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## **Social Work Practicum and Supervision**

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*By: Kshyama Sagar Mehra*



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# QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

## SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM AND SUPERVISION

M.S.W.-5

Time: 3 Hours ]

[ Maximum Marks: 100

Notes: (i) Answer all the five questions. (ii) All the questions carry equal marks.

**Q. 1. Discuss the central themes in social work practicum.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-1, Page No. 2, 'The Central Themes in Social Work Practicum'.

Or

**Describe the role of supportive supervision in field work practicum in distance learning mode.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-12, Page No. 89, 'Course Teacher as Supervisor of Field Practicum'.

**Q. 2. Giving suitable examples from your experience, explain field work practice with communities.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-1, Page No. 2, 'The Central Themes in Social Work Practicum'.

Or

**Discuss social work practicum in education sector.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-15, Page No. 119, 'Tasks for the School Social Worker'.

**Q. 3. Answer the following questions:**

**(a) Discuss the international policies regarding professionalization of social work.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-3, Page No. 21, 'Global Standards for Field Education and Training'.

**(b) What are the common challenges faced by social work students undergoing field work practicum?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-3, Page No. 23, 'Problem Faced by Students Social Workers in India'.

**(c) Mention the ethical and legal issues in social work practicum.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-1, Page No. 5, 'Ethical and Legal Issues in Social Work Practicum'.

**(d) Explain the generalist and ecological modes of social work practicum.**

**Ans.** A generalist social worker would be sensitive to different cultures and be able to approach with varied skills. In families where the young girl child is given up to the temple in prostitution (*Devadasi system*), a social worker would serve as a social activist in promoting the rights of the girl child at the macro level. The social worker would also have to work with the family with sensitivity to the cultural needs. A generalist social worker also works with the girl child at the individual level. A social worker needs to have different skills to work with clients in urban areas and rural settings. A social worker from an urban setting would have to draw on a different repertoire of skills when working with clients in a village. The social worker may have to work through existing groups in the village *Mahila Mandal*/women's group and *Balayadi*/pre-school.

**Also, Add:** Chapter-1, Page No. 5, Q. No. 2 (CYP).

**Q. 4. Answer the following questions:**

**(a) Discuss the role and expectations of a social work supervisor in agency setting.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-12, Page No. 92, 'Role of a Supervisor'.

**(b) What is the philosophy behind correctional services?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-19, Page No. 134, 'Correctional Social Work'.

**(c) Enumerate the role of Anganwadi workers with pre-school children.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-15, Page No. 119, 'Role of Anganwadi Workers with Pre-school Children'.

**(d) Highlight the impact of stress on professional functioning.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 83, 'Common Stressors Leading to Burnout and Compassion Fatigue'.

**(e) Differentiate between evaluation and basic research.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-15, Page No. 123, 'Differences between Evaluation and Basic Research' and Page No. 125, Q. No. 3.

**(f) What do you understand by aftercare services in rehabilitation of offenders?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-16, Page No. 137, Q. No. 3.

**Q. 5. Write short notes on the following:**

**(a) Qualities of a supervisor**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-12, Page No. 92, 'Qualities of a Supervisor'.

**(b) Active listening**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-8, Page No. 65, 'Active Listening'.

**(c) Group conference**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-4, Page No. 34, 'Group Conferences'.

**(d) Social work practice in healthcare setting**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-14, Page No. 109, 'Social Workers and Community Health'.

**(e) Role play**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-9, Page No. 73, 'Tapes and Role Plays'.

**(f) Children in conflict with law**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-16, Page No. 133-134, 'Juvenile in Conflict with Law'.

**(g) Duties of a social work trainee in field work**

**Ans.** A social work trainer in field work develops and deliners training programs, assesses practioners skills, provides supervision, evaluates training effectiveness, stays uprooted on test practices, colloborates with professionals and maintains documentation to enhance social work practitioners competencies and improve service quality.

**(h) Field work in donor agencies**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-17, Page No. 142, 'Field Work in Donor Agencies'.



