



Prospective Social Workers' Training to Sustainable Development of Social Groups on the Basis of System-synergetic Approach

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ABSTRACT

The article shows the system of prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups on the basis of integrated system-synergetic approach. It has been shown that the training of prospective social workers in this direction is of great importance nowadays both for Ukraine and other countries, because no matter what level the society reaches, it always has elements that break its general harmony by practicing deviant, aggressive or self-destructive behavior, that have negative impact on its whole state. It has been proved in the study that sustainable development of social groups is possible on condition progressive sustainable development of personality as the subject of life and responsible social subject as well as a group as integrity. It has been substantiated that the system of social pedagogical activity (that suggests synergetic focus of social-educational, informational, preventive, correctional and rehabilitative activities on encouraging social groups to sustainable development) provides holistic effect on axiological, cognitive, volitional spheres of various social groups' representatives with a view to develop their subjectivity as well as promotes them both to individual and joint creative and value-oriented activity for improving social life. It has been also shown that the system of prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups (which has axiological, cognitive, activity and creativity-oriented subsystems and is being implemented through academic, educational, practical, research activities, self-education and volunteering) ensures their moving to the level of self-development as well as gaining the ability to implement the system of work towards sustainable development of various social groups.

Keywords: sustainable development, social group, sustainable development of social groups, system-synergetic approach, social pedagogical activity, prospective social workers, training

1. INTRODUCTION

Implementation of the strategy of the civilization's sustainable development that is on the agenda of the humanity in the third millennium is only possible by joint efforts of various social groups, including children, youth, adults, family and community who make up social structure of the society and determine the vector of its development [1, pp. 270-278].

However, nowadays these groups are not always characterized by harmony of their existence and are at the level of sustainable development. In this regard organization of purposeful activity with a view to moving social groups up to the level of sustainable development is the matter of particular importance. In its turn sustainable development of social groups we consider as steady harmonious progress of social community on the basis of humanism, positive social interaction and solidarity, their output to the level of self-organization, when they are able to self care and mutual assistance, self-rehabilitation and self improvement, as well as to social creativity, consolidating efforts towards improving personal and social life [8, p. 374].

We also would like to note that solving the problem of social groups' sustainable development is important nowadays both for Ukraine and other countries, because no matter what level the society reaches, it always has elements that break its general harmony by practicing deviant, aggressive or self-destructive behavior, that have negative impact on its whole state. However, as it is known, according to the laws of synergetic each element is absolutely valuable for the system, because it defines the state of the system as a whole.

A significant contribution to solving these problems can make social worker as a specialist in the field of social education who works with representatives of various social groups – both positive and 'risk groups' by promoting the prevention of social deviations, as well as helping to those who are in difficult circumstances. It is a social worker (who interacts in his professional activities with children and adults, disabled and healthy, indocile and gifted, as well as with an individual, family, community) according to his professional mission and level of competence can and should be an important subject of different social groups' promotion to sustainable development [10, p. 145]. It is also important to stimulate various social groups' representatives to combine their efforts for solving important social problems.

Thus, in the context of the goals and objectives of a modern society it is important to change the main targets in the activities of social worker from providing social assistance for representatives of different social groups to their promotion to sustainable development both with a view of their effective life and conscious activity for progressive development of society.

All this determines the relevance of the training of prospective social workers (who participate in the implementation of state social policy through realization social and educational, preventive activities) to sustainable development of social groups. In its turn, substantiation the system of work on future specialists' training in this direction required determination of its key methodological foundations which could ensure its integrity and effectiveness.

The article is aimed to show the system of work on prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups on the basis of system-synergetic approach.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the analysis of the scientific literature in the field of sustainable development, as well as the training of students of socially oriented professions it was determined that fundamental methodological basis for prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups is an integrated system-synergetic approach [7,13,18] which uses the achievements both system and synergetic approaches. So, system approach [5,17] allows us to create a holistic view of any object as a system, that has such features as complexity, hierarchic, integrity, emergence (that means emerging integrative qualities that do not belong to its individual elements and are caused by their interaction) as well as ability to interact with the environment. It should be stressed that system tends to preserve the integrity of internal order and harmony in spite of influence of various external and internal factors, in particular through changing the program of living or search for optimal conditions. According to this approach the person is a holistic system and, at the same time, the main element of such social systems as society, state, nation, community, family, school and others. As a result, person gains and displays features of these systems as well as plays a crucial role in their development.

