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TRAINING FUTURE SOCIAL WORKERS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN FROM DISTANT FAMILIES

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Abstract

The article states that at the present stage of development of society a large number of families fall into the category of functionally insolvent and dysfunctional. The author focuses on the fact that many Ukrainian citizens go abroad to work, and their families become distant, that is whose members live for a long time distantly. As theoretical analysis and empirical studies show, children from distant families quite often find themselves in unfavorable rearing conditions, what causes a deviation in their behavior. The content of theoretical and practical training of future social teachers for work with children from distant families was analyzed. The author summarizes that the University education content of training students for work with children from distant families is built to combine theoretical knowledge with formation of abilities and skills in the process of their practical training. Theoretical training aims at the study of work to know the peculiarities with different types of distant families and with different children categories in these families. The directions of practical training of social teachers are predetermined by the main directions, forms and methods of work with children from distant families. While preparing future social teachers with children from a certain type of families it is necessary to develop their cooperation with families of this type. Only on the basis of criteria and indicators it is possible to estimate the formation of readiness level of future teachers for interacting with distant family. The main criteria are: attitude to work with the family, theoretical and practical readiness to work with the family, the desire to achieve goals of interaction, the evaluation of your own activity and of yourself as a subject. The readiness criteria of future teachers for work with distant families are relevant to components of teacher preparation to work with the family.

Keywords: *distant families; practical training; a readiness to work with the family; readiness criteria; theoretical training; uneducable children.*

Statement of the problem in the context of modern pedagogical science. In modern society, many families fall into the categories of dysfunctional and disadvantaged families. In the context of new market relations, a lot of the families could not adapt to the new socioeconomic conditions. Due to low incomes, feminisation of unemployment, family relations are deformed, crisis and aggressiveness occur.

Today, along with the pervasive poverty of population, there is another global problem — young parents, especially women, have to go to work abroad. These families, whose members live on a long distance, become distant families. There are not a lot of researches on the problem of distant families in psychological and pedagogical literature. F. Mustayeva, professor of Magnitogorsk University, defines a distant family as one in which each spouse's life passes separately due to the nature of the profession of one or both partners. She considers as distant families those of stewards, artists, astronauts, geologists, soldiers, athletes, and she believes that such families represent, on average, 4-6% of the total [4, p.152]. Revealing the methods of social and educational work with dysfunctional families, Professor of Kharkiv National Pedagogical University I. Trubavina gives the definition of “distant family” and briefly examines areas of work with such a family. She believes that the distant family is one whose members are on a distance for various reasons: work, prison placement, medical treatment, they cannot support their family and have to send children to the orphanage on temporary terms, etc. [8, p.113]. Professor of the Chernivtsi University D. Penishkevych has also included families whose members work abroad to this category [6, p.89]. The question of the stability of such a marriage is rather controversial. Some scientists believe that the long separation strengthens the family, the others think, on the contrary, that it results in divorce. However, all researchers admit that these families often have difficulties in upbringing children. It may also be hard to raise such children, and it creates learning difficulties.

A school social pedagogue solves a wide range of issues today. The interaction with different types of families is a special part of a social

pedagogue's activity. Family problems often lead to educational function failing caused by deviant behaviour and hardness of upbringing children. The peculiarities of work with difficult children and those from disadvantaged families covered by S. Bielichieva, S. Borodulina, L. Groisman, V. Lipnik, L. Liubin, A. Mykytina, V. Orzhekhovska, V. Matvieieva and others in their publications.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. Problems connected with training of social workers and psychologists are revealed by V. Panok, T. Tytarenko, Iu. Halahuzova, F. Mustaieva, V. Nikitin, A. Kapska, I. Kozubovska, L. Mishchyk, I. Zvierieva, N. Kolominskyi, O. Bondarenko, H. Laktionova, H. Lozhkin and others in their publications. The particular features of work with children from disadvantaged families are highlighted by Z. Zaitseva, V. Postovyi, M. Buianov, I. Dubrovina, V. Remezova, Ie. Kuznietsova in their works. Today, the willingness of teachers to work with families is studied by N. Buhaiets, T. Shanskova, N. Annienkova, Ie. Babaiev, T. Hushchyna and others. However, the issues of training future teachers to work with children from distant families, developing willingness to such work, defining criteria and indicators of this willingness have not been studied enough.

