

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES OF A SOCIAL TEACHER IN THE CONTEXT OF COOPERATION WITHOUT BORDERS

INTRODUCTION

The tendencies of the development of higher education and the requirements in the preparation of social teachers in the context of modern social development are considered in the article. The competences which are necessary for the preparation of a social teacher, offered by Ukrainian scientists, the competence of the survival of graduates in the labour market which were outlined by American scientists and the basic and central competences which are in the competency profile of a social teacher in the German system of the training of specialists to work in the social sphere are allocated.

THE DEFINITION OF PROBLEM URGENCY

Among the main tendencies of world progress which predetermine changes in an education system in particular the highest, are allocated as such: the fast rate of the development of society, the transition to post-industrial, an information society, the expansion of borders with respect to intercultural interaction; the emergence and growth of global problems, which is only possible thanks to the cooperation of the countries; societal democratisation, the expansion of possibilities of political and social choice; the dynamic development of economy, competition growth, radical structural changes in the employment sphere; growth of the value of human capital, etc (Rubin 2005: 49).

Drawing attention to all of the aforementioned tendencies is an important step in viewing the system of vocational training of the future experts of the social sphere, in particular social teachers, and is carried out under conditions of a classical university. According to an analysis of the modernisation of the choice of methods of training and professional activity, directed not only to the formation of theoretical knowledge, but also to the development of personal lines which in the future will provide experts with the

successful performance of professional activity and their socialisation in society, needed to substantially fill the educational and professional program of the training of specialists, the introduction of innovative educational technologies with the active involvement of students in the educational process. Also important is the yet unsolved but also important question is the organisation of individualised training for future experts with the application of personified programs and programs of a professional portfolio. It will give them the chance to build their own trajectory of achievement of successes, to compare them to their previous achievements, to form an individual style of activity, to gain experience in business competition, and to develop the academic and professional competences for the purpose of successful implementation into a professional business environment.

ANALYSIS OF THE LATEST RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

The question of the formation of professional lines of future teachers is devoted to the scientific works of domestic and foreign authors, in particular: to studying the essence and structure of pedagogical activity (A. Bogu, I. Zyatyu, N. Kuzmin, N. Machinsk, O. Pekhota), intensification of preparation of future social teachers (O. Bezpalko, N. Zaveriko, I. Zvereva, M. Duzha-Zadorozhna, A. Kapska, L. Mishchik, I. Kurlyak, N. Mikitenko, V. Polishchuk, O. Prishlyak, M. Shved). Competence in the approach to the vocational training of teachers in higher education is investigated by L. Kovalchuk, N. Mikitenko, I. Sabatovska, S. Sisoeva. Modern labour market requirements and the competition conditions of young specialists are studied by O. Grishnova, T. Koshmanova, P. Smolovik. Nevertheless, the question of the study of the professional competences of the social teacher in a cooperative context without borders need specification and generalisation, resulted in the choice of the purpose of this article.

THE FORMULATION IS MORE WHOLE THAN THE ARTICLE

The purpose of this article is to analyse the current state of the preparation of social teachers; to show the role of the competence approach to the training of specialists according to the modern requirements of the market of educational services, and the international expertise in the organisation of vocational education which will assist in the improvement of this process and also provide positive changes.

MAIN BODY

The difficult processes of modern social development in our state radically changed the valuable approaches to the education system, resulting in new requirements for the preparation of teachers. According to *The national doctrine of the development of education*, one of the most current problems is the improvement of the quality of national education and its integration into both European and global educational areas. An important condition for the modernisation of state education is the preparation and professional improvement of pedagogical personnel. Today, reconsideration of its ultimate goals in forming the direction of future experts is necessary, in particular social teachers with a complete complex of the basic and professionally focused competences. After all, the humanistic orientation of the formation of today is directed by the purpose – to develop the individual and their personal qualities defines the development of the whole of society. Nowadays, new educational technologies are being prepared for future teachers and should assist in the general development of their personality, the formation of cultural, moral and spiritual qualities, and also creativity and individual experience, to assist in the process of the self-organising assimilation of knowledge by students, for their self-education.

In recent years the concept *competence* remained at the all-didactic and methodological level. It is connected with its system and practical functions and plays an integrated role in general education. Attention to the strengthening to this concept also results from recommendations of the Council of Europe which concern education restoration and its approach to societal order.