In its turn, synergetic approach which was developed by H. Haken, E. Knyazeva, S. Kurdyumov, I. Prigogine and I. Stengers [6,14,16] discovers universal laws and mechanisms of evolution of nature, man and society as complex multilevel nonlinear open systems which are capable for self-organization on the basis of coordinated interaction of its elements. Researchers in the field of synergetic methodology point that synergetic systems are characterized by a number of features.

First, it is variability, instability, which is the main source of their development. So, the elements of any system constantly change. Accumulating of these fluctuations leads to destruction of previous organization and emerging bifurcation points as critical moments of uncertainty, which promote system to the choice of ways for further development.

Second, it is creative role of chaos that may have not only destructive, but also constructive role through encouraging system to enter the progressive attractor of development.

Third, this is system's openness to interaction with the environment as well as its sensitivity to any social influences, extremely weak signals, especially to the least motivational ones.

Fourth, the system is dissipative – it tends to self-organizing, self-building the steady state on the basis of its components' cooperative and coordinated interaction where ordering is realized mainly by means of internal factors, with no directional influence from outside.

Fifth, the system has nonlinear quantum nature of its development (which means constant changing states of chaos and order, organization and disorganization) that makes it possible.

Sixth, the system is characterized by probability and uncertainty of its development ways, which depend on a variety of factors and conditions. Scientists stress that it is often impossible to foresee exactly how system will develop further at the bifurcation point: whether it would be even more chaotic and stop its existence or move to new higher level of its development and organization [6].

Thus, the usage of the synergetic approach is important for understanding basic laws and mechanisms of complex social systems (including the individual, social group and the society) self-development and self-organization by means of their own resources, which are possible due to synergistic cooperative conscious interaction of all system elements. Essential conditions of such self-organization are internal activity of the system, its ability to create and complicate structure as well as to interact with the environment.

It should be also mentioned, that researchers in the field of sustainable development (F. Besong, C. Holland, I. Koblyanska, L. Melnik, T. Nestorenko) stress the importance of using synergetic principles for understanding background, cause and nature of many global problems that are mainly associated with violation of the law of techno-humanitarian balance [3,15. p. 18]. They believe that discrepancy of system of values made by previous historical experience with existing technological potential is the main cause of modern civilization crisis, because (as historical experience shows) only synergistically coordinated harmonious development of all significant spheres of society can provide the sustainability of its development. Moreover, synergetic methodology explains the insufficiency of usage of external control influence with a view to provide sustainable development of social system, which is possible on the basis of self-organization of internal sources of development of each individual as the key element of this system.

However, it should be noted that achieving of sustainable development of the individual, social group, society and civilization as a whole is complicated by many factors. First of all, development itself is multi-vector process. Moreover, all mentioned systems are characterized by non-linearity, multi variance and probability of their development. In this regard, its results are often unpredictable because of the influence of casual, chaotic, unmanaged or weakly managed processes. In addition, the person himself as a representative of social group and the society is extremely multi-dimensional being. His behavior is determined not only by individual aspirations, interests, values and unique personal qualities, but also a great number of unforeseen circumstances, which determine his actual mental state [7, p. 51]. All mentioned above further complicate the process of social systems' development.

What is more, taking into consideration that chaos can have both constructive and destructive role by promoting either self-development or self-destruction of system, it is important to remember that the process of spontaneous self-organization may cause destructive chaos, because not every person is characterized by sustainable system of values, well-developed subjective qualities as well as the ability to overcome influence of negative factors. All this gives reason to doubt the possibility of independent achievement of sustainability of social system's development on the basis of internal resources, without focused external influences. In this regard, we support the opinion of the researchers (E. Ionova, M. Kagan, N. Talanchuk) who, in spite of dominant role of internal mechanisms of self-organization, stressed the necessity to promote inner mechanism of social group' self-organization from outside.

3. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Thus, the analysis allows to assert that it is an integrated system-synergetic approach (which enables us to define main components and conditions of social system's sustainable

development and at the same time guarantees achieving positive results) that can and should be fundamental methodological basis both for solving the problem of social groups' sustainable development and the training of prospective social workers to social pedagogical activity with a view to sustainable development of social groups. We would also like to note that this approach both reveals objective laws of social systems' progressive development and emphasizes the need to maintain and increase level of their integrity, since the system operates and develops efficiently only due to positive state and interaction of all its elements. In this regard, each element is absolutely valuable for the system, because ignoring of any element results in loss of system integrity. For instance, critical state of individual members makes impossible sustainable development of social group, but at the level of its integrity any system may be self-organized one and capable to realize an internal program of its development.

So, the usage of system-synergetic approach to solving the problem of sustainable development of social groups has allowed us to draw the following conclusions.

