change, development, social cohesion, empowerment, human liberation, social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversity, and engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. Social work evolved in a number of countries to assist individuals, families, groups, and communities in enhancing their individual and collective well-being and improving respect for human dignity and human rights in general (AASW, 2015; Greene & Schriver, 2017; Sjoberg et al., 2015; Parker, 2020). According to Parker (2020), social work practice is designed to address problems in society and assist individuals to enhance their skills and acquire the ability to use their own resources to resolve problems. As defined by the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and IFSW, social work is a practice-based profession and an academic field that directly deals with individuals, groups, and communities, and that tackles the numerous and extremely complex interactions between people and their environments to promote social change and development, social cohesion, individual empowerment, and individual liberty (Faruque & Ahmmed, 2013; Zuraiju & Omar, 2020). On a similar note, Papouli (2014) also

underlined that social work is a practice-based profession that requires a student to acquire theoretical and fieldwork skills in order to obtain values, skills, and knowledge in the conduct of the social work profession.

Historically, social work education programs were established in western universities before the turn of the 20th century. There has been a significant increase in the primary initiatives of social work in Europe and North America that have been oriented at alleviating poverty, unemployment, and other social problems (Midgley, 1997; Noble, 2004). Countries such as the United States and England have identified the role of social workers as an indispensable profession to help develop the nation (Sajid et al., 2020). In a closer scenario in Asia, South Korea's social work education program was first established at Ewha Woman's University in the middle of the 20th century (Han & Lim, 2014).

As our globe becomes progressively smaller as a result of globalization, international social work and interfaced cooperation have emerged as critical components of professional development as well as enhancing the welfare of individuals worldwide. Globalization and increased complexity in the social scene in the world have brought demands for change in social work service for the community. Therefore, this paper would like to highlight the history and development of Social Work Education between Malaysia and its neighbour country, Indonesia to present a window of opportunity and inspiration to mutually enhance their own capability of social work education.

## **World History of Social Work**

### ***Developing countries***

In developing countries, social work has been incorporated into the middle-class education system since the mid-20th century (Nikku, 2011). According to Midgley (1997), the rapid rise of social work programs in developing nations throughout the mid-20th century initiated a new dimension. Societal work services that used to be more like charity work are considered as less relevant to new social challenges (Sinnasamy, 2006). Thus, social work education in Asia Pacific nations (mainly developing countries) must respond effectively to the structure and content to improve the quality of social work graduates (Noble et al., 2013).

The concept of social work in Vietnam first emerged in 1986, when the country began its path of economic transformation. However, social work education began in 1995 when the Ministry of Education and Training approved two higher education institutions to teach social work as part of a broader social science program at those institutions (Hugman et al., 2007). While in India, the establishment of social work began in 1936 with the establishment of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). The establishment of social work colleges occurred gradually, with the establishment of the second institution, the Delhi School of Social Work, in 1946, followed by another under the Maharaja Sayajirao University in Vadodara, Gujarat, in 1950. Between 1950 and 1960, most schools of social work in India had faculty who completed their doctoral studies in the USA. Numerous studies have demonstrated the continuance of American influence over curriculum and issues relating to the adaptation of Western social work concepts to Indian culture (Pulla & Kay, 2017; Lawani, 2020).

On another note, social work education in Bangladesh began under the Pakistani regime. The development carried two objectives: (1) developing professional leadership in the solution of

acute and large-scale social problems, and (2) criticizing the operation of existing social welfare structures in response to various human needs and guiding future development programs. A three-month introduction course in social work was initially offered in Bangladesh (then known as East Pakistan) in 1953. Following that, professional education in social work was started at Dhaka University in 1955-56 as a nine-month training course in Community Development and Medical Social Work. Thailand's social work history and development of social work were also unique. In Thailand, two universities offer courses in social work. Thammasat University began this program in 1954 with the establishment of the Faculty of Social Administration. Correspondingly, the Faculty of Social Work and Social Welfare of a private university, Hua Chiew Chalermprakiet University also began offering a social work program in 1990; ergo, both institutions were quality accredited by the Thailand Commission on Higher Education, Ministry of Education. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that the social work training program in Thailand was actually first launched in 1942. It was a one-year program that was administered by the government, where the trainees were the government servants. However, the program was terminated in 3 years due to multiple obstacles.

