



Field Challenges Study

National Survey Report 2021

Purpose

The study was designed to capture the perceptions of students, field education coordinators/directors, and field instructors on the most significant challenges experienced in social work field education across Canada.



Goal

To contribute to the ongoing dialogue about improving practices and developing sustainable models of social work field education in Canada and beyond.

An online survey was designed to identify the most significant challenges in social work field of education.



155 respondents



3 open-ended questions

14 Likert Scale questions



Identified Challenge



Lack of preparation, support, and training

Burden of multiple responsibilities and roles



Communication and supervision challenges

Administrative challenges



COVID and online learning and practice challenges

Equity, diversity, inclusion, and access (EDIA)



Competition, unfair practicum placement selection procedures

Respondents experienced challenges and barriers or had negative perceptions in two areas: accommodation and accessibility, and financial compensation.

Out of 83 individuals who answered questions regarding learning outcomes and supervision and support, most had positive experiences regarding supervision and support, and many had positive experiences regarding learning outcomes.

Some students felt they received inadequate supervision in their field setting. It was believed that there should be more communication to improve the supervisory relationship. Field instructors and agency personnel indicated challenges due to lack of communication and support from the social work faculty personnel.

Discrimination based on race and cultural differences were reported as a significant challenge for some respondents.

Recommendations and Future Directions

01

Stakeholders in field education programs need to contribute to the development of innovative and sustainable models of field education.

02

The discussion of financial discrimination is also reflected in the broader profession as a whole and should be addressed and researched further.

03

Lack of diversity raises criticisms and calls for a critical discussion. There needs to be more specialized research, and systemic and institutional changes, to address these racial gaps.

04

Identify ways to increase diverse representation of respondents in future research on the state of social work field education in Canada.



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