Formulation of the article' objectives. Are to highlight the peculiarities of training future social pedagogues to work with children from distant families, while studying theoretical disciplines and socio-pedagogical practice. In order to develop the technologies of training future social pedagogues to interact with distant families and children from such families, one should determine what this willingness is, and it can be evaluated according to which criteria and indicators.

Presentation of principal material.

Theoretical training of students to work with children from distant families. The scope of university education on training students to work with distant families is structured to combine theoretical knowledge with practice.

While studying such disciplines, as "Pedagogy", "Social pedagogy", "Caring pedagogy", " Personality's crisis states",

“Street Children” “Social-pedagogical work with different types of families”, “Pedagogy of family education”, “Technologies of social and educational work”, “Social support for a family”, students from the Chernivtsi National University, specialty “Social pedagogy” learn main theoretical approaches related to family and parenting problems. Future social workers try to analyse the reasons of family crisis states and hardness of raising children, find some solutions during the workshops, training sessions, socio-pedagogical practicum.

According to the theoretical analysis and empirical researches, children from distant families often find themselves in unfavourable conditions for upbringing, what leads to deviations in their behaviour. Students learn different approaches to determine abnormalities in the children’s behaviour within theoretical courses. For that reason, L. Ziubin singles out four types of deviations: 1) deviation that does not violate accepted norms (behaviour that does not match with the age during normal physical development); 2) violation of the accepted norms which is not supposed to be an offense of law (greed, selfishness, violence, lack of trust); 3) the offense that means a behaviour which violates the law, the articles of administrative and criminal laws; 4) behaviour deviations, caused largely by pathological factors (schoolchildren with psychopathic personality traits, neurotics and mentally unstable persons) [1, p. 234-236].

In the classification of S. Bielicheva, behaviour deviations are associated with unfavourable conditions of socialisation and characterized as persistent manifestations of deviations from social norms that have socially passive (unwillingness to study, work, a tendency to escape from home, vagrancy, alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide), selfish (thieving, speculations, fraud) and aggressive (insults, disorderly conduct, fighting) orientation [1, s.242].

Within the theoretical course, students learn different categories of difficult children: 1) those that exhibit some negative qualities violate discipline, indifferent to learning, 2) pedagogically-neglected adolescents 3) young offenders, 4) juveniles.

During the practicum, the future social teachers face difficulties in training and educating these children, study the reasons of such difficulties, learn forms and methods of work with difficult children from distant families. Working with such children, whose one or both parents are abroad, students find out that the children have broken ties with the micro — and microenvironment, and they have been suffered from lack of parent's influence, control and attention, as well as weak family relationships. It all leads to children's emotional rejection of parents, and recurring conflicts, resulting in the deviant behaviour of children, as the latter have been left without proper supervision.

So, according to the statistics of the Chernivtsi City Department of Guardianship, there is an annual increase of a number of guardianships, established over children whose parents have gone to earn money abroad. Children who have found themselves in unfavourable raising conditions usually require care, but one cannot claim that all children from distant family are disadvantaged.

Categories of distant families and peculiarities of the students' practical work with them. Analysing the livelihoods of these families, Professor D. Penishkevych conventionally divides them into three categories, some of whom are functional and dysfunctional families.

The first category is those families where there is mutual understanding between its members and each of them honestly fulfils its role. In such families, one of them is a migrant worker and collects money to give proper education to a child so that the latter may get a higher education, or to build a house, or to open his/her business. Family members accurately perform their duties and they regulate and plan everything by day. These families cannot be called dysfunctional and therefore social support granted by students and social pedagogues is limited to provide social and educational assistance of educational character. They consult each family member how to adapt to new meetings and separations, they explain to them that those relationships are temporary and help children establish relationships with their peers and teachers, because they often feel lonely, and become reserved.