According to the carried-out analysis, today there is no uniform coordinated definition or a list of key competences. As competences are, first of all, the order of society for the high-quality vocational training of its citizens and such an approach is defined by the coordinated position of society in a certain country or the region. To reach such coordination is not always possible. For example, in the course of implementation of the international project *Definition and selection of key competences* which was carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and national institutes of educational statistics of Switzerland and the USA, a strict definition of the concept of key competences was not created. Yet, during a symposium of the Council of Europe on the subject *Key competences for Europe* a rough list of key competences that points to certain kinds of activity, for example, was defined:

- *to study*: to study independently; to be able to apply in practical activities through useful experience; to systematise knowledge and put it in order; to apply one's own receptions of training; to be able to solve problems;

- *to seek*: to find different databases; to consult with experts; to receive information; to be able to work with documents and to classify them;
- *to think*: critically, to treat this or that of an aspect of the development of society; to be able to resist difficulties and risks; to take an accurate position in discussions, to defend one's thoughts; to analyse and estimate the social habits connected with health, consumption, and social environment;
- *to cooperate*: to be able to work in a group; to make decisions, coordinate divergences and conflicts; to be able to agree; to be able to develop projects and carry out contracts;
- *to be accepted for good reason*: to be able to organise independent activity; to bear responsibility for one's actions; to have solidarity with colleagues; to be able to use computing and simulation devices;
- *to adapt*: to prove flexibility with decisions, considering the calls of society which are quickly changing; to be able to apply new information and communicative technologies; to be resistant to difficulties; to be able to make new decisions.

Today in the world, there is a system of obligatory assimilation of knowledge, the formation of skills, and the ability to change the formation of a complex of competences for future experts. Competence measurements are used to determine the quality of preparation of experts. According to O. Loyko, it is necessary to consider professional competence as *difficult integral education covering a wide range of components and a set of systematized knowledge, skills and abilities, which are important for both the professional field of activity and for development of highly specialized personal features* (Loyko 2012; Glushkov 2012: 39).

The analysis of research on the issue of personality development testifies to all of its main features are closely connected among themselves, but the leading role belongs to outlook and personality orientation, its motives which define behaviour, and the activity of the individual. It gives an opportunity of recognising the features and characteristics of future expert in social and moral, professional and pedagogical and informative orientation. In the course of vocational training, it is first of all necessary to consider the general requirements to form the future expert, namely: *professional competence* which is based on special scientific, practical, psychological and pedagogical preparation; *common cultural and humanitarian competence* which covers knowledge of the bases of world culture, humanistic features of personality, responsibility for the results of one's own activity, motivation to self-improvement; *creativity* which provides creation of an independent way of thinking, possession of innovative strategy and tactics, and flexible adaptation to changes of the contents and conditions of professional activity; *communicative competence* which

covers perfect knowledge of the native language, foreign language skills, modern means of communication, and the basics of computer literacy, the ability to produce official papers etc (Sabatovska 2013: 255).

The specifics of professional activity of the social teacher demands organic association of personal and professional qualities, and wide erudition; therefore, preparation of such experts provides for the formation of certain professional competences and professional qualifications in them. The profession of the social teacher is extremely important and necessary for our country, which today endures crises in difficult social phenomena, such as economic and political instability, social orphanhood, poverty, dependence, etc. Mediation between personality, a family and their environment, the education of resistance to vital disorders, training for people to assist them in independently finding a way out of a difficult situation, and the creation of favorable social, teaching and educational conditions for the development and personality of socialisation. Therefore, society has high expectations for individuals who choose this profession: they should be a humanist, have an appropriate level of general and spiritual culture, ideological and moral principles, developed communicative and organisational abilities, tolerance, flexibility, knowledge of the steps when analysing social phenomena and its processes, to sympathise and resolutely operate, to embody life in the desire to assist people who need the attention of society.

For the purpose of creating the preconditions for the debugging of cooperation of experts of the social sphere in Europe, the further development of social pedagogical education in the separate countries of the International Association of Social Teachers (International Association of Social Educators AIEJI) in May, 2006 created a catalogue of professional competences for social teachers. It can become the basis for the updating of professional standards in the training of specialists in this area both in Ukraine and in other countries. According to this catalogue, social pedagogy is considered a purposeful strategy which assists social unity and community association. It is society's answer to the number of integrated problems, in particular, which arise in the context of social and educational situations.

According to the catalogue of professional competences for social teachers in the International Association of Social Teachers, it is necessary to understand the *competences* concept as the *ability of the social teacher to act in a certain task, situation or context which unites not only knowledge, habits, intellect, practical and social competence, but also in position and motivation* (International Association of Social Educators 2006: 16).

