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## CREATIVITY DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE SOCIAL WORKERS WITHIN THE SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION

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*The article deals with the problem of creativity development of future social workers within the social work field education.*

*It is proved that creativity development is absolutely necessary not only because creativity is one of the requisite twenty-first century skills but also because the profession of social worker is impossible without a creative approach in solving professional tasks in today's rapidly changing society.*

*It was indicated that the quality of future social workers professional training will improve if their creative abilities and creative activity are actualized within social work field education, so the aim of the study is to suggest the ways of developing creative abilities of future social workers in the process of social work field education.*

*The concept of field education was described, as well as key principles that guide field education programs and provide objectives for field education.*

*The aim and main tasks of field education within the Master educational program (Social Work, Social Pedagogy) of Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University were also presented.*

*In the article special training that includes conducting training exercises within the supervision sessions for the development of creative abilities of future social workers in the process of social work field education, were described. These training exercises are aimed at developing students' divergent thinking; contribute to increasing self-esteem, and also increase motivation to develop new skills; training of teamwork skills, as well as public presentation of its results; exercises which contribute to the deepening of the processes of self-disclosure of one's own professional self, the formation of the skills of self-analysis, self-understanding and self-criticism; summarizing the ideas of students about their creative abilities which is of great importance within social work field education.*

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A conclusion was made that conducting special training within the supervision sessions will contribute to the development of future social workers' creative abilities which, in its turn, will enable students to use a creative approach while solving professional tasks in the process of social work field education. It was also stated that further research will be devoted to the development of students' critical thinking during the social work field education.

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**Keywords:** creativity, creative abilities, supervision, professional training, social sphere specialists, social work field education.

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## РОЗВИТОК КРЕАТИВНОСТІ МАЙБУТНІХ СОЦІАЛЬНИХ ПРАЦІВНИКІВ В УМОВАХ ПРАКТИКИ ІЗ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ РОБОТИ

С. М. Ситняківська, Н. А. Сейко, Н. П. Павлик

У статті розглядається проблема розвитку креативності майбутніх соціальних працівників у рамках практики із соціальної роботи.

Доведено, що розвиток креативності є конче необхідним не лише тому, що креативність є однією з необхідних навичок ХХІ століття, а й тому, що професія соціального працівника неможлива без творчого підходу до вирішення професійних завдань у сучасному суспільстві, що швидко змінюється.

Зазначено, що якість професійної підготовки майбутніх соціальних працівників покращиться за умови актуалізації творчих здібностей та творчої активності майбутніх соціальних працівників у рамках практики із соціальної роботи, тому мета дослідження – запропонувати шляхи розвитку творчих здібностей майбутніх соціальних працівників в процесі практики із соціальної роботи.

Було описано концепцію практики у соціальних установах та службах, а також ключові принципи, якими керуються у процесі практик та визначають її цілі.

Також було представлено мету, основні завдання практики у соціальних установах та службах в рамках магістерської освітньої програми (Соціальна робота, Соціальна педагогіка) Житомирського державного університету імені Івана Франка.

У статті описано спеціальні тренінги – тренінгові вправи, які проводяться в рамках супервізійних сесій для розвитку творчих здібностей майбутніх соціальних працівників у процесі практики в соціальних установах та службах. Ці тренувальні вправи спрямовані на розвиток дивергентного мислення студентів; сприяють підвищенню самооцінки, а також посилюють мотивацію до розвитку нових навичок; тренування навичок командної роботи, а також публічне представлення її результатів; вправи, які сприяють поглибленню процесів саморозкриття власного професійного Я, формуванню навичок самоаналізу, саморозуміння та самокритики; узагальнення уявлень студентів про їхні творчі здібності, що має велике значення в процесі проходження практики.

Зроблено висновок, що проведення спеціальних тренінгів у рамках супервізійних сесій сприятиме розвитку творчих здібностей майбутніх соціальних працівників, що у свою чергу дасть змогу студентам креативно підходити до вирішення професійних завдань у процесі проходження практики в соціальних установах та службах. Також було зазначено, що подальші дослідження будуть присвячені розвитку критичного мислення студентів під час навчання та проходження практики.

