

IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF FUTURE SOCIAL WORKERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The article is devoted to the important aspects of the training of future social workers. The author considers social work in two directions: as a kind of professional activity and as an academic discipline, and also emphasizes the multidisciplinary nature of social work and practical vocational training of social workers.

Key words: *vocational training; social workers; social work; academic discipline; practice.*

The deep economic and social crisis in Ukraine in the mid-1990s contributes to the growth of the importance of social work as a type of professional activity whose purpose is to regulate the legal, economic relations of the individual and society, to provide every person with assistance and support in solving his problems, to provide effective social protection every member of society. This is a way of responding to a new social situation, its problems, opportunities [11, p. 1].

The formation of the system of providing social services in modern conditions requires increased attention to the training of specialists in the social sphere, especially social workers.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The professional training of social workers is the subject of research of a number of scholars: O. Poliak, Ye. Dedov, A. Kapska, R. Vainola, O. Karpenko, H. Pershko, V. Polishchuk, N. Trotsenko, L. Myshchik, and others.

The purpose of the article is to highlight the important aspects of the training of future social workers, based on the study of Ukrainian and foreign scholars.

Professional training of future social workers began in Ukraine only in the mid-1990s [13, p. 82].

In the writings of many researchers, the concept of «social worker» is identified with «social teacher». We believe that it is necessary to clearly distinguish the spheres of professional activity of social workers and social pedagogues, since in the legal framework the position of «social teacher» is included in the list of positions of pedagogical workers (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 963 of June 14, 2000), and the position «social worker» is included in the list of positions of specialists in the social sphere» [13, p. 82].

Ye. Dedov affirms that the purpose of social work is to provide competent social assistance to the population, the humanization of the socio-cultural environment, and increase the effectiveness of socialization of the younger generation [3]. He emphasizes the multidisciplinary nature of social work, arguing that social workers should help a wider contingent of potential clients facing various problems, so social workers are required to operate with

knowledge of a range of social sciences. Therefore, it is important to focus on the professional training of social workers on the multidisciplinary tasks and functions performed by various social services. Among these functions one can distinguish the following: analytical, forecasting, managerial, social and socio-preventive, social and rehabilitation, socio-legal, function of socio-economic support. To implement and perform these difficult functions, a social worker needs both a very serious vocational education and a person's readiness to adhere to the relevant professional and ethical norms and principles [3, p. 3].

A. Kapska considers that success of a social worker's activity depends on the ability to empathize with a person, to reassure her, to find the appropriate style of communication. Also important is the ability to self-education and self-improvement [14].

These abilities are the key to the successful implementation of tasks in professional social activity, which consists of a number of principles:

- socio-political (principle of legality and human rights, the principle of the state approach to the tasks implemented in social and pedagogical activities, the principle of communication content and forms of social-pedagogical activities with specific living conditions of the individual or social group);
- psychological and pedagogical (the principle of promoting the self-realization of children and young people in all spheres of their viable, principles of differentiated and individual approach to objects of social pedagogical activity, the principle, principle of system);
- organizational (the principle of staff competence, the principle of integration, the principle of control and verification of the implementation of professional tasks);
- specific principles of social and pedagogical activities (the principle of humanism, the principle of independence, the principle of relying on the potential of the client in solving their own problems, the principle of confidentiality, the principle of tolerance, the principle of maximizing social resources).

We agree with A. Kapska, that observance of the above mentioned principles of social and pedagogical ac-

tivity is one of the basic conditions of professionalism in the practical work of a social worker [14, p. 19].

A social worker is an employee of a social service that provides social services to its clients. He must know: the normative documents on the organization of social and domestic services for the elderly and the disabled at home, the organization of households, sanitary and hygiene requirements for the care of elderly and disabled people at home, the basics of psychology of older people, ways of providing urgent pre-care, the basis of legislation in the field of social protection of elderly and disabled people [15, p. 468].

Social work as a kind of professional activity is based on various humanitarian and democratic ideals. It has five key aspects: socio-economic, national-geographical, political, cultural, and spiritual [15, p. 458].

There is social work in the community, group, with a case, individual, mobile.

Determining the specifics of the professional training of future social workers in higher education institutions requires consideration of social work in two directions: a kind of professional activity and as an educational discipline.

