

**Practices, priorities and challenges in
student mobility programmes for field
education: Developing supervision
framework for better outcomes**

International Project-IASSW



IASSW AIETS

Collaborative project done by:

**Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), India
University of South Australia, Australia
Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel**

2020-2022

Practices, priorities and challenges in student mobility programmes for field education: Developing supervision framework for better outcomes

Name of project collaborators	Institutional affiliation (During the time of project approval)	Role in the project
Dr Kiran Thampi	Department of Social Work, Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Kalamassery, Rajagiri P O-683104, Kerala, India	Project Coordinator
Prof Mona Khoury-Kassabri	School of Social Work and Social Welfare Hebrew University of Jerusalem Mount Scopus, Jerusalem, Israel	Collaborator
Sophie Diamandi	Course Coordinator and Lecturer: Master of Social Work Practicum Manager: Uni SA Community Centre Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences University of South Australia	Collaborator

I. Rationale and purpose of the project:

The research project titled ‘Practices, priorities and challenges in student mobility programmes for field education: Developing supervision framework for better outcomes’ tried to understand the strategies and models adopted for supervision by the Social Work departments in their student mobility field education programmes and its impact, as well as priorities and challenges for the same. The two research partners in this proposal (Israel and Australia) are having formal agreement and student mobility programmes for field education (Inbound and outbound) with the coordinating research partner in India.

In social work education, the internship or field placement is a primary method for providing students with supervised practice experience (CSWE, 2015). Even though the importance of supervision is widely acknowledged, there are considerable discrepancies in social work supervision in India (Bradley et al., 2010). Further, it was indicated that different supervision models for social work in India were not based on sufficient evidence or empirically tested (Gulalia and Subudhi, 2021). Along with the logistic planning, the important focus needs to be on planning and preparation of learning outcomes, faculty and field supervision process, measuring outcomes and evaluation methodology. With the lack of a social work council in India for setting standards in field education, this research project is keen on developing a context specific model for field supervision to support inbound mobility students as well as strengthening the capacity of faculty supervisors in India for better preparation and monitoring of inbound mobility students to India.

The project adopted a research design for developing the model and there were workshops conducted for capacity building of the supervisors as well as disseminating the findings of the research done. The research took the data extracted from three International offices, faculty members in field supervision, field supervisors of International mobility programmes and alumni members of student mobility programme.

II. Description of the process of implementation

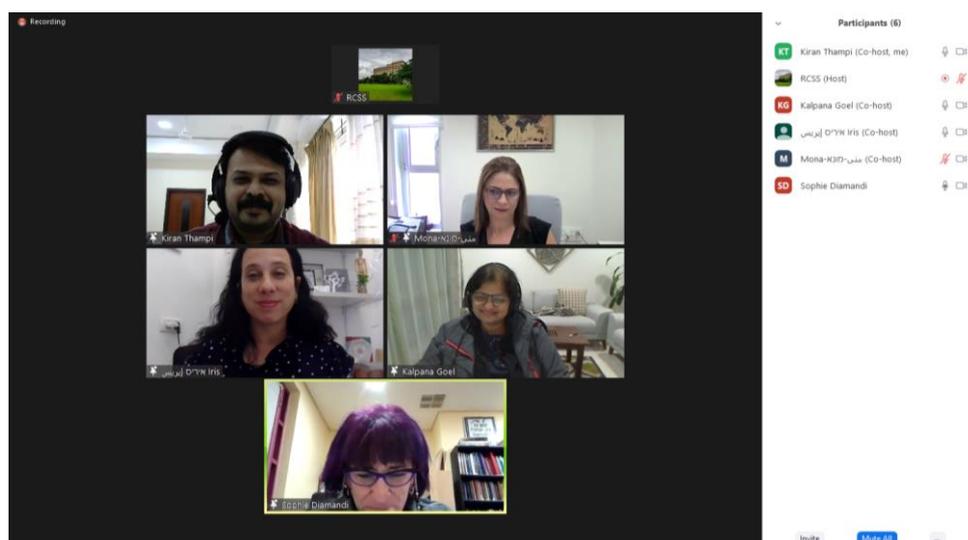
a. Initial planning meeting in November 2020

The project kick off meeting was organised in zoom and the project partners Dr Kiran Thampi, Prof Mona Khoury-Kassabri and Ms Sophie Diamandi participated in the meeting. The project implementation plan was presented by the coordinator and the team discussed the same and decided to go on with tool preparation for the research, obtaining IEC clearance, data collection, preparation of joint articles, conducting workshop for field work educators and final consultation workshop for the supervisors.