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**Ключові слова:** креативність, творчі здібності, супервізія, професійна підготовка, спеціалісти соціальної сфери, практика із соціальної роботи.

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**Introduction of the issue.** The radical change in society that is taking place during the war and will continue in the post-war period in Ukraine is a controversial, complex, and lengthy process involving the search for new ways and means of implementing

transformations in all spheres of human activity. This situation necessitates the creative participation of all members of society in this process because insufficient creative activity, lack of effective incentives for its development and integration are the main factors that

impede the implementation of new ideas, plans, new targets and orientations that are necessary in the context of the development of our state. In a humane and civilized society, which Ukraine is striving for, personality development and their creative capabilities become the endpoint of all social relations. Therefore, the problem of high-quality professional training of future social workers, a profession in demand both during the war and in the post-war period, who will be able to creatively approach the new challenges of the profession, is extremely relevant. Nowadays, a creative approach to the performance of professional duties is both a condition and an indicator of intensive renewal of social work.

**Current state of the issue.** The issue of the formation of the creative personality of the future social worker is, to some extent, covered in the scientific research of philosophers, psychologists, pedagogues, as well as specialists of social sphere. Much attention to the development of this problem was paid by N. Seiko, N. Pavlyk, O. Bezpalko, R. Vinola, I. Zvereva, A. Kapska, O. Karpenko, I. Migovich, L. Mishchyk, J. Petrochko (social sphere scientists and practitioners), as well as O. Dubaseniuk, O. Antonova (pedagogues) and others. These scientists clarify the essence of the main categories of the problem, define the specifics of social and pedagogical creativity and ways of its implementation. In the system of professional training of future social pedagogues, at the initial stages of their involvement in practical activities, there is a particularly great need to deepen theoretical and practical training for creative professional activity.

Also, the need to develop the issue of forming a creative personality in terms of developing their potential and creative abilities is mentioned in regulatory documents: the described problem is highlighted as an important issue at the state level. These provisions are reflected in the Constitution of Ukraine, the Laws of Ukraine "On Education" [1], "On Higher Education" [2], "On General Secondary Education" [3], "On Scientific

and Scientific-Technical Activities" [4], "On Out-of-School Education" [5], "On Scientific and Technical Information" [6] and numerous bylaws. The regulatory framework assumes that Ukrainian statehood, civil and legal society will develop progressively only if active work is carried out in all spheres of life, which is formed during education, upbringing of a creative personality, as well as when he or she uses these developed abilities.

Therefore, in the conditions of modern society, one of the main tasks of higher education is to develop the creative abilities of the individual during their preparation for professional activity. The implementation of this development is complicated by differences in scientific views on its process and mechanisms, as well as on its actualization.

It should be noted that the development of creative abilities during theoretical training of students is given great attention by scientists, higher education institutions train specialists of various profiles, including social sphere specialists at a high professional level, developing their creativity, skills and abilities to work in fast-paced conditions, while less attention is paid to the development of creative abilities during the social work field education, which is led to the choice of our research topic. We believe that the quality of future social workers professional training will improve if the creative abilities and creative activity of future social workers are actualized within social work field education.

**Aim of research** is to suggest the ways of developing creative abilities of future social workers in the process of social work field education.

**Research methods:** theoretical analysis of methodological and pedagogical literature, Internet resources on the issue connected with the topic, forms and methods of its organization; synthesis and generalization.

**Results and discussion.** To start with we should distinguish the nature of social work field education and the possibilities of the development of creativity within it.

According to the generally accepted definition field education is one of the compulsory academic social work subjects undertaken within a pre-qualifying Bachelor of Social Work or Master of Social Work degree and is a core component of the social work education process. Field education is also a compulsory component of some other human service qualifications [7]. Accordingly, field education coordinator is the university-based staff person or persons allocated to manage the field education program within the pre-qualifying social work/human service program.