Generally, two measurements of competence in the profile of the social teacher are: *the first* – characterises different equalities, which the expert can

affect in different practical contexts, interrupt them and analyse; *the second* – considers the central competences which follow from various prospects and the general conditions of social and pedagogical work. The integrated approach of the teaching of social students covers different fields of activity which demand of future social teachers a mastering of such basic and central competences.

Base competences

- *competence of active intervention.* The social teacher should be able to quickly, and without unnecessary delay, operate depending on the needs or desires of the client; i.e. to interrupt them when it is demanded by a situation. Their actions can be intuitive or motivated by nonverbal knowledge; nevertheless, it should be based on simultaneous theoretical or practical empirical knowledge.
- *competence of estimation.* The social teacher should be able to plan and competently analyse the activity, relying both on theoretical knowledge, and on the basis of the analysis of personal practical experience or the experience of others. They should understand communication between intention, action and result.
- *competence of analysis.* The social teacher should be able, together with colleagues and other experts, to analyse problems in the professional field, to provide a general vision and further development of social and pedagogical specialties. They should be capable of integrating their own development in their professional activity (International Association of Social Educators 2006: 17).

Central competences

- *personal and relationship competences.* The relationship with an individual who needs assistance and support, is central in all types of social and pedagogical activity; therefore, both personal competences and relationship competences are basic for social and pedagogical work. Recently, in Germany the personal aspect generally took a central position in labor activity, and the value of such competences such as a readiness to bear responsibility, motivation, non-failure of an operation, and the personal point of view, constantly increases. For social teachers, the question of their personal relationship to work has a broader aspect: it is a question of their personal relationship with the client on the basis of humanistic, moral and ethical bases. At the relationship level, i.e. personal social contact with the client gives the chance for the expert to interrupt their own life. Therefore, it is

important to be able to interpret these relationships, to direct them and change, thanks to the developed observation and attentiveness of the details of the social interaction. For implementation of this activity it is necessary for social teachers to develop empathy, the ability to adapt for new conditions, and the ability to adhere to a role.

- *social and communicative competences.* The social teacher should be able to work in a group of colleagues and a cross-sectoral group, to possess knowledge on the development and dynamics of group work and other related professional spheres, to know the corresponding terminology and ethical bases, to be able to cooperate with parents, to use methods of cross-sectoral cooperation and conflict management, to communicate at different levels and to possess different communicative tools, to advise and accompany, using various advisory technicians.
- *organisational competences.* Social teachers should generally be able to wholly formulate, plan, structure and systematise social and pedagogical activity of a certain establishment, and for separate social and pedagogical tasks, processes, projects, and initiate, introduce, coordinate and estimate them. They should be able to take responsibility for their own decisions and actions, to coordinate and carry out personal and group consultations, instructions for parents, relatives, colleagues or other experts. Today, pedagogical activity also covers administrative tasks, therefore experts of the social sphere should have knowledge of certain administrative processes; how for example, to document, to estimate, to comment, to carry out negotiations, etc.
- *system competences.* Social teachers should have the corresponding knowledge and be able to plan their work according to laws, instructions, rules and arrangements which define the general borders of social and pedagogical activity; to understand organisational and management systems and the management of these systems, to know modern and future requirements for public and private organisations for managing them and their high-quality development; to possess information on relevant systems for the estimation and documentation of social and pedagogical activity; to be able to act like comrades when participating in actual sociopolitical debate of social and pedagogical activity and its influence on society.
- *competences of development and training.* The social teacher should be always be prepared for changes, thanks to continuous professional development, pilot projects, and group consultations; to develop and improve their professional competences and theoretical knowledge; to acquire new knowledge and habits and then put them into practice; independently or together with others, and critically analyse and estimate their own work and the work of others.

- *competences which are generated within professional activity*. Actual competences which are obtained within practical activities supplement the above-mentioned central competences. This group covers such competences:
 - *competences of theoretical knowledge and methodical competences* (acquaintance with the conventional and widespread educational, social, and pedagogical theories and accepted working methods; assimilation of important knowledge from areas of pedagogics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, philosophy and their integration in work);
 - *competences of professional activity* (acquaintance with terminology and professional concepts, participation in their development; internationalisation of ethical and moral professional standards; development of documents and agreements which form the basis for social and pedagogical activity);
 - *cultural competences* (recognition of these cultural values help to come into contact with the client; the assimilation of knowledge of other cultures and their values, the establishment of contacts from other cultures, which involves the establishment of social student teaching and with which it communicates);
 - *creative competences* (possession of forms of expression and habits in the creative sphere, art, to the musician which are applied as an integrated part of social and pedagogical work with certain clients, and is are directed by a level of emotions, their social, language and intellectual development) (International Association of Social Educators 2006: 28).

