

ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF THE THEORY AND METHODS OF EDUCATION АКТУАЛЬНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ ТЕОРІЇ І МЕТОДИКИ ВИХОВАННЯ

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Creative potential of future social workers: formation in the dual form of education

Roman Gurevych, Nadiia Opushko

Vinnytsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University

Abstract

The development of the national social sector, its progressive ideas are largely ensured not only by professionalism, but also by the creative activity of social workers in the performance of professional functions and the realisation of social expectations of the society. The content of creativity in the implementation of social work technologies is revealed in the following qualities of a specialist: creativity, the ability to successfully combine valid, time-tested and experienced effective ways of working with non-traditional methods of work. The latter are formed only under the influence of effective organisation of the practical component of the educational process.

The article analyses the possibilities of developing the creative potential of social workers through the organisation of practical research as part of course and qualification work, as well as during project activities. Attention is focused on the extent to which student research based on real-life practical situations can contribute to the development of creativity and professional competence. The authors note that creativity and practical research are unknown structures and require a tolerant attitude to uncertainty.

It is noted that uncertainty can be overcome by taking into account the conditions: the problem and obstacles to its solution are determined by clear criteria obtained through empirical research; when conducting student research in the framework of dual education, attention should be paid to certain conditions that provide students with a reliable basis.

It is stated that the possibility of acquiring the creative potential of a specialist and providing simple research tools and strategies is possible through expanding students' practical capabilities and supervisory support for research projects with elements of reflection and feedback from the teacher.

Keywords: creative potential, creativity, competence, practical research, social workers, dual form of education

Творчий потенціал майбутніх соціальних працівників: формування за дуальною формою навчання

Роман Гуревич, Надія Опушко

Вінницький державний педагогічний університет імені Михайла Коцюбинського

Анотація

Розвиток вітчизняної соціальної галузі, її прогресивні ідеї багато в чому забезпечуються не лише професіоналізмом, а й творчою активністю соціальних працівників у здійсненні професійних функцій і реалізації соціальних очікувань суспільства. Зміст творчості в реалізації технологій соціальної роботи розкривається в таких якостях фахівця: креативність, здатність вдало поєднувати в своїй діяльності валідні, перевірені часом і досвідом ефективні способи діяльності з нетрадиційними прийомами роботи. Останні формуються лише під впливом ефективної організації практичної складової освітнього процесу.

У статті проаналізовано можливості розвитку творчого потенціалу соціальних працівників через організацію практичних досліджень в межах курсових та кваліфікаційних робіт, а також під час проєктної діяльності. Увагу акцентовано на тому, якою мірою студентські дослідження, що засновані на реальних практичних ситуаціях можуть сприяти розвитку креативності та професійної компетентності. Автори зазначають, що творчість і практичні дослідження є невідомими структурами і вимагають толерантного ставлення до невизначеності. Зазначається, що невизначеність можна подолати з урахуванням умов: проблема та перешкоди до її вирішення визначаються за допомогою чітких критеріїв, одержаних в процесі емпіричних розвідок; під час проведення студентських досліджень в межах дуального навчання увага має приділятися певним умовам, які забезпечують студентам надійну основу.

Констатовано, що можливість набуття творчого потенціалу фахівця та надання простих дослідницьких інструментів і стратегій можливе через розширення практичних можливостей студентів та супервізійну підтримку дослідницьких проєктів з елементами рефлексії та зворотним зв'язком з боку викладача.