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# Sample Preview of The Chapter

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# SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM AND SUPERVISION

## SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM: AN OVERVIEW

### Social Work Practicum: Concept, Meaning, Nature, Importance and Scope



#### INTRODUCTION

A strong theoretical base is important for social workers. By applying the skills and knowledge of social work, the students will be more comfortable while working in the fields with clients. They can also comprehend the nuances of practical social work. Their skills will get honed with practice of working in different situations. Social work practicum help students in dealing with issues like administrative, legal and communication. It provides an opportunity to work with intake, supervision, case recording and reporting. Practicum is an integral part of undergraduate and post-graduate curriculum.

#### CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

##### **DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

Practicum is the practical use of classroom learning. It is also called field work and field placement. It may be six months or one year internship or may be of shorter duration. In other professions, it is also called internship and field experience.

Schools have different practicum programmes. Some arrange practical keeping in view the students' interest. Some schools also allow students to freely choose the field work, supervisor and the setting when he wants to work. Some schools define what the students are expected to do and learn in a practical setting.

Social workers use theoretical knowledge for social development. They use their skills, values, techniques and principles to help individuals, groups and communities in a complex network of social, economic, political, cultural and geographical factors.

##### **MODELS OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM**

During 1920-1960's, U.S. social workers used the medical model which make the diagnosis of clients'

problems, the causes of which were believed to be in the client. In this model, problems are assessed and treated. Genetics, diseases, early trauma, metabolic disorders and conflicts in the individual or the defences used to combat them affect an individual's emotion and behaviour. These problems were considered as mental illnesses and given medical labels. Such people need help and can be treated.

In the 1960s, U.S. social workers suggested that the environment played a crucial role in an individual's life and was a cause of the problems he faced. They said that a reform approach could change the clients' system brought needed services to clients. In India, such an approach was adopted to improve the life of *Balwadis* were established in areas that did not have it, to ensure that children were educated. Attempts were made to educate the children of *Balwadis*. For nutrition, the children were provided a snack or a mid-day meal.

Health care centres and family planning centres were set up in the area. Awareness was spread through Family Planning centres to motivate families to limit the number of children so that the quality of life would improve and reduce stress. In the ecological model, people are considered as part of the existing systems, like the family and community. The individual is helped to adjust with the environment. Social workers work for meeting the needs of people by the environment.

Individuals, families and small groups are helped to cope better with regular changes in life like growing up, birth, death, sickness, marriage and other happenings in life. Social workers identify the maladaptive patterns as people, families and groups interact with their environment and deal with them using appropriate approaches.

Social work tries to see that the environment reciprocates with the individual to fulfil the requirements through services and accessibility to the resources. When

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the landlord's son rapes a young girl from the lower caste the family blames her and keep the matter concealed. They stop sending their girls to school or to even work to keep them safe.

The social worker helps the family and the girl to deal with the emotional problem. The social worker may educate the families of the lower caste about their rights and help them communicate with the landlord or the media. The social worker would also work with the local government and see that laws against rape are upheld and the perpetrators are punished. Using the ecological model, the social workers work at three levels – individual and group, the environment and their interaction.

It will be easier for the students to work at the individual and family level. It is difficult to work with the community. The student can either accompany or observe the supervisor in action or can approach with caution. It is also difficult for a female student to confront dominant male members in the community. The students can approach activist groups working for particular causes or media group with suggestions and can learn from their experiences.

### THE CENTRAL THEMES IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM

The central themes can be divided in the following ways:

#### Preparing for a Social Work Practicum

A student considering field work placement should know his strengths, weaknesses and emotions that impede field work. Students should accept their expectations from the field placement, supervisor and what one expects to learn. The students should be ready for the upcoming events.

- The students need to know their role and position in the agency.
- They should develop relationships with other staff, the clients and field instructor.
- They should know and understand the agency and social work programmes staff that will help answer questions, deal with problems and crisis situation.
- They need to prepare a plan of action and managing time to avoid stress and overload.
- They should find out their learning styles and roles to take on.
- They need to decide what personal information should be shared with the staff.

The decision to be a social worker is the first step to become a professional social worker. It is a long process to build a professional identity and get affiliated to the

professional group is a long process. Practicum plays a crucial role in this process. Social work practicum helps the students in identifying the profession and in developing personal and professional boundaries. Field work offers scope to adjust to transitions and with variety of roles.

**Safety Issues in the Field:** Social workers face the threats to physical, emotional and mental safety. Social workers in the US face the second highest level of danger after police officers. Over the years the risk level has increased. Students have been threatened by clients, staff and other professionals. Identifying threats and taking precautions are required for effective functioning.

