

One Day Workshop on Stimulating Social Responsibility through Community Engagement in Higher Education

29th April, 2023

Background

A one day workshop was organized by Centre for Woman Studies , Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University on, “Stimulating social responsibility through community engagement in higher education”.

Engaged Learning is a type of education that put classroom skills and knowledge into practice while serving your community. Engaged learning extends education outside of the formal classroom through research, internships, experiential learning, and community based learning. To better understand the potential of engaged learning in improving student learning outcomes and encouraging students to pursue community research, a one day work shop was organized to develop the understanding of a community-based research .

Objectives of Workshop

1. Disseminate the findings of BKC project.
2. To develop understanding of CBPR methods.
3. Improving student learning outcomes through community research.

Workshop Session Outcomes of the workshop

Prof. Priyamvada Srivastava, Associate Director, CWS gave the opening remarks. She encouraged the participants for doing community research for bringing a positive change in the society. She briefed the activities of Sangawari hub for “Bridging Knowledge Culture”. She highlighted about the various workshops and conferences organized by the department and about the projects done through out the year.

The first speaker of the workshop was Prof. B. Hasan, Director, Regional Studies, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur. He addressed the participants and talked about the steps and methods of community based participatory research. The speaker emphasized that a research planning is very important before we start any community research. For good research it is very important to design a research tool in context of the community. Experienced persons of the community should be involved while making the tools for research for better adaptability in terms of local language and customs. He explained that in social science research developing a research question, often based on a topic of interest or community issue. The next phase involves developing a conceptual or working definition, which is a broad notion that transforms the topic of the study into a concept that is more data focused. The participants were given hands on training of preparing schedule for collecting the research data. They were also trained about the various CBPR methods of data collection such as art based methods, focused group discussion, story telling etc to generate relevant informations for conducting a community research.

Outcomes of the workshop

In this workshop in the first half the participants learnt about –

- The participants gained knowledge about the importance of community research and how to connect the community knowledge with the academia.
- Key steps of Community Based participatory research discussed were-
Community Entry
 - Identification of the issue
- Participants recruitment and retention
 - Research design
 - Data Collection
 - Data Analysis and Reporting
 - Dissemination of Result

Participants gained knowledge about the research tools. In this the participant were trained to frame the questions for data collection. The participants were allotted time and were asked to form a questionnaire as per their research topic. They learnt to frame dichotomous questions, open-ended questions, multiple choice questions, rank order questions and rating scale questions. Participants learnt about the process of asset mapping that includes identifying the institutions, individuals, and citizen associations existing within communities that serve as positive resources. Approaching individuals and communities from an asset-based mentality empowers them to recognize their own strengths and capacities.

Research methods adopted in Community based participatory research such as interview, focus group dissection , art based methods, participatory research etc. were discussed in details.

Workshop increased participants knowledge about the CBPR methods.

The second speaker was Dr. Anuradha Chakraborty, Guest Faculty, CWS, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur. She addressed the participants and the community members and shared the results of the project completed for Bridging knowledge culture for knowledge for change(K4C) entitled ,”Study of Maternal Health Care: ACommunity Perspective”.

The purpose of the study was explained. The various steps and methods adopted for conducting the study was discussed. For conducting the study community entry was done through the programmes of NSS which was going on in the villages. The community appraisal projects conducted under NSS facilitated academia to be a part of the community and to bridge the gap between the academia and community knowledge. The research team collected relevant information about the community practices regarding maternal health care. Various Government schemes for maternal health care are being carried

out for safe motherhood. The schemes are being adopted by the community due to the awareness created among them by the health care workers. The community people have their traditional methods and practices of maternal health care .

Further it was elaborated how maternal health is being preserved in rural Chhattisgarh communities through a variety of rituals and cultural standards, like food, hygiene, and daily routines that the mother is expected to adhere to both throughout pregnancy and after giving birth. The foods that are prepared and consumed contain dietary information from the community.

