

SOCIAL PEDAGOGY IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WORK

Mgr. Viera ZOZULAKOVA, PhD.

According a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) "education and training have a crucial role to play in meeting the many socio-economic, demographic, environmental and technological challenges facing Europe and its citizens... The Council of the EU emphasises efficient investment in human capital through education and training systems, which is an essential component of Europe's strategy to deliver the high levels of sustainable, knowledge-based growth and jobs that lie at the heart of the Lisbon strategy, at the same time as promoting personal fulfilment, social cohesion and active citizenship"⁸. Social pedagogy has got an important position in the process of improving the educational attainment, in fostering the social inclusion⁹.

Social pedagogy is defined as "a special pedagogical discipline, which together with other scientific disciplines participates in solving lots of educational and upbringing problems in the society".¹⁰ Its competencies are based on prevention activities, intervention in socialization of children, young people and adults, elimination of social problems and undesirable social phenomena in the society, strengthening of positive social-educational influences and creating of optimal conditions for living. Historically, social pedagogy is based on the belief that the social circumstances can be decisively influenced through education. Thus, social pedagogy started with efforts to confront social distress pedagogically in theory and practice.¹¹

Social pedagogy is based on humanistic values stressing the complex (holistic) approach to education and care. The **holistic approach** means "understanding clients and their situation as a whole".¹² Its meaning is specific to the context, the culture and the time. It

⁸ Council of EU (2009/C 119/02), Conclusions of 12.5.2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020).

⁹ See Council of EU (2010/C 135/02), Conclusions of 11.5.2010 on the social dimension of education and training.

¹⁰ NIKLOVÁ, M.: *K aktuálnym problémom sociálnej pedagogiky v Slovenskej republike*. In: Pedagogická orientace, roč. 19, č. 1. Brno 2009, s. 18 – 19.

¹¹ HÄMÄLÄINEN, J.: The Concept of Social pedagogy in the Field of Social Work. In: *Journal of Social Work* vol. 3, No. 1. 2003; pp. 71. „Two types of strategies arose to confront social problems and to promote social well-being: politics and pedagogy“ (pp. 71).

¹² HÄMÄLÄINEN, J.: The Concept of Social pedagogy in the Field of Social Work. In: *Journal of Social Work* vol. 3, No. 1. 2003; pp. 73.

addresses culturally specific social problems through educational means and a severe culture encounters their own unique problems, solutions of social problems are highly context-dependent. In this sense we can speak of social pedagogy as socially constructed.¹³ Social pedagogy "is now being taken up with greater interest especially in the field of early childhood education and residential child and youth care. Social pedagogy is believed to be able to promote shared values and skills across different fields in education and care that were, until recently, sharply distinguished from each other".¹⁴

1960s – CHANGE OF PARADIGM

In 1960s the leading idea of social pedagogy has changed due to social problems resulting from various economical, social and political factors. H. Thiersch describes two-sided change in paradigm — emancipative and realistic¹⁵ (more attention has been paid to the emancipation of people suffering from social problems). The disciplinary identity, common understanding and the tasks and functions of social pedagogy, particularly with the reference to the relationship between theory and practice are still discussed.¹⁶

The scientific field of social pedagogy is quite range and many of authors see this discipline in a very wide context. Generally we can talk about **three models** referring to the relationship between social work and social pedagogy:

1. Approach of **identification** means practical identification of social work and social pedagogy. Social work and social pedagogy are identical.
2. Approach of **clear differentiation**, typical for English speaking countries. Social pedagogy and social work completely differ from each other. The role of social pedagogy is strongly discussed in last period e.g. in UK. This approach is used also in Czech Republic.
3. **Convergent approach** means a certain form of integration, but in fact social work and social pedagogy remain independent disciplines. The both disciplines theoretically and practically can complement each other. This approach is used in Slovakia and in a sort of sense also in Poland.

¹³ See www.social-pedagogy.co.uk

¹⁴ See PETRIE, P. et al.: *Working with Children in Care - European perspectives*. Maidenhead: Open University Press., 2006.

¹⁵ See THIERSCH, H.: *Lebensweltorientierte Soziale Arbeit. Aufgaben der Praxis im sozialen Wandel*. Munich 1992.