The second category is distant dysfunctional families where one parent stays. Now, there are some problems. The most common of them is a male depression, which leads to the alcohol abuse and unemployment, and, consequently, child neglect, resulting in violations of conduct norms and rules. In such families, a child becomes alienated as from the father, because he is morally degrading, and as from the mother, because there is no constant communication with her. There is an imbalance of the child's moral and spiritual interests, his/her cultural and educational level has been reduced. It leads to school disadaptation and problems in interpersonal relationships with family members and with their peers. Most of these families have formalised relationships between a parent and a child or mental violence against a child, which is constantly intimidated, humiliated, untrusted.

The third category of distant families is the one that has fallen apart for various reasons, and the children have been passed to guardians, or trustees for maintenance and raising, or put in government care institutions (boarding schools, children's homes), family type homes, foster family [6,с.90-91].

We have found out that guardianships was established over 25 of such children in 2014, and 18 guardianships already for 9 months in 2015 (32% of the total) due to child neglect and alienation in distant families.

The analysis of specific nature and causes of the category of such families allows scientists to distinguish their other sub-categories. The most common among them are the type of family where the mother, staying to work in another country, has broken ties with her family due to another marriage, and the father has either created another family or degraded because of alcohol or drug abuse, and he does not perform parental duties or treat children in a rude, indifferent and dismissive way. More often, socially undesirable needs and interests are implanted into children and they are gradually drawn into an immoral lifestyle. Social and educational assistance granted by students is aimed at stabilising intra-family relationships to preserve the integrity of the family. They provide every member of the family

with individual social and educational aid, while release him or her from a stressful situation. They establish babysitting, channel communication into moral and spiritual education.

The type of family where the single mother has no financial position to maintain and educate minor children is equally popular. She leaves them on carers. Most of all, they are grandparents, but it may be strangers who are indifferent to the child's needs and interests, but they can nicely treat the child at the first glance. Due to the fact that the mother has not been contacting the children for a long period of time, the guardianship authorities may send her children to boarding school or to give to other guardians [6, p.92]. Social and educational assistance granted by students is aimed at stabilising intra-family relationships to preserve the integrity of the family. They provide every member of the family with individual social and educational aid, while release him or her from a stressful situation. They establish babysitting, channel communication into moral and spiritual education.

When passing trainee's socio-pedagogical practice at secondary schools in Chernivtsi, students work with children from such families and underline that some parents of the distant family choose the strategy of dictatorship and brutal treatment of a child, the other — permissiveness, excessive indulgence and bribing. Schoolteachers include these children to an at-risk group, because it is very difficult to communicate with them, both in the classroom and during their leisure time. In order to self-actualise, they always try to prove that they are right by arguing, without realising neither their actions nor deeds. Teachers highlight that they become uncontrollable because they do not want to understand either them (teachers) nor their peers. So one has to spend much more time and efforts on them than on other children. Almost 72% of these children feel lonely, although only 6% do not see any way out of this situation, and the rest of them think that they will find a true friend, will be able to find a way out of conflict situation [5, p.73]. In addition, these children sometimes utterly helpless, because they are not able to perform a task or assignment, but they cannot ask someone for help. Reactions to the

task's failure may be different. The most common ones are denial, apathy, depression; stupefaction, crying, etc.; reconsideration of stereotypical actions, task solutions that will not give results; acts that are inadequate to the situation at hand [5, p.74].

The scope of training of social workers is presupposed to some extent by ways, forms and methods of work with children from distant families. In particular, it is predetermined by identifying problems of each child, performing psycho-diagnostics, correction work, helping parents and children establish right relationships, increasing knowledge of children and parents about the rules for forming healthy lifestyle, learning how to protect oneself against psychological and social stresses, controlling the child's life conditions in the family and school, reducing their emotional stress, making an assessment of individual psychological characteristics and opportunities of a child, and creating the child's development programme, assisting to parents in establishing contacts with form mistresses/masters, forming a favourable microclimate in form collectives and more. While working with this category of families, students combined mass, individual-group and individual forms of work.

