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PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF A SPECIALIST IN SOCIAL WORK FOR THE APPLICATION OF DIFFERENT METHODS

Abstract. The article considers the peculiarities of preparing students in higher education to apply different methods of social work. The competencies that need to be formed in applicants for bachelor's and master's degrees in social work are described in accordance with the requirements of the Standard of Higher Education, field of knowledge 23 Social work.

The analysis of the requirements to the professional training of the specialist, to the level of his knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for the effective solution of the existing social problems, his qualities and values is carried out. The functions of a social work specialist in the context of readiness to apply different methods of social work are defined: analytical and diagnostical, predictive, organizational and communicative, protective, psychotherapeutic, rehabilitative. We consider the improvement of professional's training and their expertise, as an important direction for optimization of social work and implementation of mentioned functions. Among the key professional competences, we emphasize: the ability to cooperate in international environment and to identify intercultural problems in professional practice; the use of modern experimental methods of work with social objects in field and laboratory conditions; the ability to evaluate social problems, needs, peculiarities and resources of the clients, etc. Approaches to optimizing the process of training students are considered: systemic, informational, personality-oriented, contextual, reflective, competence, activity, integrative.

Журнал «Перспективи та інновації науки»
(Серія «Педагогіка», Серія «Психологія», Серія «Медицина»)
№ 1(19) 2023

It is concluded that the professional training of students to use different methods of social work should be optimized by motivating students to achieve high learning outcomes, the formation of active positive attitude to professional activities, to study the disciplines provided by the Standard, the use of educational technologies, methods, due to the intensification of project activities of students.

Keywords: social work, methods, approaches, functions, Standard of Higher Education, competencies, training, students.

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ПРОФЕСІЙНА ПІДГОТОВКА ФАХІВЦІВ ІЗ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ РОБОТИ ДО ЗАСТОСУВАННЯ РІЗНИХ МЕТОДІВ

Анотація. У статті розглянуто особливості професійної підготовки фахівців із соціальної роботи до застосування різних методів. Охарактеризовано компетентності, які відповідно до вимог Стандарту вищої освіти, галузі знань 23 Соціальна робота, спеціальності 231 Соціальна робота, необхідно сформувати у здобувачів освіти ступенів бакалавр та магістр з соціальної роботи,.

Проаналізовано вимоги до професійної підготовленості фахівця, до рівня його знань, умінь і навичок, необхідних для ефективного вирішення наявних соціальних проблем, сформованості якостей та цінностей. Визначено функції фахівця з соціальної роботи у контексті готовності до застосування різних методів соціальної роботи.

Розглянуто та охарактеризовано підходи до оптимізації процесу професійної підготовки здобувачів освіти у ЗВО: системний, інформаційний, особистісно зорієнтований, контекстний, рефлексивний, компетентнісний, діяльнісний, інтегративний.

Доведено, що професійну підготовку студентів до застосування різних методів соціальної роботи доцільно оптимізувати за рахунок мотивації здобувачів освіти до досягнення програмних результатів навчання, формування активно-діяльнісного ставлення до професійної діяльності, до вивчення освітніх компонентів, передбачених Стандартом, використання освітніх технологій, методів, активізації проєктної діяльності студентів.

Ключові слова: соціальна робота, методи, підходи, функції, Стандарт вищої освіти, компетентності, підготовка, здобувачі освіти.

Statement of the problem in its general form and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks. In modern conditions, the person's life in society has changed fundamentally, and metamorphoses applied to almost all sides of life, changing them totally on every level – from individual working conditions of particular individual, to social conditions of the society. In government documents, in the Law of Ukraine «About the education» (2017) [1], «About the higher education» [2] in particular, it is emphasized that there is a necessity of the training of a competent expert, that has dynamic combination of knowledge and practical skills, ways of thinking, professional, ideological and civil traits, moral and ethnic values, that determine the person's ability to conduct professional successfully.

An analysis of recent research and publications. As it was mentioned in the study by H. Kucher [3, s. 210], on modern stage of development of Ukrainian society, problems of social work allow to define and rectify the ways, directions and perspectives of the development of the country as a social state. Besides, thanks to social work in particular it has become possible to reorient social politics from distribution principles through targeting principles to principles of social protection and justice. As social work is this principle, thanks to which social politics are established, then the meaning of such kind of activity includes not only defining and solving of the social problems of the society, but also the construction of Ukraine as social country of overall welfare.