¹⁶ See HORNSTEIN, W.: Zur disziplinären Identität der Sozialpädagogik. In: STUNKER, H. (eds.): *Theorie, Politik und Praxis Sozialer Arbeit*. Bielefeld: Kleine Verlag 1995, pp. 12.

„In current discourses, there are the changes to different ideas about the field of social pedagogy, social work and Social Work, which refer to different labels for topics and theoretical traditions and debates within the field“¹⁷.

N. Huppertz and E. Schnizler¹⁸ describe the **functions of social pedagogy**, which is seen as an alternative to social work:

1. **pedagogical function** – educational effort to support optimal child's development, creating of healthy life style,
2. **prophylactic function** – activities and programs leading to prevention of various deviations,
3. **compensatory function** – activities leading to compensation of deficits, e.g. from low stimulating and incentive environment,
4. **corrective function** – activities concerned on prisoners, residential child care for children with disabilities and children with emotional and behavioural difficulties, day care, family placements and fostering placements, than children homes for abandoned children and children without parents/family and houses of correction (reformatory prison, penitentiary),
5. **tutorial function** – help to those people, who are referred as marginalized groups, e.g. juridical protection,
6. **structural function** – influencing the processes of people's including into social classes, e.g. in the field of professional qualification,
7. **distributive function** – help to refugees, immigrants and social work with them.

SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AS A DISCIPLINE

„The question of social pedagogy's place in the academic system is linked to the theoretical interest in the structure of the relationship between individuals and society and the effect of education has on the roles of individual social stakeholders. The basic figure of social pedagogical thought, which occurs clearly through the course of history, is defined by the assumption that the relationship between individuals and society is conflictive and that social conditions are determined by the suppression of individuals.

¹⁷ KORNBECK, J., ROSENDAL, J. N. (Eds.): *The Diversity of Social Pedagogy in Europe. Studies in Comparative Social Pedagogies and International Social Work and Social policy*, Vol. VII., Bremen 2009, pp. 25. ISBN: 978-3-941482-34-0.

¹⁸ See HUPPERTZ, N., SCHINZLER, E.: *Grundfragen der Pädagogik*. Köln, München: Stam Verlag 1995. See also KRAUS, B.: *Základy sociální pedagogiky*. Praha 2008, s. 39 – 58.

The goal of social pedagogy is, firstly, to improve the unequal social conditions by socio-political means, and, secondly to enable individuals to fight their own battle to improve social conditions. Hence, the concept of social pedagogy focuses on the social dimension of education. The issues of social pedagogy are the social prerequisites and consequences of education, the problem of the relationship between, and the inconsistent demands of individual and the society, but also the educational problems, conditioned by the social changes and upheavals, of analysing disadvantaged groups and particular problems in their lifestyles and the way in which they shapes, and of developing strategies to solve their problems¹⁹...”²⁰.

SITUATION IN SLOVAKIA

In Slovakia the social pedagogy is seen as an independent scientific discipline and a key complementary profession to social work. Social pedagogues are specialist in direct work with children and families. It can be understood also as a **help of life**²¹. Its aim is to provide help to children, young people and adults in different types of environment by looking for optimal forms of help and by compensation of needs in the system of complex social care. The main goal is transformation of people and society by the means of education. It is the process leading to the integration and stabilization of man's personality, personal development and human growth.

Social pedagogy starts with the problems. Very important part of social education and social help is to teach every client to take full responsibility for his/her life. The professional position of social worker acquires very good skills in using the methods of critical consciousness, critical approach and pedagogical communication in interaction with a client of social work. The idea of „human dignity is included in the **concept of homo educandus**. Traditionally, the social pedagogical perspective in social work does not only concentrate on helping people to survive under difficult circumstances in everyday life, but it goes further... One educational task of social work is to help people to attain and to maintain the experience of

¹⁹ See HORNSTEIN, W.: Zur disziplinären Identität der Socialpädagogik. In: STUNKER, H. (eds.): *Theorie, Politik und Praxis Sozialer Arbeit*, Bielefeld: Kleine Verlag 1995, pp. 12 – 31.