b. Planning meeting for International Workshop in August 2021

The planning meeting for the workshop to be held for field supervisors across the globe was discussed. Dr Kiran Thampi, Prof Mona Khoury-Kassabri, Ms Sophie Diamandi, Dr Kalpana Goel and Dr Iris Zadok participated in the zoom meeting. The meeting decided on the theme, resource persons and other logistics of the workshop.



c. Virtual International workshop on ‘Supervision framework in International Field Education’ in October 2021

Virtual International workshop on ‘Supervision framework in International Field Education’ which is an initiative of the International project supported by IASSW organised by school of social work, Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Kerala, India was held on 18th October 2021. Welcome address was given by Dr Binoy Joseph (Principal, Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), India), opening remarks was given by Prof Annamaria Campanini (President, International Association of Schools of Social Work), and the project introduction was given by Dr Kiran Thampi and Prof Mona Khoury-Kassabri (Project partners). Dr Fr Saju M D (Associate Professor, School of Social Work, RCSS) gave a session on ‘Supervision model for mobility students-Rajagiri Experience’. A panel discussion was held afterwards lead by Dr Fr Joseph M K (Head, School of Social Work, RCSS). Dr Shabtay Levit (Lecturer of Practice, Hebrew University of Jerusalem) and Dr Iris Zadok (Head-Field Work Division, Hebrew University of Jerusalem) presented about Supervision standards and practices in Israel. Dr Kalpana Goel (Academic in Social Work in the Academic Unit- Justice and Society at the University of South Australia) and Ms Sophie Diamandi (Project Collaborator and Adjunct Lecturer, University of South Australia) gave a session on Supervision standards and practices in Australia. The workshop information was publicised through IASSW website. The session was attended by 103 participants from 11 countries such as India, Israel, Australia, Nigeria, Poland, Italy, Oman, Canada, United States, Kenya and Ghana. The participants were either academic supervisors/field supervisors/field work coordinators/ international mobility coordinators.

OCT 18TH 2021 @ 2.30 PM IST

RCSS RAJAGIRI COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (AUTONOMOUS)

IASSW AIRTS

VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ORGANISED BY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK RAJAGIRI COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (AUTONOMOUS) INDIA

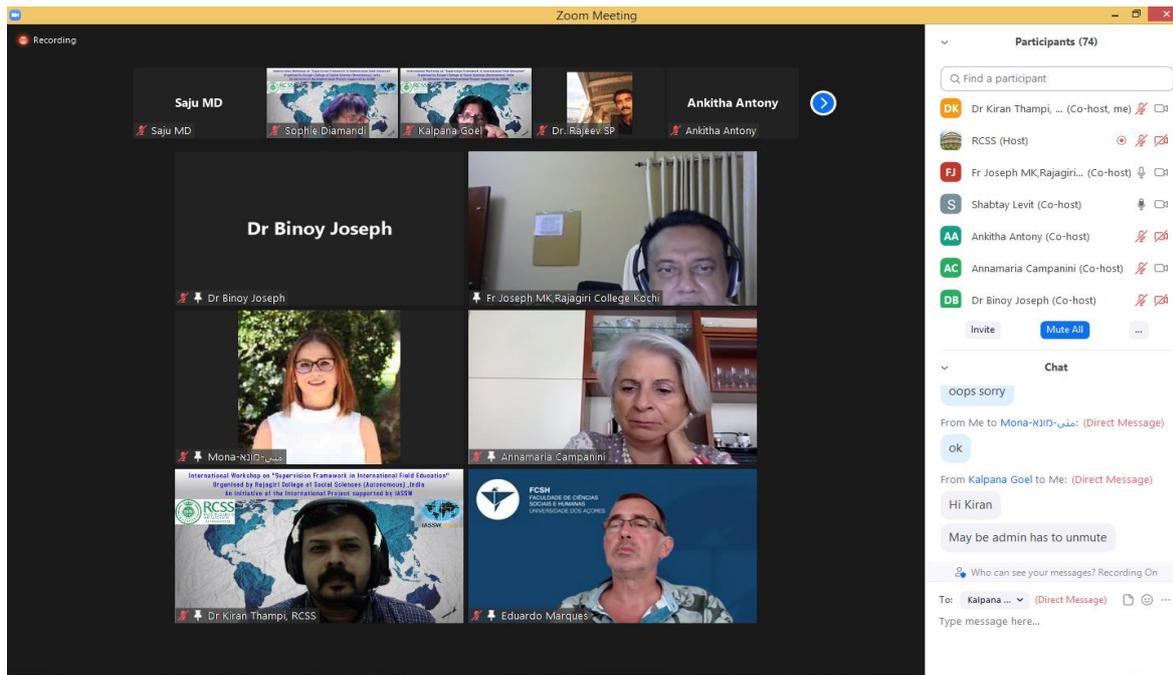
"Supervision framework in International Field Education": An initiative of the International project supported by IASSW