Field education is a distinctive pedagogy for social work education. It enables students to integrate classroom learning with professional practice so that students notice and refine their ways of thinking, doing and being. Field education socializes students into the profession through immersion in real practice contexts, while allowing a constructive and reciprocal learning space to develop. Students make sense of what it means to be a social worker by developing their professional identity, integrity, and practice frameworks [8].

Most universities in Ukraine describe key principles that guide their field education programs and provide objectives for field education. Although Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University has its own educational approach and locates field education in its own social work curriculum, departmental and university context, there are strong similarities in definitions, underlying principles and course objectives. Partly, this is because the professional standard "Social worker" has set national minimum requirements for field education, which must be met if graduates are to be eligible for membership of the professional body [9].

According to Master educational program (Social Work, Social Pedagogy) (MEP) of Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University it is required to include a minimum of two placements in their social work courses, which together must include a minimum of 42 days or

270 hours of supervised practice in a workplace setting [10]. The two placements must occur in different calendar years and offer a range of different social work experiences for students [11].

*The aim* of this field education within MEP (Social Work, Social Pedagogy) is structuring all stages of future social workers professional training: formation of sustainable professional interest in the chosen specialty; familiarization with the specifics and content of socio-pedagogical activities in educational, social, cultural and recreational institutions; promotion of students' mastery of various types of socio-pedagogical activities; formation of skills to apply theoretical knowledge in practice; the use of socio-pedagogical techniques, forms and methods when performing various professional roles.

*The main tasks* of the field education within MEP (Social Work, Social Pedagogy) are:

1. Familiarize students with the main content of activities of relevant social sphere organizations.

2. To demonstrate the skills of applying theoretical knowledge in accordance with the profile of the basic institution of field education.

3. Demonstrate the ability to provide social assistance through the specified forms: correspondence (hotline, information and advisory services for disabled children, drug addicts, etc.); face-to-face (short-term communication with the client during visits to crisis centers, rehabilitation centers); inpatient (long-term monitoring of the client in shelters, boarding schools, specialized institutions); complex, which involve interaction with doctors, psychologists, rehabilitators, and other specialists.

4. To improve organizational, diagnostic, didactic, analytical, design, communication skills and abilities.

5. To form the ability to organize and conduct work related to the provision of individual or group assistance to clients in the process of socialization.

6. To develop theoretical research in research and methodical work, to create

a need for self-education, self-identification as a professional in a specific field of social work.

During the internship or social work field education (both terms are possible in our country), the student must acquire the following competencies:

- the ability to analyze the practical experience of specialists in the field of social work, one's own professional activity;

- the ability to diagnose personality problems, to find optimal ways to solve them;

- the ability to plan the stages of activity in order to achieve a specific result, to design social assistance programs;

- the ability to independently implement a program of providing social assistance and client support;

- the ability to scientifically substantiate the results of social activity;

- the ability to realize creative potential for improving the forms, methods, and technologies of social activity.

As a result of social work field education, students should demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

1. Solve complex tasks and problems that require updating and integration of knowledge in conditions of incomplete/insufficient information and conflicting requirements.

2. Collect and carry out quantitative and qualitative analysis of empirical data.

3. Independently and autonomously find information necessary for professional growth, master it, assimilate, and produce new knowledge, develop professional skills and qualities.

4. Make decisions autonomously in difficult and unpredictable situations.

5. Perform reflective practices in the context of social work values, responsibility, including prevention professional burnout.

6. Analyze the social and individual context of the problems of the person, family, social group, and community; formulate the goal and tasks of social work, plan interventions in difficult and

unpredictable circumstances in accordance with the values of social work.

7. To organize the joint activities of various fields specialists and non-professionals, to prepare them for the performance of social work tasks, to initiate team formation and to coordinate teamwork.

8. Demonstrate initiative, independence, and originality; generate new ideas for solving tasks of professional activity.

9. Determine the methodology of applied scientific research and apply methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis of results, including methods of mathematical statistics.

