

SOCIAL WORK IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

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Abstract. *This work comments on issues connected with an aspect to include tasks from widely perceived social work into the activity of school. School, by fulfilling certain social tasks, consolidates characteristics which are significant for workplaces, as well as social institutions, e.g. children's homes, community centres, social units. Thus, for a student, school is some kind of mind training department. The time spend at educational facility forces, apart from didactical activities, insurance that children in care will get a possibility to relax, play or to provide safe development, then by defined part of a day the school replaces a family. Didactical functions, character and social education of school are equal and mutually connected. By understanding social work within categories of support in gaining abilities of self functioning within society, it will be then an activity which includes various behaviours and attitudes which drive to equip a client with necessary strength or means which are crucial for individual development and proper social functioning.*

Keywords: *child protection system, child welfare system, functions of social work, social change, social development, social work.*

Introduction

Education, understood as transfer of knowledge, skills, education, is a process that encompasses the whole human life. The earlier division of human existence, as emphasised by Urszula Jeruszka (Jeruszka, 2003), has lost its relevance in the pursuit of constant and comprehensive learning, for the time of learning, professional activity and social activity. Education begins to play much significant role in the perspective of individuals in the labour market. A higher level of education creates both greater career opportunities and greater adaptability to the broadening needs of the economics. The educational policy of the state, although essential in the area of equalising educational opportunities, can influence the development of inequalities or the perpetuation of the unfortunate position of an individual. The school system, according to the selective function, determines the educational paths of the pupils, deciding on the later strengths in the labor market. The student through the educational institution receives material support and actual aid, didactic aids, as well as psychological and pedagogical support. The role of the school in the local environment and the role of the school other than the educational one, e.g. integration of the social

environment (Godlewska & Jaroszevska, 2007), also seems to be significant from the perspective of social policy. Justyna Godlewska and Emilia Jaroszevska (Godlewska & Jaroszevska, 2007) present the most important problems of the Polish educational system:

- low level of pre-school education;
- difficulties with realisation of the educational function of the school, especially at lower secondary level;
- absence of effective mechanisms for equalising opportunities for children and young people in access to education, especially at the secondary and higher levels;
- incompatibility of vocational education and training according to the needs of the labour market;
- no systemic solutions for the dissemination of lifelong learning.

Social pedagogy treats social work as an area of social activity of various stakeholders interested in stimulating development and the support of individuals, groups or communities in overcoming difficult situations. Action at this point is understood within categories of creating institution, which makes it possible to construct analytical tools, which are the basis for distinguishing three types of institutions: real, imagined and symbolic one which are included in one organism or in an individual act of action. An institution in this sense has dynamics, arising from the tension between what is organised, developed, and what is in the process of creation. Social work is therefore a dynamic process of change and transformation, predestinating individuals or groups to enter into relationships with oneself, others and by others (Marynowicz-Hetka, 2007).

Social work as discipline strictly associated with school education

The General Assembly of the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (<http://ifsw.org/get-involved/global-definition-of-social-work>) accepted in July 2014 a global definition of social work, in practice and academic discipline, promoting such elements as social change, development, social cohesion, empowerment, liberation of people. Principles of social work include: human rights, community sense of responsibility, and respect for differences and otherness. Social work, based on its own theories, social sciences, humanities and local knowledge, mobilises people or social structures to counter life difficulties in order to improve the broadly understood functioning of the individual. Historical, socioeconomic, cultural, spatial, political and personality factors, on the one hand, may be an opportunity for the development and welfare of the human being and, on the other hand - a barrier. Structural barriers result in persistence of inequality, oppression,