Ключові слова: творчий потенціал, креативність, компетенція, практичні дослідження, соціальні працівники, дуальна форма здобуття освіти

Statement of the problem. Modern society is undergoing rapid changes in all areas of life much faster than 50-70 years ago. The expansion of the Internet, social media, digital gadgets, and artificial intelligence is changing humanity at a rapid pace. Many of the things that seem obvious to us now and that we take for granted will no longer be in demand tomorrow. For example, social workers often face ambiguous situations in which neither the target criteria nor the means necessary to resolve them are known. Situations that are difficult to understand arise not only when providing emergency assistance to people. When refugees, migrants and other asy-

lum seekers are involved, social workers are faced with completely new conditions. As a result, they can only rely on ready-made solutions, models or theories to a very limited extent. In order to solve complex problems, they need to be open to new experiences. From the point of view of learning psychology, curiosity about new things is one of the main factors of success in learning (Stumm, et al., 2011). Allowing students to follow new and unknown paths, formulating challenging tasks with different solutions, and encouraging research-based learning can create a smart educational strategy at every

level of education. Practical research is the search for solutions with uncertain outcomes.

Therefore, the didactic use of uncertainty gives students the opportunity to achieve sustainable learning success. The effectiveness of developing creative potential increases when research (project) work is based on real-life practical situations. This is possible in the process of training specialists in the dual form of education. The study of foreign and domestic experience will further improve the professional training of future dual-format specialists.

Analysis of research and publications. The problem of forming creative thinking and creativity of future specialists in the context of university training has been studied by domestic experts: O. Akimova, V. Haluziak, Z. Kurlyand, V. Kaplinskyi, S. Sysoieva, V. Frytsiuk, N. Khamska and others; training of specialists in the dual form was studied by: N. Abashkina, S. Amelina, O. Davlikanova, R. Hurevych and others.

Among foreign scholars, it is worth highlighting the works of H. Vaske, who notes that a person manifests his creative thinking and creative abilities even in an unconscious state, for example, during meditation (Vaske, 2018). Foreign psychologist Stefan Bornemann argues that creative solutions require a constant focus on research. This type of thinking not only allows you to find the next logical step (convergent thinking), but, above all, to generate alternative solutions (divergent thinking). From the point of view of cognitive psychology, both forms of creative thinking are subject to the laws of information processing in the human brain. This processing is not always conscious. In unconscious processes, the limbic system is of particular interest to researchers of the cognitive approach (Bornemann, 2012); Gerhard Roth believes that people perceive their activities only indirectly as affects, feelings, desires and ideas (Roth, 2003).

Therefore, creative processes often take place between logical rationality, on the one hand, and intuitive feelings, on the other hand. According to Ernst Pöppel, the brain is overloaded with information processing when unexpected things happen because it immediately tries to recognise and activate a well-known pattern (Pöppel, 2005). However, creativity is designed to discover unknown patterns. That is why a logical decision in favour or against something often has to be postponed and alternative ways to find it have to be sought through divergent or even lateral thinking. Stepping into unknown territory through lateral thinking requires creative practitioners to have

a high degree of tolerance for exploration and the courage to make mistakes. If you give students a research task at the beginning of their studies, you activate and use the resource of creativity.

We believe that creative thinking is a way to look at problems or situations from a different perspective. Creativity involves the ability to think laterally, draw analogies and put seemingly unrelated issues, problems and ideas into context. It often includes aspects that are born out of uncertainty.

In psychology, the quality and productivity of human thinking was initially considered almost synonymous with creativity. Jacob W. Getzels and P. W. Jackson distinguished between creativity and intelligence. Solutions that were effective and useful, but were achieved using familiar and habitual patterns are intellectual solutions. Creative solutions leave the usual framework and create new models of solutions (Getzels, & Jackson, 1968).

According to D. Dörner, scientific research is problematic only when a certain goal is set that the researcher seeks to achieve, but the path to it is unknown or blocked by certain barriers. Accordingly, the solution to the problem is to overcome the unknown barrier. The researcher identifies three different barriers:

- the interpolation barrier, in which the initial state is known, and the goal is clearly defined, but the means of achieving the goal are unknown. The barrier is that it is necessary to find the right sequence of means to solve the problem;
- the synthesis barrier: the initial and desired states of the problem are known. However, the necessary means of solving it are unknown. The researcher needs to find the right means and arrange them in the appropriate sequence. Here we are talking about the creation of appropriate means;
- dialectical barrier: only certain criteria of the research problem are known. However, there is no specific goal. The solution is in the dialectical process. Accordingly, the project or proposed solution to the problem is checked for certain aspects until all contradictions are resolved. Overcoming interpolation barriers requires effort (Dörner, 1999).