10. Develop social projects at a highly professional level.

11. Independently build and maintain purposeful, professional relationships with a wide range of people, representatives of various communities and organizations, argue, convince, conduct constructive negotiations, productive conversations, discussions, be tolerant of alternative opinions.

12. Demonstrate a positive attitude towards this profession and comply with the ethical principles and standards of social work with one's behavior [11].

In order to achieve the specified learning outcomes, develop the competencies specified in the Master educational program, and generally reach the goal of social work field education, by completing the specified practice tasks in such a short period of time, which is allocated for internship (for example, in America and Canada, such practice must include 143 days or 1000 hours of supervised practice), the student needs to approach tasks very creatively. It is not for nothing that creativity is considered one of the types of professionalism, because it is absolutely necessary when solving social problems.

Although the concept of creativity is too difficult to define, the following essential aspects can be singled out for its explanation. The central aspect of creative activity is obtaining new results

when using new methods, this is exactly what a social worker needs, because he/she cannot predict this or that problem of the client and in the process of professional activity must creatively apply various methods and forms of work to achieve effective result. If a lot of attention is paid to the development of creative abilities during the academic training of students within the university, then less attention is paid to the development of creative abilities during internship, since little time is allocated for the practice itself, so the emphasis falls on the performance of professional tasks. But creativity, like the creative personality itself, is realized in activity. Activity is considered as a condition for the realization of creative possibilities of an individual. In the process of activity, a variety of important professional qualities of the future social worker are formed, and his/her opportunities are realized. And the activity is realized in the process of internship to the fullest, that's why we offer develop students' creativity within supervision during social work field education, as in social work, 'professional supervision' is not just line management or assessment of performance. It includes support, education, and assistance in the development of personal and professional qualities.

In view of the above, instructors appointed as university supervisors began to conduct special trainings within the framework of regular student supervision sessions, in addition to the main issues as monitoring, supporting, problem-solving, in order to activate the development of personal and professional qualities during the internship. Under special trainings we mean training exercises for the development of creative abilities of future social workers in the process of regular student supervision sessions.

These training exercises are aimed at developing students' divergent, critical thinking; contribute to the deepening of the communication skills, collaboration; mastering the skills of successful

behavior and constructive overcoming of problematic situations in social activities; learning to generate ideas about possible options for practical application of resources possessed by students; contribute to increasing self-esteem, and also increase motivation to develop new skills; training of teamwork skills, as well as public presentation of its results; contribute to the deepening of the processes of self-disclosure of one's own professional self, the formation of the skills of self-analysis, self-understanding and self-criticism; summarizing the ideas of students about their creative abilities which are of great importance not only within social work field education, but also considered the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

Online and other technologies are now commonly used as educational tools in different spheres including social work education. Trainings began to be held on online platforms with the involvement of all students, regardless of their intership placement. We suggest conducting them twice a week, as internship has a very short term. In addition to special trainings aimed at developing students' creative abilities, we suggest offer students other tasks to develop creative abilities during regular student supervision sessions, such as: personal reflections, peer review, ethical dilemmas, problem-solving sessions, critical reflections. We suggest using methods that also affect the development of students' creativity: brainstorming, the method of focal objects, composing and performing creative tasks, research tasks, the method of trial and error, the method of fantasizing, the synectic method, the method of control questions, coaching method, the use of business and role-playing games, some issues of which students can follow during internship. At the same time, special attention should be paid to the development of independent creative abilities of students, because through creativity the professional interests and inclinations of students are most fully manifested.

**Conclusions and research perspectives.** Today, our society has an urgent need for creative, active, intellectually, and spiritually developed professionals. Therefore, the task of the lecturer, teacher, instructor is not to inform but to reveal the experience of the students regarding the presented while studying information. First of all, it should not be forced learning, but encouragement to learn, respect for the student's intellectual power.

Conducting special trainings within the supervision sessions via online platforms will contribute to the development of future social workers' creative abilities which in its term will enables students to use a creative approach while solving professional tasks in the process of social work field education. Further research will be devoted to the development of students' critical thinking during the social work field education.

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