At the end of XIX century, under the influence of global changes, social problems in microenvironment escalated. Fundamental changes in society and industrial production, city growth, wars, emigration, fast and painful stratification of society into rich and poor caused breakdown of families, systems of values, rise in crime and many other negative events. Modern socio-economic and political situation in the country thus caused the appearance of numerous social problems, with which the individual has to deal during socialisation and, respectively, the necessity to reconsider the social work and preparation of experts to conducting it. Domestic scientists develop theoretical and methodological bases of social work: O. Karpenko [4], S. Kharchenko [5], T. Semyhyna [6] and the others.

The professional training of specialists in social work in Ukraine is based on qualification requirements and meant to provide such level of professional competence of future specialists that will allow to perform various functions of social work successfully. Certain aspects of the professional training of future social workers are revealed in modern pedagogical studies. In particular, theoretical and methodological basis of professional training and development of the specialists in social work is defined. (O. Karpenko [7], V. Korneschuk [8], I. Melnychuk [9]) and others.

Журнал «Перспективи та інновації науки»
(Серія «Педагогіка», Серія «Психологія», Серія «Медицина»)
№ 1(19) 2023

Justification of the relevance of the study. Most of the institutes that determined people's social interactions, socially affected them, are eliminated, positive experience of socio-pedagogical activity, accumulated over several decades is diminished. In this situation, professional preparation of an expert to social work is one of the primary ways of the society to react to new social situation.

The purpose of the article. Identify the competencies that need to be formed in students in the context of preparation for the use of different methods of social work.

Setting objectives.

1. Identify the features of preparing students in higher education to apply different methods of social work.

2. Describe the competencies that need to be formed in students with a bachelor's and master's degree in social work, in accordance with the requirements of the Standard of Higher Education.

3. Analyze the functions of a social worker in the context of readiness to use different methods of social work.

4. Consider approaches to optimizing the process of training students.

Methods, techniques and technologies used. The following research methods were used to perform certain tasks: analysis of philosophical, social, psychological and pedagogical literature, study of legislative and regulatory documents, systematization for theoretical justification of professional qualities and functions of a social worker.

Presenting main material. The emergence of new social problems leads to the changes in the essence of social activity that, in its turn, puts forward new requirements to the subject, objects, means and methods of social work. The direction of changes depends on the aim of social activity as a social demand. In social work, the aim is defined and fulfilled depending on the specific social situation, specific problem, peculiarities of the object (certain individual and environment that causes the problem), and its successful fulfillment depends on the social worker's development of not only informational, judicial, social, pedagogical and methodological, but also communicative competences.

Methodological competence includes not only the knowledge of the essence, methodology, technology, experience in social work, but also the skill of their application in practice, the ability to develop new methodologies, technologies, to model, design social work with different categories if clients.

Communicative competence is tightly connected not only with the social worker's knowledge of the theory of communication and the availability of speaker skill, but also with personal qualities.

The notion of professional and personal qualities, required for the specialist in social work, presented in the studies of V. Baraniuk [10], I. Bondaruk [11],

D. Hodlevska [12], M. Voloshenko [13] is formulated according to certain categories: operational, functional, strategical and personal.

Operational qualities include fast reaction on a change of professional situation, appropriate higher education and general culture, competence in solving of various social problems, expertise in pedagogy, psychology, jurisprudence, medicine etc. Functional qualities include the developed culture of interpersonal communication; communication optimization skills with clients, representatives of various social groups; abilities to coordinate social connections and relations; facilitation skill; the ability to interact with various clients based on observation and selection of socially important information. Strategic qualities provide proper organization of socially meaningful activity among the population, coordination of social and judicial protection of clients' interests and making of administrative decisions, to reach long-term strategic aims.

The development of personal qualities determines the specialist's professional orientation on social work and professional suitability for it.

Structural and functional characteristics of the training of the bachelor and master in social work are defined in the Standards of higher education for area 23 Social works. According to these standards, the graduate that acquired the respective qualification in the specialty "Social work", has to be able to solve complex specialized tasks and problems of social sphere, including the management of social processes and the processes that are included in the individual development of the personality, that presuppose the usage of certain theories and methods of social work and is characterized by complexity and ambiguity of the conditions and oriented on further special self-education [14].

The requirements to professional preparation of an expert, to one's knowledge and skills, which are obligatory for effective solving of existing social problems, are determined in the Standard. According to them, the graduate has to be able: to use the preventive measures to avoid possible deviations in psychological development, behavior norm violations, interpersonal relationships, to solve conflicts, to prevent social risks and difficult life situations. In addition to that, one has to be able to use methods of social diagnostics in the process of analyzing the problems, requirements, specific peculiarities and client's resources; to choose the adequate methods of diagnostics corresponding to social tasks and foresee the results of their application; to analyze own work to in order to improve it and one's qualification; to perform methodological in methodological associations and social services, etc.