First, achieving of vital sustainability of the development as a global strategy for human civilization, is only possible due to progressive development of all its significant aspects including environmental, economic, social, cultural where the human factor is crucial, because spirituality of each individual and society as a whole is a systematizing nuclear of their sustainable development.

Second, study the features of the social group as a phenomenon [2,4] allowed considering it as a complex multi-level dynamic system. It is a subsystem of society and, at the same time, its basic element is a person. Social group is being developed under the influence both external (from society) and internal (from individual) factors. It should be admitted that inner factors play their crucial role, because only person sees or does not see positive or negative influence of society. At the same time goals, values, behavior, methods of interaction and activities of each individual determine general condition of social group. Moreover, depending on its type (children, youth, adults, family or community) social group is characterized by more or less degree of integrity. In the context of sustainable development it is very important to increase the level of integrity and consolidation of a social group which means both its ability to mutual help and willingness to work together for achieving significant goals.

Third, all mentioned above allowed us to determine the basic conditions of social group's sustainable development. The first one is development of the individual as the subject of life, who is capable of conscious self-creation of his own life, identifying main directions of the development, monitoring and correction of its results, crises prevention as well as can effectively creatively respond to many challenges faced by person during his life. The second one is the forming personality as responsible social subject who realize his belonging to solidarity social communities of various levels (family, community, nation, civilization) and is able to individual and joint activity for increasing the level of their consolidation. And the third one is forming the ability of various social groups' representatives to social creativity, combining efforts both within the group and different social groups for sustainable progressive development of society.

Thus, we believe that moving social group up to the level of self-organization and sustainable development is only possible due to synergistic complementary progressive development of each individual (who is the key element of social group and should aware personal responsibility both for the results of his own life and individual contribution into the

process of social changes) and the group as integrity (that means improving both its internal consolidation and ability to promote development of other social groups and society) that altogether can ensure synergistic effect. All this requires the implementation of resonance external management to activate internal resources of social groups (their spiritual, creative, activity, subjective and social potential) with a view to promote their sustainable development [12, p. 86].

Just to stimulate the processes mentioned above should be directed the activity of social worker. Accordingly, system and synergetic approach was also the main methodological basis for the developing the system of social and pedagogical activity in direction under the study that suggested synergistic focus of social-educational, informational, preventive, correctional and rehabilitative activities on encouraging social groups to sustainable development. Such activity provides positive holistic effect on consciousness, beliefs, behavior, will and actions of various social groups' representatives and at the same time involves them in cognitive, creative, value-oriented and communicative activities which are of great importance in the context of sustainable development.

In this regard, crucial is social worker's ability to encourage various social groups' representatives both to the purposeful conscious activity for their own self-development and to individual and joint creative and value-oriented activities (in particular public, volunteering) with a view to promote positive values and improve social life. Active participation in these activities provides the development of the subjectivity of various social groups' representatives – their becoming as the subjects of life, responsible creators of their own life who are able to prevent and effectively solve life problems, as well as responsible social subjects, representatives of family, community, nation, civilization, who are ready to consolidate efforts for sustainable progressive development of society. All this ensures harmonization their personal and social development, forming steady personal and social position of the individual.

The strategy of social pedagogical activity with a view to move various social groups up to the level of sustainable development (that is also based on a system-synergetic methodology) involves the implementation a number of actions. The first is aimed at providing a holistic effect on the person who is a representative of various social groups (in particular through social advertising) for understanding his essence as a subject and creator of his own and public life. Further, it is important to organize social and educational work with children and youth for awareness their mission, as well as their positive personal and social development, stimulating to active participation in public life through a wide promotion of volunteer movement, the activity of public organizations.

Next is focused on implementing purposeful activity to improve value, integrity and sustainability of the family as a social group, which is an important institution of social education of the younger generation. Furthermore, such activity involves organization of interaction of families, children and youth with gradual activation and extensive involvement of other social groups (including adults, older people, community) for their further joint influence on the process of sustainable development of society. In addition, it suggests organizing joint activity of various social groups' representatives with a view to transfer the person from 'risk groups' into positive-oriented social group, encouraging his moving to the level of sustainable development through changes in ways of being and functioning, stimulation to self-change as well as forming the ability to solve his own problems, consider creativity and harmonious positive interaction of the individual with himself, other people, the

whole world as the basis of human and social success and main condition of their sustainable development.

Thus, social pedagogical activity for sustainable development of social groups is a multi-level system that provides implementation of the system of resonance impact on different spheres of personality, different social groups. All this as a whole provides synergistic effect, encouraging social groups to self-organization, when they are able to self-care and mutual assistance, self-rehabilitation and self-improvement, as well as to social creativity, consolidating efforts for solving important social problems. As it was mentioned above, such self-organization is only possible on the basis of actualization internal potential resources of social group as an open self-determined system that is capable for self-development due to positive synergistic interaction of individuals within the group.