Students also face different types of sexual harassments, both verbal or non-verbal. Students need to document the details of the harassment, work achievements, find out other victims and directly approach the harasser to put an end to such harassments. Students can consult the agency or field work instructor or other resources to address the issue. In India, there are laws, but their implementation has been very difficult. Students do not work late into the night or work alone with a client or professional. Students should also go in pairs when visiting the client outside the house. In the case of any sexual harassment.

**Supervision:** Students should maintain open communication with the supervisor and be truthful about their actions, feelings and inhibitions to minimize the mistakes or its impact on the client. A supervisor may provide consultation or feedback. Supervision is provided by a seasoned social work practitioner. He imparts training and education with some level of authority. Supervision includes advising, consulting, understanding and helping. A student is not expected to know everything during practicum and he learns from mistakes made.

**Organization of the Agency:** There are different types of organisations. They have different values, objectives, philosophies and resources. Governmental agencies functions as per the state rules and they are more complex because of their rigid structure, conservative philosophy and larger salary.

Profit-making organizations generally have more resources. They are more flexible to change in body and use of cutting edge technology. Non-profit organizations depend on government for partial funding and employ a lot of volunteers. It may be based on a religion.

**Practicum with Individuals and Families (Micro Social Work):** Students learn interpersonal, administrative and professional skills during practicum. Skills are required for exploring the problem, feelings,

goal setting, termination and application of appropriate treatment. During field work, critical thinking or conceptual understanding is required to integrate theories and treatment strategies. Flexibility, self-initiative and risk taking are required in self-directed learning.

**Practicum with Groups (Mezzo Social Work):**

Practicum with groups can be cost effective. It will also be an efficient use of time, energy and skills. In group work, communication, education, mediation and negotiation skills are useful. Generalist, social workers may very well use group work for education or therapy at some time or the other even though many social workers may not primarily be group workers. Social work administrators use skills in conducting groups when they facilitate committees, work groups and supervise groups of staff. Students gain valuable skills in groups. Some models of group work and the role of the social group worker are given below:

**Social Goals Model:** It focuses on certain problems, interests and goals. Safety groups, parent-teacher associations, community development groups working on specific tasks and coalitions advocating for improved welfare laws work on this model. Social workers act as initiators, conveners, organizers, facilitators, advocates or resource persons in such groups.

**Reciprocal Goals Model:** These groups work on the basis of self-help, mutual aid in which members share experiences, support, ideas, solutions or their time. Anonymous groups on 12-step programmes, support groups for grief, caregiver and patient come under this group. Social workers act as facilitator, support, mediator and educator.

**Remedial Goals Model:** It is based on the principle group interaction that brings about change. Psychotherapy, marital therapy, trauma survivors and child abuse perpetrators group are some examples of this group. The social worker would be played the role of a therapist, clinician, educator or mediator.

**Practicum in the Community (Macro Social Work):** Some problems require a broader approach like new social policy, organizational change or community organization. They cannot be solved with micro and mezzo social work. Administrative social workers require skills such as budgeting, financial management, working with boards, organizational design, development and diagnosis, computer information systems, human resource management, networking, marketing and media relations.

Social workers require skills of programme development, fundraising, coalition, implementation and evaluation, planned change techniques, macro-level

advocacy, community analysis, inter-organizational planning, leadership development, citizen participation, task force membership development and retention, small group decision making techniques, economic development techniques and computer information systems.

Social policy analysts or lobbyists or elected officials need skills in policy analysis, management, advocacy, lobbying, social policy research, use of legal system and issue analysis techniques.

**Legal Issues in Social Work Practicum:** Social workers deal with legal issue for their clients, organization or themselves. Students should be aware of the legal implications of situations and activities related to courts and the law. It may involve testifying in court, filing petitions in the court, help in class action lawsuits, advocating or helping draft legislation and providing mediation.

India has lots of cases pending in the court and trial takes long time. Corruption has also affected the legal cases at police level or at the court. Money also influences cases as rich and influential people try to bribe.

