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SOCIAL WORK TECHNOLOGIES IN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF UKRAINE

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ABSTRACT

The modern educational environment is oriented towards satisfying the needs of all education seekers, and such group of children as orphans, including the orphans graduated from the residential educational establishments, requires such conditions that provide them successfully to undergo the adaptive period during the first year of study at the higher educational institutions.

Considering that the orphaned children graduated from the residential educational establishments enter a new educational space, social support is of prime importance for them.

The social support for the orphaned students, including the orphaned students graduated from the residential educational establishments, that is organized at the higher educational institutions should be implemented in three stages, each assuming the use of such methods as social diagnostic research aimed at identifying social problems, drawing up an action plan aimed at overcoming the identified problems and, as a result, successful socialization of the orphaned children during their study at the higher educational institutions.

The transformation and modernization processes of the modern Ukrainian society are oriented towards satisfying the needs of people having certain functional difficulties due to the problems of socialization. The modern education is oriented towards using such approaches and techniques that will help an orphaned child and a child with specific educational needs adapt to social environment and exercise his/her right to education both at the general educational institutions, and at the higher educational institutions. Today, a particular attention is paid to the children of the mentioned categories. Striving to improve the prospective development and formation of the orphaned children and give them an opportunity for getting higher professional education, the state and state sector considerably improve the prospective professional education that will help them in future.

STUDY OBJECTIVE

To determine basic social work technologies being relevant in the inclusive educational environment when working with the orphaned children at the general educational institutions of Ukraine.

STUDY METHODS

The theoretical and methodological basis for study of implementation of the social work technologies in the inclusive educational environment of the higher educational institutions of Ukraine is represented by general scientific and special study methods. The following methods were used during the research: comparative analysis method and document analysis method, abstraction to compare theoretical and empirical characteristics of students as a separate specific social group; special empiric methods to study national reality of socialization of the orphaned students at the higher educational institutions; involved observation to determine the problems of the orphaned students in the Ukrainian reality; surveying to collect sociological information for diagnostics of socialization peculiarities of the orphans in the environment of the national higher educational institutions; expert methods and standardized interview, observations.

Statement of basic materials

The inclusion technology provides the inclusion of particular categories of citizens into general social processes that are not available for them due to any reasons. Inclusion assumes implementation of such actions that allow every person to be equal participant in all spheres of academic and public life at all levels.

Today, the inclusive education is applied mainly in the frameworks of educational work with disabled and orphaned children. The inclusive education is a kind of education supposed to be an alternative to residential education in the frameworks of which children with specific educational needs get education at special educational institutions. Persons with specific educational needs are the education seekers who

are in need of additional temporary or constant support in exercising their right to education [6].

Based on the above, the orphaned children represent a category of the education seekers belonging to a group of persons who are in need of specific educational conditions and psychological support in the course of their socialization during study at the higher educational institutions and, consequently, an inclusive educational environment should be created for them.

The issues of inclusive education in Ukraine are of great relevance in the modern society that is evidenced by the works of such researchers as N.N. Gordienko, E.M. Dikova-Favorskaya, V.V. Kuzmin, M.O. Kuzmina, A.V. Ivanchenko, V.M. Popovich, et al.

The scientific researches of V.V. Kuzmin, M.O. Kuzmina, and A.V. Ivanchenko are devoted to the problem of the life trajectory of disabled individuals. According to the authors mentioned, for successful mastering of skills and competences offered by the higher educational institution, there should be an inclusive educational environment to be integrated into the life trajectory of the higher education seeker. [14; 15].

P.M. Popovich states that not all educational institutions of Ukraine are ready to enrol the education seekers with health problems as they are lacking of sufficient technical basis and high-quality specialists trained for working with children with specific needs [11]. Such situation considerably limits the development of the educational space in the higher education of Ukraine and significantly limits the rights and opportunities for the orphaned children and disabled people to get sound academic background.

The inclusive education is one of the tools of overcoming social inequality as it gives an opportunity to sound academic background for people who face limitations in this regard due to any reason. That is why, the development of the inclusive educational technologies is of great social importance. Moreover, the inclusive education facilitates overriding discrimination by age, race, nationality, gender, capability and other features of physical and social differentiation.

To summarize, the inclusive education can be represented as the education that brings the ideas of equity with regard to each member of society irrespective of his/her nationality, gender, race, culture, religion, social status, individual opportunities and capabilities [5; 7; 9, 10; 13].

The social work in the framework of the inclusive education assumes the creation of the educational conditions that will be beneficial for a child with psychophysiological disorders and make it possible for him/her to get both basic, and professional knowledge during study at the universities. During his/her study at the universities, he/she should undergo general way of social adaptation oriented not only towards the educational process but towards the formation of social relations with the socialization and adaptation “agents”, i.e. with peers and teachers, the people with whom a person contacts in the course of study. The representatives of the social sphere at the universities can be both counsellors and psychologists, and mental health professionals, occupational therapists, rehabilitation specialists and therapists [7; 8].