### ***Developed Countries***

As previously mentioned, a significant role have to be enacted to further assist the community's well-being (Nikku, 2011) and the developing countries have seen considerable growth in social work in recent years (Noble et al., 2013). This growth has been paralleled with an increasing scholarship from developed countries such as China, UK and etc. Furthermore, contemporary work on social development and social work increasingly draws on work in developing countries, partly in response to developed countries' growing influence. However, the majority of countries in Western Europe and North America have clearly defined and detailed national standards of social work practice that may or may not correspond to the definition of social work education in developing countries (Faruque & Ahmmed, 2013).

Social work education in Ireland began in 1912 with a program in Civic and Social Work at Alexandra College in Dublin, designed to meet the growing demand for effective solutions to society's major social and economic issues (O'Connor & Parkes, 1984). The course was soon followed by a Diploma in Social Science in 1915 at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland and Diplomas in Social Studies at Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin in 1934 (Kearney & Carmichael, 1987). In 2020, five higher education institutions in Ireland (Republic of Ireland) presently provide professional social work education programs and qualifications approved to gain access to registration in social work. These programs are offered at universities in three of Ireland's largest cities—Dublin, the capital city; Cork; Galway and an Institute of Technology in Sligo. This reflects the increased demand for qualified social workers on a national and regional level in Ireland. In China, for instance, social work-study was offered at a few universities, including Nanjing's Yanjin University. However, during the 50s and 60s the political movement saw social work subject service the capitalists being forced to eliminate from the university curriculum. Social work education and training in China developed much more slowly than in other countries, when the government implemented an Open Door Policy in 1978, sociology teaching was resumed and paving the path for social work to be reintroduced to higher education (Law & Gu, 2008). Today, social work education in China is rapidly expanding.

The first program of social work education in South Korea was established at the Ewha Womans University in 1947. Since then, other South Korean universities (e.g. Kangnam University and Seoul National University) have established social work departments. In general, Korean social work education can be divided into three stages: (1) the Department of Social Work era (1950–1960); (2) the Department of Social Welfare era (1970–1980); and (3) the Department of Family, Society, and Welfare era (1990–current).

Contributions from experts working for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the early stages of social work education have had a significant impact on the development of social work education. These countries, which came from a variety of political backgrounds and social difficulties, regardless of whether they were develop or developing countries, took the initiative to establish social work education in order to address social problems that had surfaced through education. Through academic courses and field education, social work education aspires to create effective and competent practitioners for the profession. Malaysia and Indonesia have also participated in this endeavour and were not left behind. The growth of social work education in Malaysia and Indonesia differs in terms of the educational structure, curriculum, and government funding. Hence, we would like to see the direction of social work education in Malaysia and Indonesia and the differences between both countries in order to reform and improve the system, curriculum, and social work educators.

## **Social Work Education Practices in Malaysia**

### ***History***

Social work has been recognized as one of the possible solutions to tackle social problems such as teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, illiteracy, and unemployment in Malaysian society. Recognizing these emerging social problems, the government strives to strengthen the social work profession in order to promote positive social change as well as addressing problems to increase the well-being of the population. Initially, social work services in Malaysia were formed through a collaborative effort by the government, voluntary organizations, and the extended family system. Additionally, the rural-urban migration phenomena have transformed our social-cultural structure which led to a change in traditional family patterns and loosened networks for support. The vulnerability and resiliency of these families have been tested by disturbances caused by violence, chronic illnesses, and disabilities (Hatta, 2009).

The social work service was traced from 1912. According to Baba et al (2011), a special department was created to attend to the well-being of migrant workers by the colonial administration. The service back then was deeply embedded within a social welfare paradigm rather than that of social work services (Baba, 2002; Kee, 2007; Sinnasamy, 2006). This can be seen in Malaysia's Social work education history where the Department of Social Welfare was formerly established in 1946 to tackle the social problems of displacement, juvenile delinquency, and poverty (Hatta & Saad, 2018). Previously, the concept of social welfare was introduced by the British Colonial Administration as social work as early as the 1930's to cater to the well-being of the immigrant labour from India and China. Social work services were first intended to assist the needy through financial assistance for the needy, probation programs for juvenile delinquents, protection homes for women and girls, and residential care for the disabled and the aged.