It is important to emphasise that mastering the above-mentioned competences is impossible only during the course of training: it continues in the natural course of further professional activity (Shved, Duzha-Zadrozka 2009: 98).

Having analysed the catalogue of professional competences of social teachers of the International Association of Social Teachers, the professional standards of preparation for future experts of the social sphere in higher educational institutions of Germany, the curricula and programmes in the direction of training of “*socially pedagogic*” specialists, a conclusion can be drawn, the special accent put on vocational training when carrying out development of adaptive and analytical abilities and abilities, the mastering of a certain set of professional competences and professional qualifications which the social teacher can use in their practical activities depending on the situation and character of a problem.

To attain success in the global labour market the modern expert should be globally competent and possess the corresponding competences which

will help them to be competitive. According to Tonja Wagner, well-known American scientist skilled in the interviewing of leaders of leading corporations, these developed types of competences will assist in the survival of young specialists in the labour market, specifically in educational areas (Koshmanova 2013: 351-352):

1. *Critical thinking and solutions to students' problems.* Abilities are one of the most important indicators of critical thinking when asking different kinds of questions, the ability to identify them and solve the problem, to put knowledge into practice and to make decisions, and the ability to work as part of a team.
2. *Cooperation in networks.* The ability to communicate with others to direct them (to act as an informal leader), to create a positive working atmosphere in the community, to form trust between people, and the ability to accept different races, nations, language, culture.
3. *Dexterity and abilities of adapting.* Today there is a change in decision-making in the hierarchy of authority from the superior to the whole team of employees who assist in the development of abilities to adapt to an environment which will be the key to success in work.
4. *Initiative and enterprise.* Experts should not only solve problems and be kind players in team, but also offer new possibilities and ideas, form strategic plans, and find initiative and enterprise.
5. *Oral and written communication.* As the modern environment is continually changing to become more of a virtual office, employees should be able to communicate through e-mail, to accept conference calls, to structurally communicate with representatives from different cultures, and to use a full complex of modern means and technologies.
6. *Assessment and information analysis.* In the modern world of global work which is teeming with the continuous flow of new information, an important professional quality of the modern expert is the ability to receive it and to critically and effectively comprehend and use it. It influences ability of the person to develop the civil qualities along life.
7. *Inquisitiveness and imagination.* Development of these qualities is not only connected with the ability of an expert in solving a problem, but with the development and improvement of professional services which relate to creativity and innovations.
8. In modern market conditions there is a qualitatively new requirement of labour which is the requirement of professional mobility, i.e. the ability to quickly master technical innovations and new specialties. This ability substantially depends on the level of general and vocational education, from extensive and valid vocational training. Professional mobility also pro-

vides a high level of generalised professional knowledge, readiness for operative selection and the implementation of optimal ways of performance of different tasks in the field of this profession. In conditions of quickly changing educational and professional production technologies, mobility acts as an important component of qualifying the structure of the expert (Rapacevitsh 2005: 482).

Considering that the modern labour market unites *prestigious* works, are characterised by the stability of employment of the position of the worker, high level of compensation, possibilities of professional growth, use of professional technologies, pertinent are the thoughts of O. Grishnovo and P. Smolovik that competition for the worker in the primary Ukrainian labour market will provide fundamental basic education, the ability for training and replenishment of knowledge, the existence of additional knowledge and habits, professional mobility, and the system of values focused on personal development. According to scientists (M. Gusakovskiy, S. Kostyukevich, L. Yashchenko, etc.) the requirement of studying and applying practical experience should be included in the number of actual problems in modern education. Therefore, when organising vocational training for future skilled workers who will compete in the labour market and are capable of professional mobility, it is important to address life experience and to teach it to work with it (Goutsharenko 2000: 123).

Conclusion. Having shown features of the preparation of social teachers in Ukraine and abroad, having analysed a number of classifications of professional competences, having considered the professional standards of the preparation of future experts in the social sphere, and having outlined the general requirements of the market of educational services, we have reached such conclusions. The special accent in the vocational training of social teachers is carried out in the development of adaptive and analytical abilities and abilities, mastered by a certain set of professional competences and professional qualifications which the social teacher in the professional activity on the accounting of requirements of the modern labour market, while using positive foreign experience and debugging effective international cooperation without borders.

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Summary

The purpose of this article is to analyse the current state of the preparation of social teachers; to show the role of the competence approach to the training of specialists according to the modern requirements of the market of educational services, and the international expertise in the organisation of vocational education which will assist in the improvement of this process and also provide positive changes.

Key words: vocational training, competence approach, key competences, professional mobility