At the end of the practicum, the student should close cases and projects. The students need to focus on knowledge, skills and values gained during practicum, and note areas of learning which they can pursue in the future. The students should evaluate whatever they have learned during the period. Also, they should take note of what they have contributed to the agency. The relationship with the clients should end to reinforce the professional role and boundaries. The students say specific goodbyes to all the staff. Clients should know their growth and encourage students to instill the confidence in them to conduct independently, while reassuring that they will always be there for them.

**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM APPROACHES**

In social casework, practicum students help individuals on a one-to-one basis. The job in case work ranges from counselling individuals to adjust their environments to suit their needs or to adapt to changing environments. In this approach, social workers may help women deal with joint family disputes, men deal with problems with landlords on the agricultural field, adolescents deal with emotional turmoil and enable members to work with stigma of the lower caste among many other issues.

In group work, the group worker facilitates different group activities to achieve various objectives. People are helped to develop in different ways through group processes. Group work is different in rural and urban

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areas. In urban areas, the group may provide information related to marriage, religion, career, sex, legal rights and art. In rural areas, the groups are oriented to provide basic necessities and education of bank loans, private enterprise, child health and government programmes. The Mahila Mandals or women's groups offer important information to women for social and economic improvement.

In group therapy, individuals with emotional, behavioural, or social problems are helped to overcome their problems through group processes. Many people can be helped at a time. The group worker has to understand the needs and feelings to facilitate the people in a group. Group therapy is used in self-help groups, schools and hospitals.

In family therapy, families facing problems in communication, behaviour, emotion and relationship are helped to overcome the problems. Generally, in joint families, the grandparents and siblings of the father, his wife and children have complex problems that need help. This can be used to deal with issues arising out of differences between parents-in-law and daughters-in-law, breadwinner's loyalty to mother and wife, marital conflict, childrearing, keeping tradition and modernism.

In community organisation, the students in practicum encourage and motivate the local community members to plan, develop, coordinate and implement programmes. The community organizers facilitate the change and in the process may enlist the help of the local panchayat or village elders to settle disputes. A social work administrator sets the objectives, analyzes conditions to provide services, recruits and supervises staff to form the organizational structure, and looks after the budget and funding of the agency. Most administrators work in the urban areas and it is very difficult for a social worker to be an administrator in a very rigid, rural, hierarchical structure.

**COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM**

Social workers in practicum may provide service directly or indirectly. In direct service, they have to do some administrative work, supervise at times, have a good knowledge of the resources and be a team player. In case of indirect service providers, social workers may take up some caseloads working as true generalists. Morales and Sheaffor suggested that the direct social workers need the following basic competencies.

**Use of self that is sensitive of one's limitations and capabilities:** The student should be aware of his strengths and weaknesses and should use his skills, values, knowledge in helping the client.

**Giving and receiving help:** The social worker has to understand the intricacies of the helping process. He has to know that the primary reason for his act is to benefit the client and not for self-satisfaction. While receiving help the client may be embarrassed, feel inadequate or find it de-meaning.

**Professional helping relationship:** The social worker has to maintain a positive relationship with client. It should be based on mutual respect and trust. The social worker has to be a genuine, warm and empathetic worker with a positive approach.

**Sensitive Approach:** Social workers have to understand the differences in culture, gender, age, religion, and disability. With proper understanding, social worker can understand the impact of the factors on the clients' social, emotional and behavioural functioning.

**Code of Ethics:** The social worker has to adhere to ethical practice of social work and provides the best possible service. He has to know the requirements for ethical practice. It is the public trust that grants professional sanction.

**Understand the behaviours of individuals and families:** Social worker should have biological, psychological, sociological and anthropological knowledge of individual and family. He should understand the behaviour, family and social structure, family and individual life cycles, human physiology, anatomy, growth, development and anticipated times of concern. Social worker should also have understanding about the impact of any event or situation on individuals and families.

**Gathering information on clients:** Since social workers need to gather information about individual, family and the community, he should know how to conduct an interview and good communication skills such as listening and questioning. The information can be used in the treatment phase.

**Analysis of clients' information:** Social worker has to analyse the information gathered to determine the problem for selecting appropriate treatment methods. Once the strengths and limitations are assessed, resources which are required have to be collected.

**Empowering the client:** Social worker should help the clients to understand and accept the problem and situation. He does not have to decide for the client and should empower the clients to make decisions and actively solve the problem. Assisting a client in clarifying a problem or resolving a conflict should not include deciding and functioning for the client.