Social work as a kind of professional activity - activities aimed at harmonizing personal and social relations through the provision of assistance to individuals, groups of people and communities that are experiencing difficulties in social welfare functioning, by means of protection, support, correction and rehabilitation, as well as by changing or reforming certain social elements of the system. Social work, as a professional activity, distinguishes it from other professions such as «man-man» (a doctor, a teacher, a psychologist, a lawyer, etc.) with his versatility and work content. The most important feature is the nature of the relationship between a specialist and a client. In contrast to the subject-object relations, inherent in other types of help professions, in the process of social work usually develop subject-subject relations, while the assistance is focused mainly on the activation of clients. Like any other activity, social work has its structure, each element of which is organically linked with others. This is the subject, content, control, object, means, function, and purpose. The object of social work is the problems of people whose solution requires third-party assistance. The subjects include the state as a whole, which implements social policy, state, charitable and social organizations, social workers, and clients. Content of social work as a pedagogical activity includes the following stages: collection and analysis of information about the client's problem, objective assessment of the situation, planning of the appropriate actions, choice of the optimal solution, the choice of the appropriate technique (method) for solving the problem, its application to solve the problem, the evaluation of effectiveness [15, with. 463].

Social work as an educational discipline includes history, theory, methodology, technology, management, foreign experience of social work, etc. In the process of studying social work, students master various methods and technologies that allow them to provide mediation between clients of social work and society, to stimulate clients to perform their socially meaningful activities, to prevent social problems and to correct deviant behavior [15, p. 464].

There are 2,258 specialized formations in Ukraine, over 1,700 specialized state centers that require highly skilled

specialists in the social sphere, which stipulates the need for the professional training of social workers who can effectively carry out modern social policy tasks, are able to use in practice effective technologies of practical work with different categories of population [4].

The main task of socio-pedagogical work is to establish a balance between the responsibility of society to personality and personality to society. One of the prerequisites for success, the effectiveness of socio-pedagogical work is the ability of a specialist to identify problems and needs at different levels: individual, interpersonal and social [5].

A. Kapska [4] and O. Karpenko [6] explain social work as the unity of such components:

1) assistance to an individual or a group of people who are in a difficult life situation, through support, counseling, rehabilitation, patronage and other types of social and psychological and pedagogical services;

2) actualization of the self-help potential of persons who were in a difficult situation;

3) purposeful influence on the formation and implementation of social policy at all levels – from national to local – in order to provide a socially healthy environment for life expectancy and human life, and to create a system of support for people who find themselves in a difficult life situation. The first two levels represent the micro level, the third – the macro level of socio-pedagogical work.

In Ukraine there are author schools of social work and social pedagogy prof. Kapska A. (Kyiv), prof. Migovich I. (Uzhgorod), prof. Kharchenko S. (Lugansk), prof. Mishchik L. (Zaporizhia) and others, who violated and solved a wide range of theoretical and practical issues related to the creation of conditions for the social formation of the individual in general and the preparation of social workers for professional activities in particular.

The training of specialists in the social and socio-pedagogical sphere is carried out on the whole in 56 higher education institutions of Ukraine and 14 institutions of the I-II level of accreditation.

It should be noted that the systematic training of specialists in the socio-pedagogical sphere is ensured by the unity of a number of blocks of the cycle of professionally oriented training («Psychology», «Pedagogy», «Introduction to a specialty», «Social pedagogy», «Technologies of social and pedagogical work», «Socio-pedagogical work with the family», «Socio-pedagogical work with children and youth», «Applied techniques») and the specifics of the variational part of the cycle. A key component in the training of a specialist should be professional-oriented practice, since it defines the general and specific tasks, practical skills and skills that a highly skilled social worker must possess [4].

In many institutions of higher education in Ukraine (Kyiv Drahomanov State Pedagogical University, Zaporizhzhya State University, Ternopil State Pedagogical University named after V. Hnatyuk, Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University) vocational training of social workers involves passing the practice throughout the entire period of study [12, p. 207].

O. Karpenko, A. Kapska consider it is necessary to emphasize the practical vocational training of social workers, which:

– contributes to the formation and development of professionally important personal qualities of a specialist,

skills and abilities to conduct diagnostics, to create a map of the social history of the client, to solve conflicting problems of clients, to have a social and legal basis, to organize the interaction of different departments, to carry out analytical, forecasting and corrective work;

- allows to effectively realize the acquired knowledge and skills;
- enables students to make sure their choices are correct;
- forms the readiness of students for professional activities in the social sphere [6, p. 78].
- defines the general and specific tasks, practical skills and skills that a highly skilled social worker must possess [4; 6].

R. Vainola emphasizes the personal development of the future social pedagogue in the process of vocational training at a higher education institution. She grouped professionally significant personal qualities of a social teacher in six blocks (humanistic, deontological, communicative, competent, emotional and volitional and organizational). Professionally significant personal qualities in each block were structured, namely: humanistic (patience, benevolence, kindness, sensitivity, altruism); deontological (tolerance, tact, restraint, correctness, confidentiality); communicative (contact, courtesy, openness, attentiveness); competent (devotion to the cause, awareness, objectivity, diligence, experience); emotionally-volitional (persistence, determination, activity, confidence, optimism); organizational (discipline, punctuality, concentration, cleanliness, assemblage). The indicated structure reflects in essence indicators of the effectiveness of personal development of the future social teacher [2, p. 19].