²⁰ KORNBECK, J., ROSENDAL, J. N. (Eds.): *The Diversity of Social Pedagogy in Europe. Studies in Comparative Social Pedagogies and International Social Work and Social policy*, Vol. VII., Bremen 2009, pp. 20.

²¹ BAKOŠOVÁ, Z.: *Sociálna pedagogika ako životná pomoc*. Bratislava 2008, s. 58.

meaning and dignity in their life. Pedagogical questioning is closely connected with ethical themes – developmental processes on people are connected with moral values”²².

Presentday social situation in the world is rapidly changing. We are witness of growing social-pathological phenomena among all generations, especially the young generation. Aggressive behaviour and strong individualism are just some of them. In Europe we have got a model of democracy and freedom based on “fundamental Athenian concept and model of democracy. From that model, democracy evolved into a general political and administrative system that guarantees the proper function of a given society, city or country. But democracy itself cannot create a real bond among the people... This does not lead necessarily to substantive human relationships. Democracy safeguards the structure and proper function in terms of freedom and rights, while community guarantees the function in terms of connectedness amongst people”.²³

CURRENT PROBLEMS AND TASKS

- Place and role of social pedagogy in basic and secondary schools and residential care.
- Competencies of social pedagogy (new profession or an alternative practice model).
- Competencies of social pedagogues.
- International paradigms and their relevance to the Slovak model.
- Ways of using the holistic practices in social care.
- Social work, community work, social pedagogy and education. How to define the areas of discussions and research.
- Using creativity and individual approach in social care practice.
- The position of social pedagogues as members of helping professions.
- The role of social pedagogues in social inclusion of children.
- Mutual relationships among social pedagogy, social justice and political action.
- Development of a professional association for social pedagogues.
- Coaching and managing social pedagogues and their further education.

²² HÄMÄLÄINEN, J.: The Concept of Social pedagogy in the Field of Social Work. In: *Journal of Social Work* vol. 3, No. 1. 2003; pp. 77.

²³ DEMETRIOS, archbish.: A Call to faith. New York 2004, pp. 104 – 105.

According the Acts²⁴ of Slovak Ministry of Education adopted in years 2008 and 2009 a social pedagogue belongs to the system of educational counselling and prevention. His main aim is to do and coordinate preventive activities (e.g. reducing of social-pathological phenomena, prevention of criminality) in all kinds of primary and secondary schools.

Social activities of social pedagogues and special pedagogues are focused on:

- a) monitoring and evaluation of children behaviour using methods and techniques adequate to contemporary knowledge of social pedagogy - its theory and practice,
- b) social counselling,
- c) sociotherapy,
- d) using of diagnostic methods of social pedagogy.

Social pedagogue can work in schools as a school social pedagogue, in re-socialization centres, in the centres of pedagogical-psychological counselling, in residential care centres, centres for very young mothers with children, in community centers etc. Slovak schools still do not have social pedagogues, only special pedagogues, although Slovak pedagogues call for such kind of professionals at schools.

CONCLUSION

The terms social work and social pedagogy "are used synonymously to a large extend²⁵, although some authors insist on the difference between the terms"²⁶. Social pedagogy belongs to the system of pedagogical disciplines. As a help of life it is positive pedagogy. Its aim is a transformation of people and society by education. "Social pedagogy is a scientific discipline which provides its effective solutions and processes of application leading to the creation of theoretical basis of social help as well as to the developing of practical activities of social help."²⁷

The role of social pedagogy and social pedagogues in professional social work is very important. Social pedagogy should be concerned not only on work with children, but on work with young people and adults as well. It is an integral part of social work, social care and

²⁴ Ministry of Education, Slovak republic: Act No. 245/2008 (so called school Law), No. 325/2008 about schol institutions of educational consulting and prevention, Notice No. 437/2009 about qualification of pedagogues.

²⁵ In historical development and in discursive disputes there are three terms for social work: social pedagogy (Sozialpädagogik), social work (Sozialarbeit) and Social Work (Soziale Arbeit).

²⁶ KORNBECK, J., ROSENDAL, J. N. (Eds.): *The Diversity of Social Pedagogy in Europe. Studies in Comparative Social Pedagogies and International Social Work and Social policy*, Vol. VII., Bremen 2009, pp. 25.