Social work began without a formal school program. Due to rapid industrialization which resulted in various social problems, it was important to have higher education to foster a social worker who knows the basic principles of social work education. Initially, social work education formally begin at the University of Malaya in Singapore in 1952 (Yasas, 1974). Malaysia launched a premier social work program at the University of Science Malaysia (USM) in 1975, which is the sole program as a member of the IASSW resulting from the United Nations Conference of Social Welfare Ministers to ensure that its officers received professional training.

Since then, the number of social work programs at various institutions has grown rapidly, influenced by community demands (Ali, 2005). Subsequently, education for social work in Malaysia slowly makes its way into becoming a formal training or program within Malaysian universities. In response to the country's accelerating socioeconomic development and the emergence of social problems, several universities are incorporating a loosely structured social work curriculum within a more established field.

Table 1

*List of Malaysian Universities with Social Work Education program (2020)*

| <b>University</b>                        | <b>Name of Program</b>                                 |
|--|--|
| Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)          | Bachelor of Science (Human Development)                |
| Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)          | Bachelor of Social Work Management                     |
| Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA) | Bachelor of Social Work with Honours                   |
| Universiti Malaya (UM)                   | Bachelor of Social Administration                      |
| Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)     | Bachelor of Social Sciences (Hons) Social Work Studies |
| Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)     | Bachelor of Social Sciences with Honours (Social Work) |
| Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)          | Bachelor of Social Work                                |
| Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)          | Bachelor of Social Work with Honours                   |

(Source: Zuraiju & Omar, 2020)

The rapid growth of social work programs in recent years has generated concerns about curriculum design discrepancies and a shortage of qualified and experienced social work educators. Thus, in 2000, at the proposal of USM, these five universities (USM, UNIMAS, UUM, UKM, and UM) formed the National Joint Consultative Council on Social Work Education (NJCCSWE), which also included the Malaysian Association of Social Workers. This grouping was formed to assist less experienced social work programs in ensuring the quality and

uniformity of social work education in the country (Fuziah & Baba, 2013). Since its establishment in 2002, NJCCSWE has served as a platform for social work educators to debate topics involving social work education and training across the country. However, as an unregistered network, it lacks the prestige and influence of more established institutions in the United States, such as the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Therefore, public institutions and non-governmental welfare organizations hired social work educators in their own capacity rather than through the NJCCSWE to offer skill training for their social welfare workers.

It is critical for the Malaysian social work curriculum to meet not only international standards but also to foster the development of indigenous knowledge and practices (Jafar et al., 2018). To integrate the social work curriculum of Malaysia's institutions, it was suggested that these universities should adopt the curriculum that was outlined in Table 2 as a reference point.

Table 2

*Components of social work curriculum in Malaysia*

| <b>Component</b>           | <b>Focus area</b>   | <b>Examples/names of subject</b>   |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Foundational subjects      | Social sciences and humanities: understanding of human behavior and society, and contemporary social issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychology</li> <li>• Sociology</li> <li>• Human Development</li> <li>• Cultural diversity</li> <li>• Race relations</li> <li>• Policy and law</li> </ul>   |
| Social work core subjects  | Theories and skills: knowledge, skills, and values in social work   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethics and values of social work</li> <li>• Social work intervention: individual casework, family work, group work, and community work.</li> <li>• Social welfare and policy</li> <li>• Communication and counselling skills</li> <li>• Working in organizations</li> </ul> |
| Practice settings subjects | Area of services relevant to social workers   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and families</li> <li>• Health and mental health</li> <li>• Drugs and substance abuses</li> <li>• Disabilities</li> <li>• School</li> <li>• Elderly</li> <li>• Minority and marginalized community</li> <li>• Offending and criminal justice system</li> </ul>     |