When researchers open up a completely new field, they also need to move quickly from the present to action. Under what circumstances can people break away from their own thoughts and desire to plan and act? Julius Kuhl considers this ability to be part of the personality. Accordingly, he distinguishes between situation-oriented and action-oriented people. Students with a research assignment

also face similar problems. If the desired outcome is unknown, they gather information. Gathering is successful when people move towards an initially undefined goal and take action. Then, based on the new information, any adjustments can be made to the course (Kuhl, 2001).

The central task of practice-based learning is to assign students tasks where the definition of the problem is initially unclear. An important skill is the ability to research, understand and structure problems, as well as to work independently to solve them. Some scholars note that developing a problem concept may be more important than solving it (Getzels, & Jackson, 1968).

Accurately conceptualising a problem is important because otherwise there is a risk of simply moving towards obvious solutions that do not address the original problem. Defining the problem is the first step towards solving it and is the main process in almost all models of creative processes. Therefore, students should also acquire problem-solving competences. Problem solving includes researching, formulating, constructing, identifying and defining problems. Students can practice mastering these steps and increase their overall problem-solving ability.

Action research is primarily an empirical method that works with qualitative and quantitative survey and evaluation methods. Unlike traditional research, it focuses not only on collecting data to draw conclusions, but also, as Maja Heiner emphasises, on the study of practice with the aim of changing it in a targeted way (Heiner, 1998). Heinz Moser argues that practice research can also come from practice itself. Research through "professional practice" is possible when the concepts "emphasise the need for scientific connections and focus on the acquisition of scientific knowledge" (Moser, 2015). According to Werner Thole, practice-based research opens up specific approaches to socio-educational fields of activity, as practice is not only researched, its methods and research strategies directly intervene in practice - they are researched in practice and together with it (Thole, 1999).

III. Chantal Munsch considers this type of research to be "socio-educational research" and even refers to the term "action research", which first appeared in the 60s of the twentieth century as part of the movement for education reform (Munsch, 2002). Action research now focuses on the intensive participation of researchers and research subjects. For S. Munsch, equality of researchers and practitioners is

a central factor in the relationship and can lead to relevant results in practical research (Munsch, 2002).

Thus, practice-based research aims to contribute to empirically based changes and improvements in the field. To some extent, we can already talk about collaboration here, which brings us to one of the central challenges of social work. It is closely related to the practice-based research approach and the characteristics of the future.

The purpose of the article is to analyse the process of formation of student research activity, which promotes the development of creative potential and increases adaptability to changes and complex professional challenges.

Presentation of the main material. Dual education is a symbiosis of theoretical and practical parts of training, when a student receives the necessary knowledge at the university and processes it at an enterprise (company, organisation) which the educational institution cooperates with (Hurevych, et al., 2022).

Based on foreign experience, we note that the training of social sector professionals is often implemented in a dual form. For example, the Internationale Studien- und Berufsakademie, Freiburg, the International University of Cooperative Education, Darmstadt, the Internationale Berufsakademie Darmstadt, the International Cooperative Academy, Kassel, Germany. Kassel Internationale Berufsakademie, Internationale Studien- und Berufsakademie, Göttingen Academy of Business and Management (Verwaltungs- und Wirtschaftsakademie und Berufsakademie Göttingen), Wilhelmshaven University of Cooperative Education (Berufsakademie Wilhelmshaven), Internationale Berufsakademie in Münster, etc. We consider it relevant to borrow foreign experience and implement certain ideas in the national process of professional training of social sector specialists.