Community under study have preference and avoidance of certain food items during pregnancy and post delivery period that are strictly followed by the community members. The community under study followed the concept of cold food and hot food for maternal health care. Some of the food preference practices were in concordance with the ayurvedic principles while some were contrasting, which might be a possible reason of micronutrient deficit among them. The information collected by the study was shared with the participants of the workshop and with the community members.

It was further explained that in the rural communities of Chhattisgarh ,pregnancy is not seen as a special period in a woman's life. It is thought of as an everyday part of existence. Women continue to perform manual labour in the home and in the fields. Being physically active throughout pregnancy is thought to facilitate a quick and easy birth. the community people prefer to eat less during pregnancy as they believe that eating full belly during this period will result in large sized foetus which will result in c-section delivery rather than a normal delivery.

During pregnancy period women eat locally available food such as seasonal fruits, vegetables, rice, curd and various kinds of decoctions made with regional medicinal plants as per their elders' recommendations. Considering that green

leafy vegetables constitute a staple food of their traditional diet and are high in iron, they believe this to be adequate. They refrain from consuming extra IFA supplements.

It was emphasized that regular communication and interaction can promote the importance of taking supplements, ANC check-ups, especially in light of the anaemia among women and children, and eradicating misconceptions about caesarean deliveries. This type of study can empower communities by sharing knowledge back with them and creating awareness of existing government schemes and programmes. The community's knowledge of maternal health care can be expanded by regular involvement between the community's universities and health professionals. Knowledge is ultimately bridged via relationships. The fundamental process of knowledge development is socialisation. People's interactions provide communities with a platform on which to share and develop new knowledge.

In the second half of the work shop the participants learn about-

- This workshop provided a learning platform where the participants gained knowledge about the essential steps required for planning and conducting a community research.
- The workshop enhanced the participants understanding about the community engagement in higher education and its impact on social responsibility.
- Steps of community entry.
- Identification of the issue.
- Approaching the research partners.
- Various methods employed in community research.
- Workshop served as a platform for knowledge exchange and learning from peers encouraging the participants to explore innovative approaches in community research.

Knowledge gained by the various workshops are utilized in planning and conducting project that aim for community benefit. A project on rag pickers entitled, “Garbage pickers attitude & problems:A CBPR approach” was conducted . The project team along with Dr. AnikshaVaroda visited the various slum areas of Raipur . The team initiated a program to spread public awareness about inequities that girls face in Indian society.

Waste picking is informal occupation rank lowest in the hierarchy of urban India, and they struggle to lead healthy and productive lives. Many waste pickers endure a difficult everyday reality, including regular harassment extortion and many more problems. Many waste pickers, who serve an important societal function, face problems in their attitude, lack of self-esteem and social dignity. There is a need to shift the way of waste pickers are looked upon, and how they themselves think about their work. The goal of this study is to look at the Garbage Pickers attitude & their problems they face in daily lifestyle.

Our research team interviewed 40 waste pickers in slum areas of Raipur.It was observed that waste picking was mostly done by younger people and the whole family was involved in this work. Around 88% of the respondents were aged between 6 and 45 years. The collection of recyclable materials and items was mostly done by young children , while the sorting was mostly done by women.

The majority of garbage pickers worked seven days a week. Most of them had experienced illnesses or injuries. Body pain, bruises, and fatigue were the most frequently mentioned conditions. Most waste pickers had bruises or scars on their hands, arms, and feet, mainly from cuts or piercings during sorting. When asked about their subjective feelings, the research team found that the waste pickers choose this work due to extreme poverty in which they lived in. Many used the money earned by garbage picking in alcohol and drugs consumption.

Most said they were distressed by their work as they experienced discrimination, prejudice, and social rejection.

In all the workshop provided a platform to gain knowledge about the essential steps required to be considered for planning and conducting a community based participatory research.