discrimination, exploitation. Reflecting on the structural aetiology of oppression or privilege, including the criteria of race, language, class, religion, gender, disability, culture and sexual orientation, and on developing a strategy of action against structural and individual constraints, play an important role in emancipatory practice, the foundation of which are the empowerment and liberation of the people. Solidarity with disadvantaged people triggers the pursuit for poverty reduction, the liberation of the defenceless and the oppressed, and the promotion of social inclusion and cohesion. The promotion of social change is based on the belief that the current situation of a person, family, small group, community or society is interpreted as requiring change and development to intervene in social work. There is therefore a necessity to counterbalance structural conditions that affect marginalisation, social exclusion, oppression. The role of human activity lies at the root of social work initiatives in the promotion of human rights, as well as economic, environmental and social justice. Social work is also required to maintain social stability, but it cannot be used for the purpose of marginalising, excluding or oppressing a given group of people. Social development is understood as intervention strategies, desirable states and policy frameworks. It is based on holistic, bio-psycho-social, spiritual diagnoses and interventions that go beyond micro-macro divisions, and involve different levels of the system, as well as interdisciplinary, interdisciplinary cooperation on balance. The pursuit of socio-structural and economic change is significant within social development, although the conventional idea is that economic growth determines social development. Principles of social work include: respect for the inherent value and human dignity, harmlessness, respect for otherness, protection of human rights and social justice. Encouraging social justice and defending human rights are motivational as a justification for social work. Human rights must coexist with social responsibility. The concept of social responsibility is related with the everyday reality, because individual human rights can be attained when human beings are responsible for each other, the environment and recognise the importance of building relationships within communities. Social work focuses on the protection of human rights at all levels, facilitating individuals to take responsibility for each other's well-being, as well as raising awareness and respect for the interdependence between people and the environment. Social work refers to the rights of the first, second and third generations. The first generation includes civil and political rights (freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, freedom from torture and arbitrary imprisonment), the second - socio-economic and cultural rights, including rights to specific areas of education, health, housing, the use of their own language by ethnic minorities while the third focuses on the world of nature, the biodiversity between species and intergenerational equality. The rights of all generations are mutually reinforcing, dependent on each other, ensuring individual and collective rights. Social work, with a wide assortment of

theories and research, is interdisciplinary, as well as trans-disciplinary. Science is understood here as a basic knowledge. Social work draws on knowledge from its own theoretical foundations and research, and goes on to the theories of other humanistic theories, including but not being limited to community development theory, social pedagogy, administration theory, anthropology, ecology, economics, theory of education, management theory, psychiatry, psychology, public health theories and sociology. The uniqueness of research and the theory of social work is evidenced by the fact that they are application and emancipatory. A substantial area within these research or theories is formed by the participation of social work recipients in a dialogical, interactive process that is constructed by specific practice environments, as well as the core resources of knowledge. Recognising only the values of Western knowledge and theories, and the elimination and negation of native knowledge are elements of the colonial heritage. The new global definition of social work proposes to stop and reverse this process by believing that native people in each region or area have their own values, ways of knowing and transferring knowledge, and contributing to science a very important contribution. Social work, letting to voice and learning from indigenous peoples, wants to make reparation for hegemony and historical Western scientific colonialism. International Federation of Social Workers, having regard to the work of the United Nations, define the indigenous peoples as:

- living on (or keeping attached to) geographically defined territories of their ancestors;
- striving for their respective territories to maintain separate social, economic and political institutions;
- typically striving to preserve cultural, geographical and institutional distinctiveness rather than full assimilation of society;
- identifying as indigenous or tribal (<http://ifsw.org/policies/indigenous-peoples>).

The justification and commitment of social work involves intervention where individuals interact with the environment. The environment is a variety of social systems in which a person is rooted and a natural geographical environment that has a fundamental influence on his life. The participatory methodology affirmed in social work refers to the claim that it engages people, social systems, to counteract life problems in order to improve daily living. Social work promotes more work with people than for people. Taking into account the paradigm of social development, social workers have a variety of skills, techniques, strategies, rules on different levels of the system, set to maintain or change. The practical side of social work involves many tasks, forms of therapy, counselling, group work and environment, formulation and analysis of social policy, advocacy and

interventions. Emancipation prospects give social work strategies a direction to strengthen human hope, self-esteem, creative potential in order to resist the dynamics of oppressive forces, as well as the structural a etiology of injustice, combining micro-macro, as well as individual-political dimension of intervention. The holistic approach to social work is universal, but the priorities of the practice, depending on the historical, cultural, political and socio-economic conditions will be different in different countries.

Activities implemented within the scope of social work may fulfil the following functions:

- where social work appears as a distributor of goods, a guard and a stabiliser of social change, and social workers represent managers of social problems;
- contesting in which the activities of the representatives of social professions focus on the realisation of social mechanisms, hence they act as spokesmen for people excluded from social life;
- in contrast to the management of social problems, representatives of social professions, together with their dependents and users, work out a contract draft (Marynowicz-Hetka, 2007).