²⁷ MACHALOVÁ, M.: Komparácia sociálnej práce, sociálnej pedagogiky a sociálnej andreagogiky z hľadiska sociálnej edukačnej práce. In: *Sociálna a duchovaná revue* (1), II/2011. PBF PU Prešov 2011, s. 59.

social policy. "Parallels and differences to the social pedagogy paradigm can only be discerned against the background of the analysis of the respective relationship to social policy."²⁸

REFERENCES

BAKOŠOVÁ, Z.: *Sociálna pedagogika ako životná pomoc*. Bratislava 2008.

DEMETRIOS, archbish.: A Call to faith. New York 2004.

HANGONI, T.: The role of social work in solving problems related to the global economic crisis. In: *Sociálna a duchovná revue* (3), I/2010, s.71 – 81. PBF PU, Prešov 2010.

HÄMÄLÄINEN, J.: The Concept of Social pedagogy in the Field of Social Work. In: *Journal of Social Work* vol. 3, No. 1. 2003; pp.

HORNSTEIN, W.: Zur disziplinären Identität der Socialpädagogik. In: STUNKER, H. (eds.): *Theorie, Politik und Praxis Sozialer Arbeit*, Bielefeld: Kleine Verlag 1995, pp. 12 – 31.

HUPPERTZ, N., SCHINZLER, E.: *Grundfragen der Pädagogik*. Köln, München: Stam Verlag 1995.

KORNBECK, J., ROSENDAL, J. N. (Eds.): *The Diversity of Social Pedagogy in Europe. Studies in Comparative Social Pedagogies and International Social Work and Social policy*, Vol. VII., Bremen 2009, pp. 25. ISBN: 978-3-941482-34-0.

KRAUS, B.: *Základy sociální pedagogiky*. Praha 2008.

KUZMYK, V.: Sociálna služba Cirkvi a jej vplyv na formovanie metód sociálnej práce. *Kvalita vzdelávania pracovníkov v oblasti sociálnej práce*. PBF PU Prešov 2010, s.41 – 46.

KUZYŠIN, B.: Základné východiská projektovania v sociálnych a charitatívnych oblastiach. In: *Sociálna a duchovaná revue* (1), II/2011. PBF PU Prešov 2011, s. 3 – 8.

²⁸ LORENZ, W.: Paradigms and Politics: Understanding Methods paradigms in an Historical Context: The Case of Social pedagogy. In: *British Journal of Social Work* (38). Oxford University Press 2008, pp. 625.

LORENZ, W.: Paradigms and Politics: Understanding Methods paradigms in an Historical Context: The Case of Social pedagogy. In: *British Journal of Social Work* (38). Oxford University Press 2008, pp. 625 – 644.

MACHALOVÁ, M.: Komparácia sociálnej práce, sociálnej pedagogiky a sociálnej andreagogiky z hľadiska sociálnej edukačnej práce. In: *Sociálna a duchovná revue* (1), II/2011. PBF PU Prešov 2011, s. 57 – 64.

NIKLOVÁ, M.: *K aktuálnym problémom sociálnej pedagogiky v Slovenskej republike*. In: Pedagogická orientace, roč. 19, č. 1. Brno 2009, s. 18 – 27.

PETRIE, P. et al.: *Working with Children in Care - European perspectives*. Maidenhead: Open University Press., 2006.

ŠAK, Š.: Cesta života človeka i spoločnosti. In: *Sociálna a duchovná revue* (1), I/2010, PBF PU, Prešov 2010, s. 3 – 14.

THIERSCH, H.: *Lebensweltorientierte Soziale Arbeit. Aufgaben der Praxis im sozialen Wandel*. Munich 1992.

ZOZUL'AK, J.: Človek v centre pozornosti sociálneho pracovníka. In: *Sociálna a duchovná revue* (2), I/2010, s. 3 – 11. PBF PU, Prešov 2010.

ZOZUL'AKOVÁ, V.: Úloha sociálnej pedagogiky a kresťanskej sociálnej pedagogiky v oblasti sociálno-charitatívnej služby. In: *Sociálna a duchovná revue* (1), I/2010, PBF PU, Prešov 2010, s. 25 – 31.