Department of Social Work
University of Kashmir
BEST PRACTICE OF DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Title of the Practice:

Enhancing employability of students and promoting faculty development through involvement in multi-sectoral engagements for developing appropriate skill sets.

Objectives of the Practice:

- The practice aims enhancement of required social work skills in students leading to better employability and also promotes engagement of faculty with various critical stake holders leading to better greater expertise in research application, monitoring and evaluation of intervention.
- The department gives thrust to the research that promotes and facilitates the evidence based practice model helping faculty and scholars to create knowledge that responds to the regional and local contemporary social challenges.
- The practice aims to serve various stakeholders like GO/NGO's, by helping them to receive evidence based monitoring and evaluation in their interventions.

Context of Practice

The engagement of the practice helps in developing competent, effective and ethical social workers who have the desired ability to respond to the contemporary socio-economic realities of our society. Furthermore, the disconnect of the faculty with community and industry negatively affects the teaching pedagogy especially in the discipline of social work. Therefore, engaging in research on contemporary socio-economic issues and evaluating various public policies for their effectiveness

and allowing the students to engage in field work on socially relevant and academically suitable interventions areas is of utmost importance. This allows the students to explore and study various specializations in the field of Social Work.

The Practice

The best practice of department of social work emancipates from two main activities i.e Fieldwork as part of curriculum and Research. The department of social work focuses on diverse research areas. The research especially being done for understanding the effectiveness and efficiency of various governmental policies in primarily being done by the department. The department has functional understanding with various line departments like: Department of Education government of J&K, Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, J&K, Directorate of Health, J&K. The functional MOU's with these departments are helping them as following:

Evaluation of various Programmes: Program Evaluation entails understanding program objectives, selecting appropriate evaluation methods, and analyzing data to assess effectiveness of interventions by government at grassroot level. The faculty and students interpret findings and use results to inform decision-making authorities, this leads the continuous improvement and better outcomes in programs for individuals and communities.

Identification of limitations and challenges faced by NGO's/GO's during implementation of Programmes: Identifying limitations and challenges during program implementation involves recognizing resource constraints, stakeholder resistance, and unforeseen contextual factors. Addressing these hurdles requires adaptability, effective communication, and a commitment to create the flexibility in program design and execution.

Financial planning for future activities: Financial planning for future activities involves forecasting the resources needed to support various educational, research, and community engagement initiatives in future.
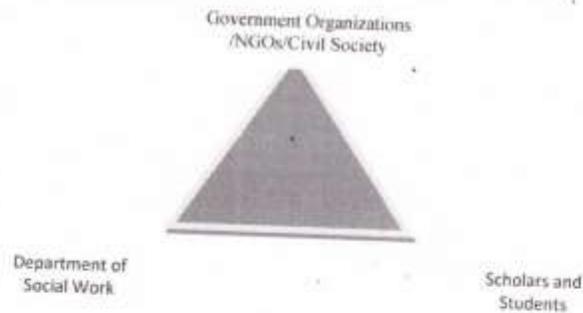
Social Inclusion: The research and fieldwork engagement in practice also helps in promoting social inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized sections of society. The evaluation of programs has reflected the patterns of exclusion. This way the fieldwork and research suggests inclusive policies for implementing agencies that address barriers to participation, providing support services for marginalized groups, and fostering a culture of respect and acceptance.

The research and field work of department of social work is helping faculty and students as following;

- **Doing research on key areas that society confronts:** The research on contemporary issues helps students and faculty to be aligned with recent and relevant studies.

- **Training of students through extensive engagements in fieldwork:** The in-campus and off-campus training on conducting fieldwork has generated responsive human resource. The students are able to blend the theoretical propositions with practice at field. For instance, the engagement of students in Participative Rural Appraisal helps them to gain impact and rapid assessment of needs and problems.

- **Community Engagement:** The engagement of students with the community is helping them to understand needs and objectives of people at community level. It also makes faculty and students more empathetic in their orientation. Since there is need to have a sensitive support structure in form of human resource for effective implementation of various governmental programs.

The community engagement is help in developing the human resource as sensitive one.

- **Collaboration and Networking**

Government Organizations
/NGOs/Civil Society

Department of
Social Work

Scholars and
Students

The practice model works in triad, wherein the engagements is manifold and ensures the learning and development of all concerned. This triad model is also seen as a mechanism for all stakeholders to make improvements in their routine activities. The continuous handholding of students in the field helps them to improve in various areas like communication data collection, data processing, data presentation, developing empathy and working with individuals, groups and communities. It also helps students to gauge the process of implementation of various programmes at grassroots level example the department recently conducted impact assessment of PMGSY in Kashmir division, wherein the engagement of faculty and students in the field helped them to unleash their academic potential and get insights about grassroot program implementation.

The faculty members are developing the skills of evaluating these policies and programmes, the stakeholders analysis with high regressive model are used which marks the understanding of new trends and paradigm in the field of social work research. The contemporary evidence based practice or study is also helping the faculty to generate the knowledge base globally to respond on the contemporary issues faced by society.

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Issues and Challenges Faced:

- The primary challenges of containing this kind of model are that it becomes difficult to ascertain the fieldwork in academic calendar of the university. There are some financial constraints in such practice, where in lack of flexibility become hindrance.

- The efforts of the department through field work interventions and research on vulnerable people often encounters problems. To be successfully achieving our objectives of creating the competent and ethical social workers through serious field work interventions and research, the department lacks appropriate means of transport and allied services. Given the difficult topography and hard to reach areas of intervention, the additional human and financial resources are desperately needed.

Evidence of Success

The social work education imparted at the department along with the research and consultancy assignment carried out by the departmental faculty promotes and encourages the creation of knowledge that promotes social work values and social welfare. The areas of field work training for students is based around independent interventions and with various national, state and community based organization working in the area of Public Health, Women empowerment, Community Participation, Rural/Urban development, Mental health and much more. Similarly, the research and consultancy work of faculty include some of the most critical areas for social work interventions like Mental Health, Disaster Response, Gender issues, Domestic Violence, Mental health, Ageing, Livelihood development, Rehabilitation and resettlement and much more. The evidences available clearly demonstrate the success of such initiatives

Links

- https://socialwork.uok.edu.in/Main/ViewPage.aspx?Page=Research_Projects

- https://socialwork.uok.edu.in/Files/f45bcdab-5a41-4b9b-8c18-9df1f163f480/Menu/FW_Report_2018_f65af659-be19-436c-ad72-c4de2c354f6b.pdf

- https://socialwork.uok.edu.in/Files/f45bcdab-5a41-4b9b-8c18-9df1f163f480/Menu/fieldwork_hyd_2023_32e818a1-db40-4052-a0d4-2ae1469b0e56.pdf