In this regard we would like to emphasize that sensitivity of social group to any slightest external and internal influence makes it open to resonance external management which would contribute to the launch of self-organization mechanisms and the gradual moving social groups up to the level of self-management by their own development. However, it should be taken into consideration that such influence would have resonance effect only when it is coordinated with inner needs of the individual or social group.

Moreover, system and synergetic approach has also been the basis for designing an integrated system of prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups which has axiological, cognitive, activity and creativity-oriented subsystems and provide the development and self-development of its subjects. Such a system is being implemented during all the period of their study through the whole range of activities in higher school including academic, educational, practical, research, self-educational and volunteering that encourage students to active cognitive, creative, value-oriented and communicative activity.

So, axiological subsystem was aimed at understanding by future specialists their mission, role of individual and social groups in implementation of the strategy of the civilization's sustainable development as well as the importance of purposeful activity organization for sustainable development of the individual, social group and society. It also provided both forming of sustainable value system of prospective social workers and their willingness to develop a system of values of various social groups' representatives.

Cognitive subsystem was directed to gaining by students the system of knowledge about sustainable development, specific characteristics and socialization problems of various social groups, methods, techniques and technologies of social and pedagogical activity as well as mastering the strategy and the system of social and pedagogical work with a view to sustainable development of social groups. Activity and creativity-oriented subsystem was focused on the further development of constructive, projective, communicative, organizational, managerial, research, creative and other students' skills as well as searching and creation effective means of social education which would provide holistic effect on axiological, cognitive, volitional spheres of personality as well as axiological, world view and activity focus of social groups and at the same time would contribute to harmonization of their personal and social development. This subsystem also provided gaining the experience in this field during practical work and volunteering, which intensified thinking, feelings and will of the students. All this promoted understanding of the creative nature of professional work, social responsibility for its results and encouraged prospective social workers to further self-development with a view to realizing their professional activities on creative level.

Thus, the system of prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups (which is developed on the basis of the system-synergetic methodology and characterized by complementary academic, educational, research, self-education, volunteering and practical activities in this direction that ensure its synergistic effect) has also ensured social workers' moving to the level of sustainable development.

We would like to note that the author's ten-year experience in the context of prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups at the Faculty of Psychology and Sociology at G. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University has proved effectiveness the system of work that has been developed by us.

Firstly, such activity had positive impact on prospective social workers and provided significant qualitative changes in their personal and professional development. Thus, observation of students, expert assessments of their teachers as well as analysis of their research works, practical and volunteering experience have confirmed positive dynamics in all basic criteria of prospective social workers' willingness to sustainable development of social groups (including motivational-value, cognitive, creative and activity-oriented criterion as well as important personal qualities). So, students have become conscious of importance of their own social mission in the context of implementation of the strategy of civilization's sustainable development. They are characterized by a stable value system and desire to work purposefully for sustainable development of the individual, group and society as well as cognitive and creative activity both in academic and extra-curricular process. Most of them are moving from formal to conscious productive level of educational and professional activities, show initiative, original creative approach to solving urgent social and pedagogical problems. Moreover, students have begun to understand deeper social significance of their own profession and to realize social responsibility both for immediate and long-term results of their activities. They are also characterized by a persistent desire to personal and professional self-development, improving their knowledge, communicative, organizational, creative and other skills for providing effective influence on the beliefs, feelings and will have various social groups' representatives.

Secondly, the results of such training emerged in active volunteering and practical activity of prospective social workers with a view to sustainable development of social groups during their study in higher school.

So, on a voluntary basis student's organized active social and educational work with children and youth in kindergartens, schools, colleges, centers of social services for the purpose of stimulating their sustainable development. Students organized creative activities on the themes: "The value and uniqueness of human life", "They could and you can", "Past, present and future. We choose life", "The consequences of a negative attitude to the world", "Our future depends on us", and "Responsibility begins with me", "Good and evil I choose good because ...", "My mission", "Change the world for the better", "Give a smile to people!", "Learn goodness of your heart", "Doing good is easy", "The unity is our strength", "Our joint achievements", "Our choice is our life", "Together we are the power", "We achieved this with the help of our work", "Our mark in the history", the Days of Good Deeds and other events that were aimed at the development of children and youth as responsible creators of their own and public life. All this provided both forming the system of values (including awareness of the value of their own existence, the significance of others, positive communication, cooperation, mutual assistance and consolidation as basic conditions of sustainable development) and promoted them show themselves through positive actions, work