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|                             |   |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Practicum/Field instruction | Crucial and integral part of professional training in social work involving placement and supervision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Minimum 2 placements with a total of 800–1000 hours on fieldwork practice</li> <li>•Minimum 1 hour per week of professional supervision</li> </ul> |
|-----------------------------|---|--|

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(Source: Tsui, 2004)

### ***Issues & Challenges***

Social work education in Malaysia is in a stage of transition. According to Turner (2017), multiple attempts have been made to bring the profession closer in alignment with the global benchmark through social work education and training in order to raise the standard of the profession. To ensure quality, social work education program must meet the standards set by the professional body in the field of social work provided by the legislative authority of the government. The absence of a professional organization given the legal provisions to regulate the development of social work education in Malaysia (George & Krishnakumar, 2014). Currently, the Malaysian Social Work Education program is accredited by the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA). Consequently, the development of the social work curriculum in Malaysia also lacks its own identity as the majority of them are significantly affected by western culture while Malaysia is a multiracial and multi-faith country that is progressively complex in nature. Thus, Malaysian social work educators need to understand local culture and modify the curriculum design (Ring, 2014).

As previously mentioned in Table 1, multiple universities have offered such programs/ courses at the tertiary level despite countless lecturers that are still lacking in academic qualifications and interpersonal skills in the social work field and less experience in fieldwork practice (Hua & Shafie, 2017; Gray et al., 2016). This situation leads to unhealthy development in social work education and services when unqualified lecturers or educators only have the ability to teach theories, taken from textbooks which are mostly designed for the Western communities, while social work is a highly sociocultural discipline that should be adjusted to fit the surrounding (Gray & Coates, 2010; Ornellas et al., 2018).

The high financial dependency of the university on the government has forced universities to generate their own financial resources by implementing collaborative programs with the industrial community in need of new programs to meet current development. This has caused the government and universities to detach, which induced the government to be unclear about the social work education program and its importance of it to Malaysians (Amin et al., 2019). This is in line with Farley's (2014) study that mentioned less support from the government to implement social work education programs. Undoubtedly, this triggered no specific act and development of social work curriculum in tertiary education (Chong, 2020) and create an unclear definition of social work in Malaysia social service. Previously, it has been mentioned that Malaysia have an issue involving the limited capacity of social work educators in public universities. A growing number of demands of social work educators in Malaysia are requested by most public universities. The current number of social work educators are inadequate to cater the numbers of social work students in Malaysia. Thus, there is a need to strengthen the capacity of social work educator in Malaysian public



universities (Zuraiju and Omar, 2020). When government fails to recognize the importance of social work in the community, social work education is seen as a course that has no privilege.

## Social Work Education Practices in Indonesia

### *History & Development*

Indonesia is faced with numbers of fundamental social problems such as poverty and malnutrition, unemployment, children's issues, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, natural and social disaster, disability, and the booming of older people. Thus, professional social workers' participation is necessary to cater to these social diseases (Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2016). The evolution of social work education in Indonesia has seen a series of historical moments in which different ideas about the goals of the social work profession have to continue to be debated.

According to Midgley (1997), social work education is available in secondary schools as well as universities and colleges. In Indonesia, social work education begins in secondary school, contrary to most countries where social work education is offered at the college or university level. It was established as *Sekolah Pembimbing Kemasyarakatan* (SPK) in Solo, Central Java, and was offered for four years. In 1950, these schools developed to train in theory and practice and the majority of the students are still the ministry of social affairs' staff. 5 years later, SPK were also establish in Jakarta, then in 1959, it were then set-up in Medan, Palembang, Semarang, Malang, Banjarmasin, and Makasar with a different name "*Sekolah Pekerjaan Sosial Atas*" (Social Work High School-SPSA). Prior to that, Indonesia extended the program by providing training centers as below:

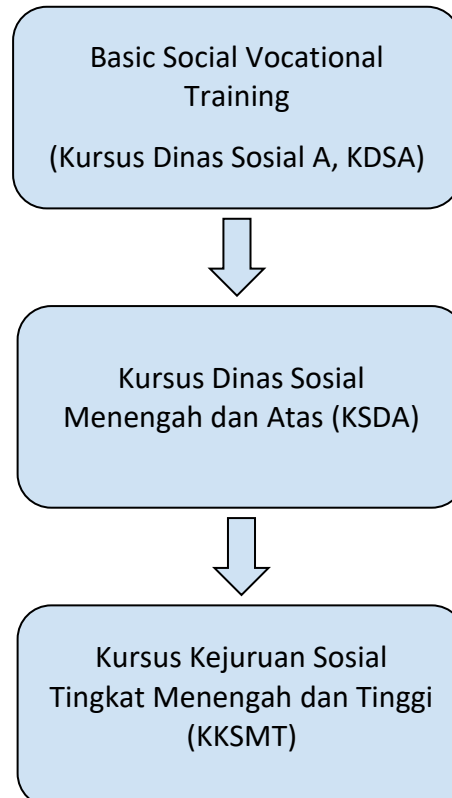


Figure 1: History of Social Work Education in Indonesia (Source: Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2016).

This course is viewed as a significant formal education and training center with the objective of enhancing the quality of human resources within the ministry of social affairs (Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2016). With the establishment of the Bandung School of Social Welfare in 1964, these training institutions were elevated to university status under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs, offering a three-year bachelor's degree and a two-year postgraduate program. Later that year, in 1976, *Sekolah Pekerjaan Sosial Atas* was renamed "*Sekolah Menengah Pekerjaan Sosial*" (Social Work Secondary School-SMPS). In 1994, the school was renamed *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK) Kesejahteraan Masyarakat* (Vocational Secondary School-Community Welfare), and the curriculum was integrated with other programs within the school, creating a major in social work/social care that takes three years of study.

On a side point, in 1981, Indonesia had only four universities and colleges offering bachelor's and doctoral programs in social work (Gray et al., 2014). The University of Indonesia, Bandung School of Social Welfare, University of Muhammadiyah Jakarta, and Widuri School of Social Work all offered these courses. By 2011, there were 33 universities/colleges providing programs in social work/social welfare (IASWE, 2012).

Table 3

*List of Indonesian Universities with Social Work Education program (2022)*

| <b>University</b>   | <b>Name of Program</b>  |
|---|---|
| <i>Universitas Indonesia</i><br>(University of Indonesia)                           | Bachelor of Social Welfare Science<br>Bachelor of Sociology             |
| <i>Universitas Negeri Padang</i><br>(Padang State University)                       | Bachelor of Sociology Education   |
| Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University<br>(State Islamic University of Yogyakarta) | Bachelor of Sociology   |
| <i>Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia</i><br>(Indonesia University of Education)      | Bachelor of Social Studies Education<br>Bachelor of Sociology Education |
| <i>Universitas Airlangga</i><br>(Airlangga University)                              | Bachelor of Sociology   |
| <i>Universitas Gadjah Mada</i><br>(University of Gadjah Mada)                       | Bachelor of Sociology   |

(Source: Universities' website)

Several initiatives have been launched by the Indonesian Association of Social Work/Social Welfare Education between 2010 and 2013, with the goal of developing social work and overcoming the problems that social work education in Indonesia has encountered. The activities include;

