

# Book Review

## Doing Social Work Research

Author: Roger Smith

Year of Publication: 2013

Publisher: Rawath Publications, Jaipur

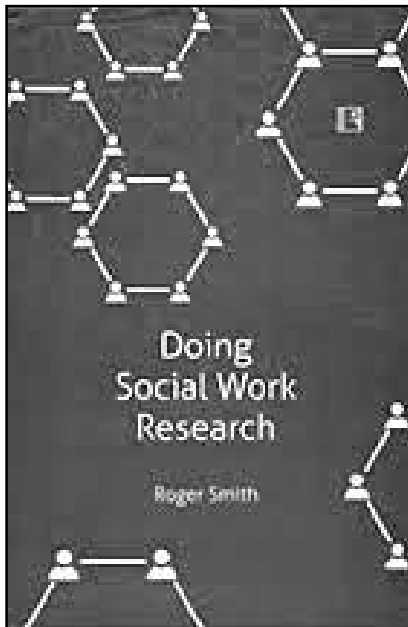
ISBN: 978-81-316-0589-9 (HB)

Rs. 695/-

---

\* Dr Ashok Antony D'Souza

---



Despite Social Work Research being regarded as one of the auxiliary methods of Social Work Profession, there is a huge dearth for literature that is capable of effectively addressing the philosophical as well as practical issues confronting the field. What has been written or deliberated upon is often borrowed or adapted from social and developmental sciences. In such a situation, the book 'Doing Social Work Research' authored by Smith makes a bold attempt to address a genuine and long-standing need of a profession that has huge academic and practice implications.

The author of the book has cut out for himself a simple agenda in writing this book – “to enable intending researchers in social work to prepare the ground and carry out their work” (p. 10).

However, the contents of the book show that the writer is clearly aware that it is an injustice to the profession and an underestimation of the caliber of the professionals to straightaway begin with the definitions and process of Social Work Research. Just like a good researcher, the writer expends lots of energy in explicating that the Social Work Research is as complex and complicated as Social Work itself. Further, he goes on to show the interactive relationship between academic enquiry and practice. Thus, he discusses the issues relating to methodology and methods of social research against the backdrop of contested concepts and issues confronting social work education,

---

\* Associate Professor, Dept of Studies in Social Work, Rani Channamma University, Belagavi, Karnataka, India. Email: ashnith2005@gmail.com

practice and research today. He finds the common ground to address all the related ideological and practical issues of Social Work Research in its values and demonstrates how research projects in Social Work can be emancipatory to the profession, professional and the client system. The major strength of the book is the examples and illustrations of research projects taken from author's own experience as a researcher.

**The major contents of the book include:**

A comprehensive overview of social work research methods

Detailed guidance on 'how to' carry out research in social work

Illustrative examples of research practice from personal experience

Effective links between core social work values, purposes, methodologies and research practices

Thus, the book is a rare resource for social work researchers, educators, practitioners and students who are confronted with many theoretical and operational issues in approaching and conducting Social Work Research. Only drawback of the book is that it draws mainly from author's experience in Britain. However, it can act as a motivating factor to someone from India who is as competent and committed as Smith to write a similar book for Indian readers.