Having training sessions, examining different pedagogical situations, students try to make parents aware that cruel punishment and attempts to force the child to fulfil without any question all their demands result in tensions and the child's attempt to find people from outside who will understand and give him/her a piece of advice. This may encourage the child to enter antisocial companies and make dubious acquaintances. Therefore, they explain to parents and carers why they should not be irritated, cry in a conversation with a child, and much less apply physical punishment. They convince adults to avoid multiple repetition of the same demand to the child and not to make tragedies out of the thing if the child has done something wrong, in any case, not to humiliate the latter in public and to try to understand and build their relationships with a friendly attitude to him/her.

The preventive and socio-educational teaching practice is very important for preparing students to work with children of distant

families. Students can pass such a practice at a children's shelter under the Chernivtsi Regional State Administration.

Children living in the distant families often fall into the category of difficult, they have deviant behaviour, find themselves on the street. During practice at the children's shelter, students work with difficult children from distant families that had run away from their home, guardians and boarding schools. In this shelter, the future social teachers learned to communicate with children who find themselves on the street, passed with them various educational activities, studied the causes and consequences of the phenomena of homelessness and neglect.

While working with children in the shelter, the students were interacting with those children with distant families who had found themselves for various reasons without proper supervision. The trainees studied the conditions of education for such children, the future social teachers firstly tried to find out how strong the child's inner attachment is to his/her relatives, as a break with a close person, even with antisocial behaviour, can cause stress to the strong need for care and love to him/her. For that reason, the institution created warm, sincere relations, an atmosphere of trust between students and pupils. Children taught to personal care, self-service, day regime, as children are developed in a quite different way outside the family. Students contributed to the children's adaptation to new conditions and their early socialisation through some work.

During the trainee practice in Regional Centre of Social Services for Youth, students learn to give social support to distant families that have become dysfunctional. Social support of parents resulted in eliminating the causes of moral degradation through treatment, job placement and more. All consequent actions aimed at returning them to normal life. Thus, the creation of a happy family environment for each person is the guarantor of his/her security, recognition of this person's rights and his/her good performing of its social functions.

Criteria for the willingness of future social workers to work with distant families. Based on a set of criteria for assessing the level of willingness for social workers, developed by a number of authors,

T. Gushchina determines quality parameters of formation of future teachers' willingness to interact with a schoolchild's incomplete family [3,77-79].

Having reviewed the mentioned criteria and parameters, and analysed them, we may define the basic criteria of future teachers to work with distant families. As the criteria for assessing the willingness of a future pedagogue to interact with a schoolchild's distant family, we may single out four criteria, which correspond to components of preparedness to work with a family and were proposed by T. Gushchin [3]: 1) attitude to work with the family, 2) practical willingness to work with the family, 3) achievement drive of interaction, 4) evaluation of the teacher's own activities and himself/herself as their subject.

Let us examine the meaning and structure of every mentioned criterion.

The parameters of attitude to work with a distant family are 1) personal meaning of pedagogical activity; 2) direct interest (or indifference) to this activity. The nature of personal meaning defines three levels: utilitarian-pragmatic, imperative and value. The second parameter has three following basic levels of interest in the interaction with a pupil's distant family: positive interest is not shown, positive situational interest, positive sustained interest.

The second criterion, practical willingness to work with a distant family, is presented by cognitive and operational parameters. According to both indicators, the character of practical willingness to interact with a distant family defines three levels of its maturity: reproductive, constructive and creative. Each next level includes the features of previous one and also has special features that are typical only for him.

The parameters of the third criterion, the achievement drive of interaction, are the following: 1) satisfaction with teaching and professional activities as well as interaction with distant families (during the teaching practice and while performing research tasks); 2) display perseverance (refusal) and activity (inactivity) in solving tasks related to the interaction with incomplete distant

families of pupils (during training sessions, teaching practice and while performing research tasks). The degrees of manifestation of emotional and volitional component for each parameter are defined as low, medium and high.