The following table (Marynowicz-Hetka, 2007) describes the functions and related social work models:

The implementation of the aims and tasks of social work is determined by taking conscious actions aimed at shaping the personality of child in care. It encompasses a wide range of activities: from intervention, through marginal, institutional, environmental, organisational, to caring one. Understanding social work in terms of support for gaining self-employment in society, it will be an activity that includes a variety of behaviours and attitudes aimed at equipping the client with the necessary strength or resources for individual development and proper social functioning. Supporting development as the core of social and educational work in terms of social pedagogy means proactive, protective and cultural actions aimed at enriching the development that are taking place in institutions, institutions, groups or living environments, and refer to the widest populations. In this context, the aim of protectionism is to protect the pejorative impact of potential threats and to promote the promotion of conditions conducive to a more satisfactory level of life. It is also of great importance to seek and help weak forces while strengthening the strengths of enabling social and educational activation of the environment, thus supporting the capacity of individuals, groups or local communities to develop and solve problems by themselves. Social and educational work therefore stimulates social activity and stimulates mutual aid activities to meet the development needs of individuals, families, groups, social backgrounds and active participation in inspiring, developing and improving

social-pedagogical programmes aimed at improving the quality of human functioning and creating a more favourable environment (Olubiński, 2007).

Table 1 Functions and models of social work

Functions	Goals	Manners	Models of social work practice	Orientation of activity
Protective/ normalising	change guard, stabiliser	protection normalisation and distribution of goods problems management	adaptive/normalising distribution managing social work	on transfer (of goods, rules, solutions) individual projects of solutions
Mediative	communication and mutual understanding (situations, problem, solutions etc.) and development	interactive and taking into consideration communication	relational promotional and developmental ones	on change and mutuality of division, creating a community
Defining	advocacy excluded analysis of mechanisms of social problems	protection of own laws and radicalisation of attitudes	radical focused on change and shaping	on solution of social problems, on society; direction from revolve society to radicalisation of excluded social group or in danger of exclusion

There are two basic systems in the social work approach to child and family care:

1. Child protection system – the focus of social work on the protection against harm done to the child by parents or carers, using legalistic capacity to disclose cases of wrongdoing and punishing perpetrators. This approach is the most popular in Canada and in the United States.
2. Child welfare system – focusing on recognising all events and circumstances harmful to the child in terms of social and psychological problems experienced by the family. Social work in this system, mainly in European countries, is oriented towards helping the family to overcome existing difficulties and to strengthen their proper functioning (Spratt & Higgins, 2005).

In the face of educational imperatives such as: equal opportunities, effective emancipatory and adaptive education, improving the quality of education, normalising the educational situation (Chrzanowska, 2009), it seems necessary to coordinate the care and education activities. Among the indispensable conditions that depend on the success of science and the optimal development of a young man Bogumił Łuczak (Łuczak, 2000) states:

- material situation of the family;
- lack of nervousness, conflicts, chaos, disorder, constant haste and sense of security;
- values recognised in the family;
- satisfying the basic needs of the child;
- the health of the child and the parent's concern for its proper physical development;
- proper motor, intellectual, emotional, social development;
- lifestyle, organisation of daily activities.

Summary

Therefore, the educational success of the student depends to a large extent on the fulfilment of the protective function by the educational environment. School as the second most important parenting area for the child is the place where the social problems of the young man and his family are concentrated (Sander, 2005). In the social system of the state, as given by Jerzy Materne (Materne, 1999), primary schools, in particular, have a main role in bringing together the whole population of children. The school, by fulfilling its assigned social tasks, consolidates the attributes attributed to the work places and to social institutions, such as children's homes, day-care centres, social clinics. It represents a type of mental work. The time spent at the educational institution forces the student to take charge of recreation, play or safe development, in addition to the didactic activities, so that he takes over family responsibilities for a certain part of the day. Thanks to establishing interpersonal relations, the student acquires the norms functioning in society, adopts the prevailing system of values and social roles performed by individual members of the group (Siedlaczek-Szwed & Jałowiecka-Frania, 2016). The educational, upgrading and social functions of schools are therefore equal and interrelated. Due to the significant increase in caring needs and the increasing number of problems that directly threaten the development of the child, the school among other institutions involved in the care process is of prime importance, and should therefore expand its activities in terms of broadly understood social work both for pupils and their families (Kromolicka, 2002). Social work at school, emphasising the promotion of social competence, must refer to the following principles:

- parents and children are part of a transactional system that is characterised by continuous development and adaptation;
- parents and children are seen as highly motivated to gain the skills needed to meet the needs or challenges of everyday life;
- transfer of the centre of gravity from therapeutic work with clients to develop skills for mastering the art of life;

- opportunities provided by the environment or social support are a means of supporting development, achievement and self-fulfilment;
- the help' needs to be tailored to individual needs in order to maximise the competence, identity and autonomy (DuBois & Miley, 1996).

Social work as discipline should be strictly connected with school education, with purpose to ease problems which are connected with learning process and strengthening educational potential of students (Skidmore & Thackeray, 1996), plays an important role in stimulating the comprehensive development of a young man, especially in the face of his barriers to learning e.g. in disability, chronic illness, poverty, discrimination, social maladjustment, disfunction of the family.

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