An analysis of domestic and foreign scientific literature on the issue has made it possible to state that the academic success of social work students is largely related to the aspect that determines the ability to innovate and be creative. These qualities are particularly effective in the process of practical training and research, as part of project assignments, coursework, and qualification papers.

Social activity is an important tool for ensuring free personal development. In its professional actions, this profession must adhere to the principles of human rights and ensure social justice. Professional methods and ethical principles help in the fol-

lowing areas of social work: health care for children and young people, care for the elderly, care for the disabled, general social assistance, social education, social pedagogy, etc. Social workers help people solve their social problems through counselling, care, support and, if necessary, monitoring. Thus, the essence of social and pedagogical work is to help those who seek help. Thanks to the professional actions of social workers, recipients of social assistance have the opportunity to lead an independent and autonomous life. To achieve this goal, they are counselled, educated, supported, coached and accompanied in the process of problem solving.

Social workers or educators deal with the life situations of the people they help, the specific problems, skills and deficiencies of those seeking help, and find specific methodological approaches to solve or initiate a process of problem solving. This approach has led to a fundamental shift in perspectives in the social work profession: "Instead of focusing on the 'problem', people who are identified as having the capacity to act and who may need support come to the fore" (Bornemann, & Schneider, 2022).

In this view of social work, the concept of orientation to the world of life, developed in the 70s of the twentieth century, is almost synonymous with the understanding of professionalism in social work. The pluralisation of life situations, individualisation of life and complication of its conditions lead to the fact that social workers have an increasingly wide range of methods and strategies of assistance aimed at constructively shaping the life world of recipients (Bornemann, & Schneider, 2022).

Thus, social workers and educators offer assistance in overcoming life difficulties. Recipients are viewed as subjects of their own lives, and they have to regain direct influence on their own life situation with the help of specialists - they solve their problems themselves, not social workers. The professional help offered by social work creates a specific "coping environment" in which service recipients can act (Bornemann, & Schneider, 2022). In other words, it means that professional helpers create the right favourable conditions. These conditions are different for each person seeking help. Therefore, different approaches and different ways of achieving the goal are required.

Working together between a social worker and a client is like moving into the unknown. Solutions need to be found and created. In this respect, social work requires a high level of creativity when using specific intervention options. Creativity as the main resource

of social workers is not sufficiently represented in the theoretical foundations of social work. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen creative skills in the structure of social and pedagogical education.

Thus, the main subject of social work is shaping and changing the future through the development of the individual's potential. In addition to providing emergency care, social work is about creating something new - something that does not yet exist, but which will improve the current situation. Therefore, this definition is closely related to the purposeful description of creativity. There is a close connection between social work, practical research and the broader concept of creativity, which is to some extent an integral part of the profession. Trust in people's capacity for development should also be a basic position of university teachers. This is facilitated by a number of factors that need to be addressed as an integral part of education. These include: the time factor for developing the problem under study and getting acquainted with the methodological approach to solving it; the time factor for intensive problem solving; and the time factor for making mistakes and finding ways to solve them.

When creating curricula, the teacher should not only strive to develop research as a key competence, but also consider it as an integral part of the curriculum. In the dual study programme at the International University of Cooperative Education in Munster (Germany), academic work and socio-pedagogical research are taught as compulsory modules in the first three semesters. In the fourth semester, students are required to carry out practical work with empirical elements. The experience and knowledge gained are then confirmed in the bachelor's thesis with a new empirical part (Bornemann, 2012).

The motivation for research-based learning is, in particular, to strengthen and empower students in their uncertain research activities. The teacher gave them time, confidence, and now they need a framework for their actions. In the 1980s, psychologists Edward L. Deci and R. M. Ryan developed a theory of motivation at the University of Rochester, which became known as the theory of self-determination and is an extension of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Deci, & Ryan, 1993).