The parameters of the criterion's maturity of the evaluation of the teacher's own activities and himself/herself as their subject are the power of reflection and reflection adequacy.

The manifestation degrees of the power of reflection are formal, egocentric and reflexive itself. Reflection adequacy is measured at three levels: adequacy is not practically observed, partial adequacy, high adequacy.

The knowledge of criteria and parameters of future social workers for working with families presents a possibility to plan better theoretical and practical training of such specialists to work with distant families and children from these families.

Research conclusions and perspectives of further studies in the area of investigation. The scope of university training of students for working with children from distant families is structured to combine the process of learning theoretical knowledge and that of gaining practical skills during their practical training. The theoretical training is aimed at studying the peculiarities of work with different types of distant families and different groups of children in these families. The areas of practical training of social workers are predetermined by main areas, forms and methods of work with children from distant families. The task of the future social teachers is to help children to adapt to life conditions, overcome various life crises, psychological problems, choose the right path in life, socialise in the community.

When preparing future social workers with children from a certain category of families, one needs to develop their willingness to interact with the families of this type. The formation of willingness of future teachers to interact with distant families may be objectively assessed only on the basis of criteria and parameters. The criteria of future teachers' willingness to work with distant families are related to the component of a pedagogue's willingness to work with the family. The main criteria are the following: attitude to the work

with the family, theoretical and practical willingness to work with the family, achievement drive of interaction, evaluation of the teacher's own activities and himself/herself as their subject.

In future studies, we plan to develop technologies of formation of future social workers' willingness to interact with distant families and children of these families.

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ПОДГОТОВКА БУДУЩИХ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ ПЕДАГОГОВ К РАБОТЕ С ДЕТЬМИ С ДИСТАНТНОГО СЕМЕЙ

Аннотация

Автор акцентирует внимание на том, что многие украинские граждане выезжает на заработки за границу, а их семьи становятся дистантными, то есть такими, члены которых длительное время проживают на расстоянии. Дети из таких семей достаточно часто оказываются в неблагоприятных для воспитания условиях, что приводит отклонения в их поведении. В статье проанализировано содержание теоретической и практической подготовки будущих социальных педагогов к работе с детьми из дистантных семей. Кроме того, автор раскрывает критерии готовности будущих социальных педагогов к работе с дистантными семьями. Основными критериями автор называет следующие: отношение к работе с семьей, теоретическая и практическая готовность к работе с семьей, стремление к достижению цели взаимодействия, оценка собственной деятельности и самого себя как ее субъекта.

Ключевые слова: готовность к работе с семьей; дистантные семьи; критерии готовности; практическая подготовка; теоретическая подготовка; трудновоспитуемые дети.

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ПІДГОТОВКА МАЙБУТНІХ СОЦІАЛЬНИХ ПЕДАГОГІВ ДО РОБОТИ З ДІТЬМИ З ДИСТАНТНИХ СІМЕЙ

Анотація

Автор акцентує увагу на тому, що чимало українських громадян виїжджає на заробітки за кордон, а їх сім'ї стають дистантними, тобто такими, члени яких тривалий час проживають на відстані. Діти з таких сімей досить часто опиняються в несприятливих для виховання умовах, що зумовлює відхилення у їх поведінці. У статті проаналізовано зміст теоретичної і практичної підготовки майбутніх соціальних педагогів до роботи з дітьми з дистантних сімей. Крім того, автор розкриває критерії готовності майбутніх соціальних педагогів до роботи з дистантними сім'ями основними з яких називає такі: ставлення до роботи з сім'єю, теоретична і практична готовність до роботи з сім'єю, прагнення до досягнення мети взаємодії, оцінка власної діяльності і самого себе як її суб'єкта.

Ключові слова: важковиховувані діти; готовність до роботи з сім'єю, дистантні сім'ї; критерії готовності; практична підготовка; теоретична підготовка.