For registration: <https://forms.gle/QaTnFqV21wsvStWD8>

Contact: internationaloffice@rajagiri.edu

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 Prof Annamaria Campanini President, IASSW	 Dr Binoy Joseph Principal, RCSS	 Dr Fr Saju M D Associate Director, RCSS
 Dr Fr Joseph M K Head, Social Work, RCSS	 Dr Shabtay Levit HUJI, Israel	 Dr Kalpana Goel Project Co collaborator UniSA, Australia
 Dr Kiran Thampi, RCSS Project Lead, IASSW	 Prof Mona Khoury Kassabri, HUJI Project Collaborator, IASSW	 Ms Sophie Diamandi, UniSA Project Collaborator, IASSW
	 Dr Iris Zadok HUJI Project Co collaborator	



d. Research component

There were two research components for the project. The project team developed research plan and prepared the tools. The proposal got IEC clearance from three partner institutions and thus could proceed with the workflow. First research was conducted as part of this project with an aim to develop a field supervision framework for International students who come to India for their field practicum. This study took International students' perspectives who came for field work in India within the last five years. The second research was conducted with an aim to document the experience and perspectives from the faculty supervisors and field supervisors who are a part of supervision of students in social work from three project collaborators. The sample taken was the field supervisors with experience in guiding International students in their field work practice.

e. Publication in peer reviewed journals

The international project has produced two publications in Scopus/Web of Science indexed journals from the research conducted with due acknowledgement to IASSW.

1. Devassy, S.M., Thampi, K., Harrison, J., Scaria, L., Metzger, J., & Joubert, L. (2022). International Social Work: Cross-Cultural Supervision of Interns from the West in India. *The British Journal of Social Work*, bcac081, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcac081>.

Abstract: Social work practice in a global context requires an understanding of the cross-cultural nature of practice settings in local communities and globally. One step to developing this understanding of the internationalisation of social work education, including the student internship, is to incorporate supervision by local practitioners and educators. A qualitative interview study of fourteen social work students from Australia, New Zealand, Europe and the USA completing internships in the Southwest Indian state of Kerala revealed themes of increased practice knowledge, practice skills, understanding of cross-cultural values and ethics, critical reflection and research skills development as a result of reflexive supervision provided to them by practitioners in their internship agencies and faculty from their host and home

institutions. This challenging of views within one's own culture, promoted by supervision, leads to increased capacity to engage in critical anti-oppressive practice amongst social workers.

2. Thampi, K., Devassy, S. M., Goel, K., Zadok, I., Diamandi, S., Kassabri, M. K., Kuncheria, J. M., & Prahlad, H. (2022). Supervision framework for international field education in India: Shared knowledge and experiences of supervisors from India, Israel, and Australia. *International Social Work*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00208728221123165>.

Abstract: Along with the logistic planning, the important focus of international student mobility programmes in social work is on the field supervision process and measuring its outcome. Without a social work council in India for setting uniform standards in field education, this paper proposes a framework for field supervision to support inbound mobility students in India. The study predominantly explores the qualitative experiences of field supervisors from India, Israel, and Australia on fieldwork supervision. The themes evolved from the study are focused on the supervision process, strategies followed, challenges faced, and outcome measurement.

f. Capacity building Workshop on practice learning and supervision in social work

The capacity building workshop took place on 4-5 august 2022 and was organised by the Department of Social Work, Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Kerala, India. The resource person for the workshop was Ms. Avril McIvor, Director of Practice Learning, and Lecturer in Social Work, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh, UK.