N. Trotsenko notes that professional self-improvement of social workers is a process of developing professional qualities, raising the level of professionalism, which is based on professional self-knowledge, self-determination, self-organization and self-actualization of a specialist [16].

O. Karpenko believes that the professional training of future social workers consists of three stages: the first one is indicative (adaptive), when the future specialist acquaints himself with the social conditionality, functions, place and ethics of the social worker's activities; the second is the mastery of the theoretical knowledge necessary for a social worker of a broad profile: sociological, psychological, pedagogical, sociocultural; The third stage is the acquisition of the practical skills necessary for a social worker, in particular, skills of communication, organization of social interaction and self-help, influence in order to rehabilitate a client or correct his behavior, etc. she notes that the central idea of professional training of students for social work is their integrated development as subjects of educational and professional activity and social-professional communicative activities throughout the period of study at a higher educational institution [7].

The similar opinion is adhered by K. Baklanov, who developed a model of development of self-awareness of a social teacher in the process of professional training and professional self-improvement: the first level corresponds to the period of professional training – this level of formation of foundations; the second level corresponds to the

completion of vocational training and the acquisition of a system of professional knowledge, skills and competences that are professional; The third level is the level that a well-established professional with professional experience and professional spirituality possesses as a harmony of universal, professional and personal ideals [1].

According to L. Myshchik, the system of training future social educators should be complex and based on the following principles: an individual approach; the unity of theory and practice; voluntary participation; the gradual inclusion of participants in preventive activities; sequences; dynamism; multifunctionality; cooperation [9, p. 76].

Z. Falinskaya understands the professional training of social educators as a process of forming a specialist of a new type, able to quickly and adequately react to changes taking place in society, competently solve socio-pedagogical problems in all types and types of educational institutions and institutions of social work, at all levels of management [17].

H. Pershko notes that a social educator must possess computer methods of recruitment, storage and processing of information, as well as use of modern educational technologies in his professional activities [10].

According to V. Polischuk, the contents of the training of specialists should include the following components: a deep analysis of contemporary social development and the formation of the ability to give an objective assessment of social policy, to propose alternatives; a clear representation and classification of modern models, forms and methods of the practice of social work itself; proper pedagogical process of training social workers; the development of theories, concepts, models and technologies aimed at the effective functioning of the social worker; development and implementation of programs that enhance the competence of a social worker [12, p. 200].

I. Migovich emphasizes that a social worker must have appropriate professional training and knowledge in various branches of law, psychology, sociology, pedagogy, statistics, demography, physiology, economics, computer science, management. It is important for the social worker to be emotionally hardened, to be prepared for mental overload, to hold back and to treat clients in good faith in all circumstances, to be able to make decisions in extreme situations, to critically evaluate their activities [8, p. 144].

O. Karpenko argues that attracting future social workers to participate in the organization and implementation of the learning process helps students to independently carry out analysis, creatively approach the combination of theoretical and practical knowledge, and activate the development of cognitive independence [6].

Conclusions. It should be noted that the modernization and humanization of the higher education system of Ukraine in the context of European integration require an increase in the professional level of future social workers.

The professional training of future social workers should be comprehensive and focus on multidisciplinary tasks and functions performed by various social services. A key component in the training of social workers should be practical vocational training and professional-oriented practice.

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**ВАЖЛИВІ АСПЕКТИ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ПІДГОТОВКИ МАЙБУТНІХ
СОЦІАЛЬНИХ ПРАЦІВНИКІВ У ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ**

Стаття присвячена важливим аспектам професійної підготовки майбутніх соціальних працівників. Автор розглядає соціальну роботу у двох напрямках: як вид професійної діяльності та як навчальну дисципліну, а також робить акцент на багатопрофільному характері соціальної роботи та практичному професійному навчанні соціальних працівників.

Ключові слова: професійна підготовка; соціальні працівники; соціальна робота; навчальна дисципліна; практика.

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**ВАЖНЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОЙ ПОДГОТОВКИ БУДУЩИХ
СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ РАБОТНИКОВ В УЧРЕЖДЕНИЯХ ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ**

Статья посвящена важным аспектам профессиональной подготовки будущих социальных работников. Автор рассматривает социальную работу в двух направлениях: как вид профессиональной деятельности и как учебную дисциплину, а также делает акцент на многопрофильном характере социальной работы и практическом профессиональном обучении социальных работников.

Ключевые слова: профессиональная подготовка; социальные работники; социальная работа; учебная дисциплина; практика.

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