Among general qualities that influence the successfulness of social work, we also highlight the capability for efficient mediation among an individual, family, society, national and municipal organisations; empathy; communication skills, extrovertness; persuasion skill; the ability to work as an unofficial leader that facilitates the initiative; the ability to cooperate. We are sure that social work requires the professionals to have certain humanistic values (awareness about the

Журнал «Перспективи та інновації науки»
(Серія «Педагогіка», Серія «Психологія», Серія «Медицина»)
№ 1(19) 2023

value of human personality, individuality and creative nature); sociological and pedagogical orientation (acceptance of chosen profession and understanding of its creative nature); professional and ethical culture (unity of moral essence and external behavior, the ability to sympathise).

We highlight the necessity of establishing the communicative qualities in the professional expertise of social worker as an especially important, and communicative culture in the process of professional preparation. The elevation of social work in our country to a professional level causes the selection of this profession by people, who have certain personal traits: having communicative and speaking skills, high spiritual and general culture. One has to be able to analyze social events, to see one's place and role protecting human rights for a dignified life, to have solid moral principles. The code of ethics and professional skills of social worker is based on fundamental human values, developing of dignity and uniqueness of every personality, its rights and opportunities. Social worker has to be aware of one's moral responsibility before the client and society, willingly accepting the responsibility for helping people in improving the quality of their lives.

Social protection of different categories of the population is one of the most important directions in world social politics, which includes: activation of the work of social services and institutions; increase of attention to the problems of training of social field professionals, interest to professional's personality, one's unique qualities, readiness to social activity.

Considering the content of students' training for using different methods of social work, we highlight such functions of the social work professional:

1. Analytical and diagnostical function: studies and critically evaluates peculiarities, risks and the direction of the influence of social microenvironment on individual and social status of a client.

2. Predictive function: plans own activity based on deep analysis of social and pedagogical situation, programs and predicts the perspectives of individual's development during socialization, participation of all subjects of social work, which can provide social help; defines aims and fitting programmes, their realization, etc.

3. Organizational and communicative function: provides collective work, business and personal contacts of all subjects of social work.

4. Protective function: uses juridical norms protecting clients' rights and interests; facilitates the use of measures of state coercion and realization of legal responsibility towards individuals, who directly in indirectly perform illegal actions.

5. Psychotherapeutic function: helps in solving conflicts, relieving the state of depression, changing the attitude to life, social environment, organizing the situation of success.

6. Rehabilitative function: organizes the system of measures for social and pedagogic rehabilitation and support of individuals from the «risk groups», who

for various reasons feel social, economical, professional and other difficulties in the system of civil, family and other relations that cause different forms of social disadaptation.

We consider the improvement of professional's training and their expertise, as an important direction for optimization of social work and implementation of mentioned functions. Among the key professional competences, we emphasize: the ability to cooperate in international environment and to identify intercultural problems in professional practice; the use of modern experimental methods of work with social objects in field and laboratory conditions; the ability to evaluate social problems, needs, peculiarities and resources of the clients, etc.