together for progressive development of the society which confirms formation of stable personal and social position of the individual. Furthermore, prospective social workers also constantly interact with representatives of “risk groups” (including children deprived of parental care, persons with disabilities, various kinds of addiction, behavioral problems, family in difficult circumstances) in orphanages, rehabilitation centers, public organization, centers of social services for family, children and youth for their moving into positive-oriented social group. They implement the system of socio-pedagogical activity (informational, socio-educational, preventive, correctional work, organize trainings, developing classes, joint creative activity) in order to encourage them to self-rehabilitation and further positive personal and social development. It should be noted that volunteering experience of students - future social pedagogues of G. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University is widely represented in the author’s previous publications [9,11].

What is more, future social workers do not only work hard in this direction, but also involve other people in such activities (in particular, the representatives of youth public organizations). So, within the social partnership students organize meetings pupils with famous people, Olympic athletes, etc. Such interaction convinces children and youth that a man himself is the architect of his own happiness, but its achievement will certainly require physical and spiritual efforts, great desire and hard work. All this encourages them to work hard on developing their own personality, teaches to overcome difficulties, find ways to achieve goals and solve difficult situations in every sphere of life as well as consider difficulties as the beginning of the path that leads to success.

We would also like to note that students both actively participate in volunteering, the activities of public organizations and promote them among people through the creation of social advertising, videos, organizing talk shows, round table discussions, public events on the themes “Helping is easy”, “We are volunteers and are proud to bear this title”, “Caring for the happiness of others, we find our own”. So, prospective social workers are able both to self-management and to organizing the activities of others. They actively promote socially significant activity in the community and involve other people into social creativity for positive social change.

Thus, future professionals work purposefully with children, youth, and adults, families as the social groups that make up the social structure of society and determine the vector of its development.

Thirdly, the majority of the students are actively engaged in self-education, research, creative activity. So, prospective social workers initiate, create and implement their own programs and projects to stimulate representatives of various social groups to sustainable development as well as participate in regional and all-Ukrainian contests of social and pedagogical projects. They also create social advertising (posters, booklets, videos) aimed at increasing the value of family, community, nation, healthy life, spirituality, social responsibility both for the results of their own lives and for the individual contribution to the process of social change, consolidation and joint activities for improving public life. They are also characterized by searching and implementation of innovative forms and methods of socio-pedagogical activities in this area. One of these forms became the Studio Theatre of socio-pedagogical clowning. The experience of such work has been presented in our previous publication [9].

Fourthly, it should be admitted that expert assessments of the teachers, school principals, managers of social services, centers of social and psychological rehabilitation,

public organizations (with which students actively interact in the process of volunteering, social pedagogical practice by organizing social and educational, joint creative activities as well as social significant activity with a view to promote positive values) have confirmed that this activity significantly promotes progressive development of different social groups' representatives. They has started to work actively both for their own self-development and participate in socially significant activities for improving social life as well as aware social responsibility both for the results of their own life and for individual contribution to the process of social change.

Fifthly, the observation of graduates who have completed training and are working in the social sphere have shown that they purposefully work for sustainable development of social groups in their professional activity.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, it has been proved in the study that system-synergetic methodology is the key one both for solving the problem of sustainable development in general and the training of prospective social workers to sustainable development of social groups in particular. It is the system and synergetic approach that allows understanding the fundamental laws of social groups' sustainable development as well as designing an integrated system of social pedagogical activities for improving their integrity. It has been shown in the study that sustainable development of social groups is possible on condition of progressive sustainable development of personality as the subject of life and responsible social subject as well as a group as integrity. It has been also substantiated that the system of social and pedagogical activity (that suggests synergistic focus of social-educational, informational, preventive, correctional and rehabilitative activities on encouraging social groups to sustainable development) provides holistic effect on axiological, cognitive, volitional spheres of various social groups' representatives with a view to develop their subjectivity as well as promotes them both to individual and joint creative and value-oriented activity for improving social life. It has been also shown that the system of prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups (which has axiological, cognitive, activity and creativity-oriented subsystems and is being implemented through academic, educational, practical, research activities, self-education and volunteering) provides their moving to the level of self-management and self-development.

The results of the implementation of the system of work on prospective social workers' training to sustainable development of social groups on the basis of system and synergetic approach have confirmed its effectiveness, as social workers themselves are at the level of sustainable development and self-development (spiritual, personal, social and professional) and consciously work with a view to stimulate various social groups' representatives to sustainable progressive development and self-development.

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Biography

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