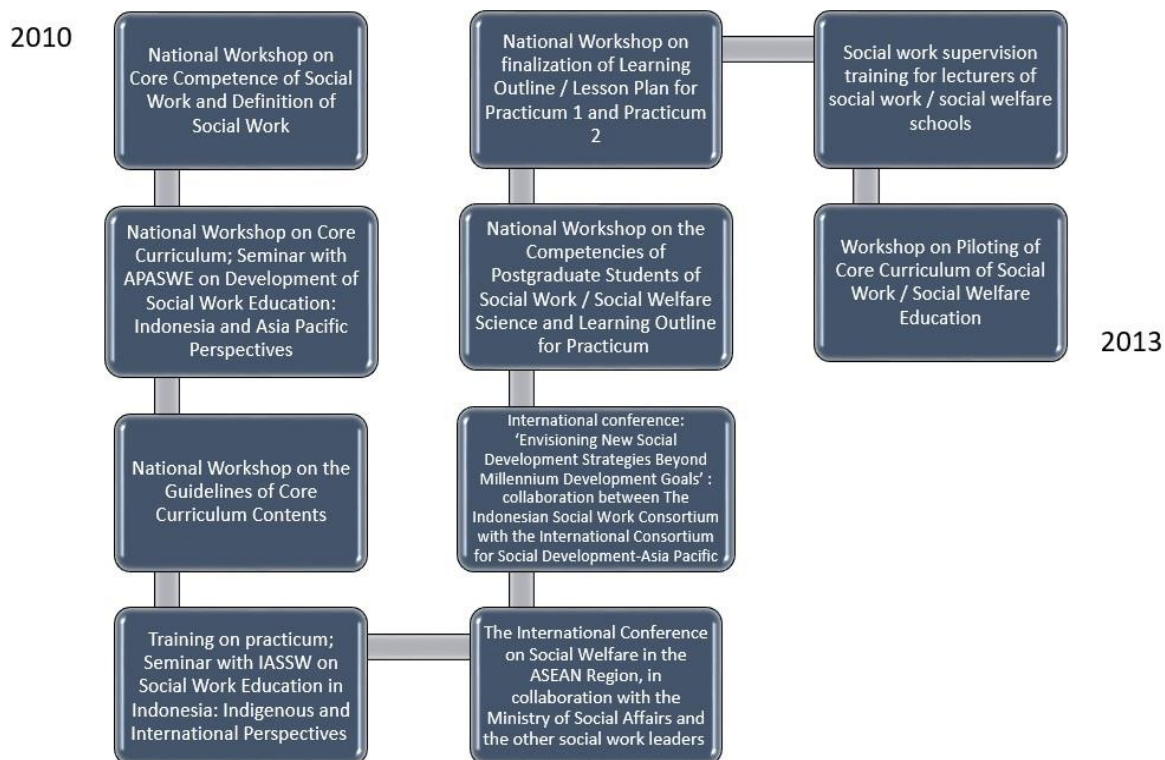


Figure 2: Initiatives by the Indonesian Association of Social Work/Social Welfare Education between 2010 until 2013 (Source: Nugroho & Santi, 2014)

The evolution of social work education and the social work profession is still striving to acquire maturity as a profession. Social work education needs a new direction in order to meet international standard in curriculum, fieldwork, indigenization, multicultural perspective, and distant education. Despite the fact that the Indonesian Association of Social Work/Social Welfare has undertaken a number of efforts, the country continues to face issues that must be addressed in a more efficient manner if social work growth is not to be jeopardised to a serious degree.

### **Issues & Challenges**

Similarly to Malaysia, social work education in Indonesia is undoubtedly varied. Indonesia's social work education has developed slowly and is still fighting to acquire professional standing commensurate with the country's development. This is due to their country's economic slow growth. Indonesia's social work education has progressed at a delayed pace equivalent to its national development (Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2016). According to Fahrudin (1999), social work education in Indonesia varies significantly in terms of program content, instructional methods, student admission requirements, study time, career outcomes, and the number of students admitted each year. The primary issue with social work education in Indonesia is the education system's struggle to achieve a professional standard and curriculum that is relevant to the country's needs (Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2020). There is also a shortage of human resources in social work education, particularly qualified lecturers and instructors for fieldwork.

Historically, Indonesian social work education has incorporated and adapted a greater number of models from Western social work education. Social work in Malaysia lacks its own identity as the majority of them are significantly affected by western culture while Malaysia is a multiracial and multi-faith country that is progressively complex in nature. In line with Shaffie's (2006) finding has illustrated the models in which welfare ideas and practices of the UK were diffused. However, no significant effort is being made to identify a core or supplementary social work curriculum that is more relevant to their national growth (Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2016). In order to make social work and social work education initiatives at the educational level more effective and influential, it is essential for government entities to develop specialized policies and modules that are more suitable to be implemented in Malaysia. The transfer of welfare knowledge, concepts, and practices can be accomplished by changing and adapting them to the local settings, requirements, and culture (Shaffie et al., 2020). Furthermore, the social work/social welfare education programs at public and private colleges are fairly similar. For example, a Bachelor's degree at the University of Indonesia requires 144 credit hours, which is comparable to the number of credits required for a Diploma at a private university. Organizations involved in social work education and the social work profession must take an active role and adhere to the Global Standard for Social Work Education and Training (IASSW, 2014).