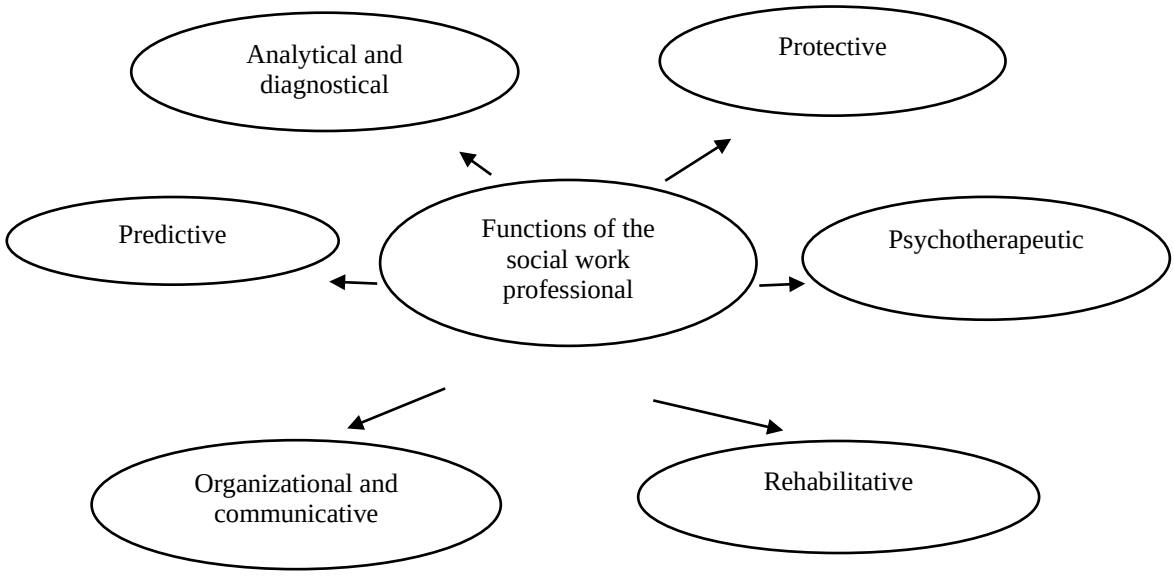


Fig. 1 *Functions of the social work professional (Developed by the author)*

Optimization of educational process in higher education institutions is based on different approaches: systematic, informative, personality-oriented, contextual, reflexive, competence-based, activity-based, integrative, etc. The use of systematic approach let us build the preparation of future specialists for social work as a system - to define components, explain the relationship between them, functions, state, stages of establishment, to determine the methods of diagnostics. Reflexive approach to students' preparation for professional social activity is based on the principle of conscious perspective, when self-building activity of a student comes on the first place. Integrity is required in social work. Such constituents as analysis, correction, control and regulation should not be excluded from social work structure. Because of an absence or complete problem analysis, the aims of social work are not defined well enough and its full effectiveness is not ensured. Insufficient attention to control and regulation does not allow organizing correction work in time.

Participative approach, based on such core management functions as analysis, planning, organization, administration, control, regulation, allow aiming

of the specialist on complete implementation of social work. Contextual approach is implemented on principles of imitational modelling, processability, problemality, flexibility, constructive interaction. Contextual approach facilitates consistent and systematic preparation of student to professional activity. Practice oriented approach to the training of social work professionals allows to eliminate the defective features of professional training, which include insufficient use of practical activities in the educational process of higher education institutions and its remoteness from innovative directions and experience in the area of social work with the population. Contextual approach to the training of the specialist using the whole system of didactic forms, methods and instruments allow the modelling of subject and social matter of future professional activity.

The specific features of the training of social work professionals is determined by the conditions of the development of Ukrainian society, which do not require a specialist in narrow area, but a professional, who is able to recognize one's own responsibility and ready for interaction based on cooperation, respect to personality, its rights in special environment (in society, family, work team, group, etc.)

So, the professional training of students for using different methods of social work, in our opinion, should be optimized via motivating the degree recipients for achieving high results of studying, forming of active positive attitude to professional activity, to learning of the course subjects, defined by the Standard, to the use of educational technologies, methodologies, which activate project work of the students.

We consider the Project approach, which includes stimulation of students' activity in designing and implementing the models of solving social problems, to be one of the primary approaches in the process of training of future experts in social work. Social projects development during university studying includes learning and recording of the content of social demand, peculiarities of social environment, lifestyle, national and sociocultural environment that influence the socialization of an individual.

Therefore, social work, in broad sense, is a general form of human activity, which emergence and development is connected with the demand of society and certain individual in socialization, acquisition or restoration of social consciousness, social functioning, social behavior, etc. In modern conditions, the activity of social work specialists provides help in successful solution of problems, to people with special needs or limited opportunities that remain in difficult living situation. Personal, individual, socially active and activity approaches, principles of continuity and systemacity, natural and cultural accordance, humanism and tolerance, cooperation and responsibility, etc.

Research findings. Optimization of educational process can be fulfilled through organizing not purely studying, but studying and investigating activity of the future specialist in social work. The training of a competent specialist for work includes the use of research tasks during university education, together with

engaging future social workers to solving socially and professionally important social problems. Such activity requires students to demonstrate autonomy during the analysis of the task and the ways of resolving it, to apply the knowledge from various sections of educational programme; to do studying and research work; to develop future specialists' research skills, analytical and heuristic methods of cognition, which are peculiar to the psychology of creativity, the transfer of knowledge from other sciences, resourcefulness, original ways of solving tasks, individual view on a problem. To assure the high quality outcome of this process, close interconnection between theoretical learning and types of practice is required.

We uderstand readiness of students to the usage of various methods of social work as an integral formation, which is the result of training of future specialists in higher education establishments for creative social and pedagogical activity that includes personal («I want and have skills for it»), theoretical («I know») and operation-activity («I am able to») readiness.

Prospects for further research in this area. A promising area of future research is interconnection of theoretical studying and practice is assured through integrating the knowledge of students from different academic courses (psychology, social psychology, sociology, medical biology) while developing the content of practical tasks. Unity of theoretical studying and practice during specialists' professional training facilitates: realization and use by students of theoretical knowledge, acquired during the course studies, which are defined by the Standard, about individual and society on practice; recognition of the value of this knowledge for successful work; consolidation of empirical knowledge, acquired during practice; actualization and realization of students' practical experience.

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