Self-determination theory offers a way to successfully organise practical research in higher education. The theory of self-determination is based on the expansion of the categories of internal and external determination. The need for social integration can be realised in the student environment through

numerous individual and peer feedbacks. Basically, teachers and supervisors should initiate the process of supervision and monitor all students. The purpose and essence of student support is to convey confidence that all problems and obstacles are not an individual phenomenon or a consequence of a lack of ability, but are a purposeful process that is an integral part of any research, because it is a movement into the unknown, and it is necessary to have a certain tolerance for uncertainty. This applies to both students and experienced researchers. The need for autonomy and self-determination can be seen as a basic constructivist principle: there is no right or wrong, only a process of finding individual solutions.

Constructivist learning environments do not encourage the solution of didactically prepared problems, but rather the independent search and construction of problems in authentic teaching and learning situations. Thus, constructivist didactics aims to ensure the learning process through independent and often self-organised activities of students (Bornemann, & Schneider, 2022). Students take centre stage, while teachers take a back seat. The role of the teacher is to provide students with freedom of action in a field that is in fact highly regulated and pre-structured. If this is successful, the motivational need for autonomy and self-determination is almost satisfied.

Therefore, teachers in inquiry-based learning can only provide guidance within a relatively broad framework. Although research is a process guided by certain rules, the ways and interpretation of these rules can be shaped by the researchers themselves. We need to give students this opportunity and room for manoeuvre. Quick and visible success is the easiest way to overcome resistance and fear of failure. Therefore, students need quick wins, especially for their own research projects during their studies.

Quick wins require deliberate planning and communication on the part of teachers. Therefore, the focus should be on successes, as failures are usually the first thing that comes to mind for students. It is therefore important to identify, highlight and celebrate small successes. The problems that arise are used to develop solutions together with the participants and thus strengthen their ability to act. Another main goal of accompanying students in practical research during their studies is to properly handle the complexity of empirical research. First of all,

the focus is on recognising their own research competence and building it up in small steps.

Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research. Thus, in the process of studying the topic, we have come to the conclusion that creativity is directly related to the development of new strategies for overcoming previously unknown problems. The creative process can be understood as a form of problem solving that leads to completely new solutions and goes beyond the known patterns. New solutions can be found, for example, by removing certain problematic barriers. It is important to first identify these specific barriers in order to find appropriate solutions. They can serve as points of reference that can be used to expand your own competence and to be creative. A case study is an appropriate framework that allows students to become aware of these barriers and expand their ability to act creatively.

It is established that action research is a way of systematically studying fuzzy and unclear problems and making it possible to assess them more clearly. Action research is subject to the same quality criteria as other empirical research strategies: validity, reliability and objectivity. In order to meet these criteria, knowledge and experience of tried and tested survey and evaluation strategies are required. The main difference from traditional empirical research is the collaboration of researchers with the people being studied and the strong intention to change or improve practice in the field specifically. The before mentioned intention requires intimacy between the researchers and the field under study. This leads to the conclusion that only professionally trained researchers can conduct research. Therefore, it is important to mention that cooperation between professionals and clients is the main competence of a specialist.

We state that the possibility of acquiring the creative potential of a specialist and providing simple research tools and strategies is possible through expanding the practical capabilities of students and supervisory support for research projects with elements of reflection and feedback from the teacher.

As prospects for further research in this area, we note the following: development of ways and directions for the formation of practical skills of future social workers in theoretical activities at the university and practical work with organisations providing social services and those in need of social assistance.

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Про авторів

Роман Гуревич, доктор педагогічних наук, професор, дійсний член (академік) НАПН України, директор Навчально-наукового інституту педагогіки, психології, підготовки фахівців вищої кваліфікації, e-mail: r.gurevych2018@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1304-3870>

Надія Опушко, кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент, докторант, e-mail: hmarka52@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3013-2675>

About the Authors

Roman Gurevych, Dean of the Institute, Full academic of National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, Doctor hab of Pedagogy, e-mail: r.gurevych2018@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1304-3870>

Nadiia Opushko, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor, doctoral student, e-mail: hmarka52@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3013-2675>