To add to the complexity of this issue, the curriculum and fieldwork system differ in their academic (university administration) and professional (college) guises. The distinction between academic and professional curriculum and fieldwork is in the duration of fieldwork, supervision, and manner of evaluation. Fieldwork placement in university administration is a required subject for all social work majors. However, it is not routinely supervised by a university-based social work educator. This is largely owing to Indonesia's significant disadvantage in fieldwork education, which comprises a shortage of properly certified social workers to supervise students on field placements.

Finally, Indonesia is a multiracial country comprised of individuals of many racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Among the issues discussed is how to build and administer a social work program that is culturally relevant. It is worth wondering how the developmental programs can be applied to one's country if its own cultural context was ignored.

### **Conclusions**

Despite their distinct multi-cultural characteristics, Malaysia and Indonesia are frequently referred to as *serumpun* due to the majority of their populations being Malays or peoples of the Malay race. Both countries are mainly Muslim, have somewhat similar cultural norms, and both have recognized the Malay language as their national language. As you might expect, they had similar issues and challenges with the social work education program. Nonetheless, they also have two separate disputes to overcome. The history and development of social work education were also different from one country to another. Without strategic alliances and cooperation from higher learning institutions and government support, the future orientation of social work education in Malaysia and Indonesia would not be successful. It is important for both Malaysia and Indonesia to work and focus on their direction of social work education favourable according to their necessity.

Table 2  
*Issues and Challenges between Malaysia and Indonesia*

| Issues & Challenges      | Malaysia   | Indonesia  |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Western influence</b> | The development of the social work curriculum in Malaysia is also lacking its own identity as most of them are heavily influenced by the western culture (Amin et al., 2019).                              | In the beginning, social work education in Indonesia was influenced strongly by the American model with their social work curriculum (practices, curriculum and etc.) (Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2016).            |
| <b>Professional</b>      | No professional body was established in Malaysia to regulate and monitor the development and implementation of social work education (Amin et al., 2019).  | The major issue with social work education in Indonesia is the education system's struggle to establish a professional standard and curriculum that are relevant to the country's needs (Shaw & Ow, 2019). |
| <b>Colonization</b>      | Malaysian social welfare system and social work education were influenced by the British administration (Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2016).  | Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch and the Japanese which had no impact on its social welfare system and social work education (Fahrudin, 2011)  |
| <b>Multicultural</b>     | Social work service is also under pressure to serve a commitment toward improving the well-being of multi-faith society in Malaysia that is progressively complex in nature (Baba, 2002).                  | The social work education program is challenged in teaching cultural sensitivity to social work students (Louro, 2019).  |
| <b>Governance issue</b>  | Less support from the government to implement social work education programs Sirat (2009), nonetheless economic progress was correlated to the social work education in Malaysia (Fahrudin & Yusuf, 2016). | Social work education in Indonesia is not supported by economic progress (Louro, 2019).  |

It is essential for Malaysia and Indonesia to investigate a variety of approaches and then devise one that satisfies the requirements and goals of local professionals without watering down the fundamental social work concepts, virtues, and integrity. In order to effectively solve the difficulties associated with the social workers and social work education, Malaysia and Indonesia has to have an accurate understanding of both its strengths and limitations.

However, the professionalization and protection of the title of a registered social worker will only be meaningful to marginalized individuals and vulnerable groups if the profession eventually demonstrates the ability and competence to safeguard, provide higher-quality services, and bring about positive life changes for the underprivileged. To drive social work education in Malaysia and Indonesia on the right path for the future, all of the relevant stakeholding bodies within the social work profession and the allied educational sectors need to demonstrate their commitment to the advancement of social work in Malaysia and Indonesia. It is necessary for the National Joint Consultative Committee on Social Work Education to play an important role in the process of exchanging information and constructing social work curriculum while ensuring that quality is maintained.

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