4&5 August 2022

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

RAJAGIRI

An initiative of International Project, IASSW

IASSW NETS

Workshop on
'Practice learning and supervision in social work'
Jointly Organised by
Department of Social Work
Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), India
&
University of Edinburgh, UK

Prof Anna Maria Campanini
President
IASSW

Avril McIvor
Key Resource Person
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Inaugural Session

Dr. Fr Joseph MK CMI (Head, Department of Social Work) inaugurated the two-day workshop. During the address, he spoke on the need for supervision in Indian social work education and the need for FDP trainers in the domain of supervision. The sessions started with a virtual message delivered by Prof. Anna Maria Campanini, President, IASSW. Avril Mc Ivor, the resource person of the workshop facilitated the group and gave an idea about the two days' workshop. Fr Shinto Joseph (Asst Director, RCSS) expressed his view on supervision and conveyed his regard to the resource person for the workshop. The session ended with the expression of gratitude by Dr. Kiran Thampi, Project lead, IASSW.

Workshop Overview

This workshop was for those who are involved in social work supervision to social work students. It was a valuable opportunity for the faculty members and scholars to refresh their staff supervision skills and review their current practices. Participants had an opportunity over the two days to explore the frameworks and theory, which informed the process and task of student supervision, especially from the fieldwork perspective.

DAY 1:

The first session was an introduction session based on names/experience/role plans. The main objective of the session was to understand 'what the participants wanted in two days' workshop', 'how to achieve it' and 'how will the participants know they achieved it'. The activity helped to initiate a rapport between the resource person and participants. Charts and sketches were utilized to portray this activity creatively. The second session was a self-reflection exercise to demonstrate the supervision history of the participants and to elaborate on the achievements, limitations, and how they impacted the participant's knowledge and practice. The key concepts of power, authority, and understanding were explained throughout the session. The session was interactive and participants shared their experiences and opinions. The third session dealt with the question 'what is supervision?'. The session had group work exercises on the different models of supervision, different approaches to supervision, the purpose of supervision and the development of supervision working. The input was given by the resource person and the participants were asked to develop a simple, jargon less definition of supervision through group discussion. The session also had Dr Kiran Thampi disseminating the major focus and findings of the research supported by IASSW on developing a supervision framework for International students in India.

DAY 2:

The first session was a group exercise to make the participants understand the need for emotional awareness and pro-social modelling in supervision. Here the participants shared their simple definitions of supervision and were put for discussion. The second session dealt with art and social work in which the participants were asked to consider what worked for them in supervision and why; What didn't work for them and why. After the group discussions, reflections were made on supervision cycle identification. The third session dealt with the supervision cycle what are the benefits and consequences of different types of supervision. There was role-playing done by the resource person with participants and group discussions were also conducted. The session enlightened the participants on the consideration of the Supervisor, Supervisee, Agency, Service users, Identification, Analysis and motivating people

to change. The fourth session dealt with supervision contract and learning styles in supervision and its impact where the participants through practices and role-playing explored the aspect of power, gender, values, race, age, sexual orientation, and disability. This workshop was a purely practice-based workshop in which participants had the opportunity to undertake exercises and to reflect on their own experiences of supervision. There were group work, role-playing, and practice strategies to promote good practices in supervision and to overcome existing challenges in supervision practices. There were resources and materials for the enhancement of supervision skills, which were effectively utilized by the participants to understand how to handle students in the field supervision.

Feedback from the participants (Selected feedbacks are included here):

Participant 1: *“It was a very informative and interactive session with many group activities. These group activities and demonstrations gave me a clear understanding of the process of supervision. The case study presentation and its discussion in the group enhanced the competencies to disclose the failure of the supervisee for the fieldwork.”*

Participant 2: *“It clarified the role and responsibility of the supervisor in the process of supervision. Special appreciation for the efforts made by the resource person to come down the level of all the participants. This training enlightens me to revisit the formats and standards of our field education and make necessary changes. The hands-out given will be a useful material for further use”*

Participant 3: *“The sessions provided clarity on the roles of both the faculty supervisor and organization supervisor in student supervision”*

Participant 4: *“Sessions were very easy to listen and course was just right mix of good interactions. Practical demonstration helped me to learn more. Great presentation style with lots of opportunities to ask questions and talk about real life examples which all made for a really enjoyable and informative work shop”*

Participant 5: *“Workshop's theme was fresh and relevant. The role plays in particular were highly in-depth, and the information overall was really fulfilling. Most of the reading that the resource person offers is straightforward yet useful. The session provided us with first-hand knowledge of the strength and importance of practice education.”*

Participant 6: *“Despite the fact that there had been many seminars and discussions about field supervision, this was the first supervision training attended in an international context. We were able to comprehend global standards in practice, specifically Scottish standards of field work.”*

Participant 7: *“The two-day workshop on Practice Supervision and Learning was a reflective session which helped me to look into my supervising skills. As a social worker, I believe that supervision is a skill which could be used effectively in monitoring and evaluating individual, group and communities. Through different activities and practices, the workshop helped me in opening a new perspective on supervision. I learned the important elements to develop a supervision plan in the Indian context. A 360-degree understanding could be made from the supervision of the subject (supervisee). It also made me understand that the social work practice is unique and is highly dependent on the culture and context where it is practised, thus a concrete supervision model is impossible. Being a practitioner in India, I learned that the*

supervision needed the focus on a socio-economic development perspective and should help the supervisee in development”



III. Discussion of outcomes and/or feedback to the project

From the research study, researchers aim to have a comprehensive model for supervision of inbound mobility students in field education with the support of research partners who are directed by their respective social work councils. The research has developed a model for supervision by using the data provided by the faculty supervisors and field supervisors in Australia, Israel and India (Thampi et al.,2022). The model notes pre-departure orientation to the supervisee as a key process to be done by the home university which will contribute to the success of the whole field work process and specifically the supervision process. There needs to be consensus on standards between the supervisors prior to the field work and the arrival seminars needs to be organised on socio-political-cultural context by the host university for the supervisee to set the context. The model consists of the supervision process which include supervision contract, supervision contents, setting learning objective, planning supplementary tasks for reflective practice, providing feedback and documenting the supervision record. The model also discusses about the supervision strategies like preparing supervision plan document, Individual & Group conferences, faculty liaison and organising learning circles among the students. The model also has outcome measurements of the supervision process like assessment tool, gap analysis, formative & summative evaluation tool for measurement. The challenges in supervision also features in the model which explores the areas like time, cultural context, addressing the expectations of host & home universities and considering ethical challenges. This model will benefit the prospective international students preparing for the mobility to identify the process of supervision, challenges involved and the strategies to overcome the same. It will also help the social work educators and the supervisors to identify their role as

supervisors and the standards in supervision process for better outcomes for the mobility programme primarily in India.

This International project also aims at preparing the faculty members in India for strategizing the supervision for inbound mobility students. Two workshops were conducted and the first one was primarily to identify the standards in supervision across three partner countries. The discussion also motivated the participants to share their process and standards followed in respective places. The second workshop was a capacity building programme for the supervisors in India where a council for social work education is still not established to frame the standards. It was a programme organised to address the challenges and prospectus identified from the research. It was beneficial for the attendees who were faculty supervisors, agency supervisors, and the field supervisors.

This project in general will benefit policy makers, administrators, social work educators to strategically plan and document supervisory requirement in student mobility in India from other countries. Once the supervisory requirement contributes to the quality of field education, it will have more inbound mobility as well as collaborations and partnership between social work institutions in India and abroad for better cross-cultural learning.

As there are formal agreements between the research partners in this project, more student mobility programmes are already planned in the forthcoming years which will be supported by the experiences from this project.

IV. Conclusions

The project focussed on exploring the practices, priorities and challenges in student mobility programmes for field education and developing supervision framework for improving the quality of field education. Though the context of developing a supervision framework was the international student mobility to India, this framework also adds to the existing models of supervision which could be followed in field education in India. This project could be replicated in other countries to explore the varied practices and challenges in supervision for field education. This could be undertaken with special focus on those countries which still lack a social work council to establish and monitor the standards in field education. This is also important for any host institution (even though they have their own standards set by their respective councils) to explore the supervision practices and priorities of the home institution before they accept a mobility student for field exposure. Being good supervisors requires training in all the areas discussed in the framework and it needs special attention as it completes the cycle of learning in field education. This project proposes developing a manual of supervision which could be prepared from these insights and could be used as a guide for developing supervision models unique to the context and considering the mandatory requirements.

Acknowledgements:

We acknowledge the support given by the administration of the three partner institutions Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), University of South Australia and Hebrew University of Jerusalem. We would like to thank Prof Annamaria Campanini (President, IASSW) for her great encouragement throughout the project. We thank Dr David McNabb (Chair, International Project committee) and his team for directing us on each stage of this project. We also thank Ms Rashmi Pandey (Executive Officer, IASSW) for the support.

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