In his works, V.V. Kuzmin [7; 8; 14] not only determines the methods of social work being relevant during the orphaned children adaptation to study at the universities but also defines their sequence. Thus, the author offers a case worker to begin social interaction with an orphan from the date of the orphaned child enrolment to the university.

The first stage of the work should begin with diagnostics of the physical state of the child in order to develop the adaptation program for the educational environment of the university. After such diagnostics, it is necessary properly to proceed to the social diagnostics. And only after these procedures, the university representatives will have a full picture prior to start the child's adaptation to the inclusive educational environment.

The second stage for the orphaned child to adapt to the conditions created at the educational institution assumes continuous work of the case worker with the orphaned student. This work can be oriented towards three basic areas, depending on the extent the orphaned student succeeded in the adaptation process at the first stage, such areas can be distinguished as educational, remedial and health-improving. Depending on the problem that is to be worked over, a model oriented towards solving such problem will be created.

During diagnostic research (survey, interview, recitation), the case work should timely identify any problems in these areas and provide a quality social support to the child in the form of consultations, maybe, correcting the orphaned student's behaviour, on the issues of arrangement of measures to maintain the child's health. The case worker should pay particular attention to involvement of the orphaned student graduated from the residential educational establishment in the public activities, for example, in students' council, participation in the faculty or university events [7; 8] aimed at maintaining the child's health.

Considering the fact that studying at the higher educational institution is the last system of social influence on the orphaned children, social significance of the educational process of the university considerably increases due to commissioning of social services. Provided that the orphaned students get the high-quality social support, it acquires adaptive features that can be used by a person in his/her future life when adapting to new conditions, particularly, when starting own professional activity.

Based on the conducted analysis, we can state that the higher educational institutions face a task not only to provide the high-quality social support to the orphaned students during their adaptation to study in the new educational environment but to create the conditions where the orphaned student can feel social protection, psychological and moral readiness for independent living.

Based on the practical experience, we can speak of the complexity of this issue. Considering that as of the date of enrolment to the university the orphaned student has already had negative social experience that is characterized by a lack of love and care, consequences of some kinds of deprivations, experienced denial by relatives,

the provision of social support becomes a rather complex issue. During remedial work with the orphaned students, particularly, with the orphaned students graduated from the residential educational establishments, that is aimed at their socialization, the positive dynamics can be achieved only by using an individual approach, methods and techniques being relevant for each particular case, and conducting regular diagnostic research.

The peculiarities of adaptation of the orphaned children after their enrolment to the universities can be identified by comparing the peculiarities of adaptive period of this category of children graduated from the residential educational establishments with the adaptive period of the other categories of applicants. We have conducted a comparative sociological research based on interviewing of 280 respondents belonging to a group of graduates from the residential educational establishments (that is the orphaned children) and simultaneous interviewing of 315 respondents graduated from the general educational institutions but having health problems and brought up by parents. The main question the respondents answered was: “What are your plans for future?” The interview results were as follows (Table 1.1.).

Table 1. Project of life of graduates from general educational institutions brought up by parents and orphaned children graduated from the residential educational establishments

area of activities	Graduates from the residential educational establishments (orphaned children)		Graduates from general educational institutions of non-residential type (control group)	
	quantity	%	Quantity	%
work	218	78	284	90
continuing education	202	72	290	92
founding a family	143	51	224	71
public activity	13	4.7	22	7
own health care	20	7.2	189	60
home improvement	86	30.8	246	78

On the basis of the interview results obtained, we can see that 78% of the orphaned students graduated from the residential educational establishments are ready for active work. To clear up the question, we asked to specify at what age the children were ready to start active work and found out that 72% of graduates from the residential educational establishments were ready to work only after getting professional education, while 28% of graduates were ready to work immediately after getting the basic education, i.e. after studying at the residential educational establishment. The control group indicators considerable differ as 90% of the interviewed graduates from general educational institutions of non-residential type are ready for active work but only 8% of them are ready to work immediately after school graduation.

Studying the problem of founding a family, it was found out that 92% of graduates from general educational institutions of non-residential type were ready to found a family, while the study group showed this indicator of 51%. The further interviewing of the study group respondents found out that among 49% of children that had not suggested to found a family first, 23% supposed that they could change their opinion but only after achieving certain results.

7% of graduates from general educational institutions of non-residential type are ready to be engaged in public activities, while only 4.7% of respondents among the orphaned students graduated from the residential educational establishments are ready for such kind of activity.

7.2% of orphaned students take care of own health, and these are directly the children with specific educational needs, while the remaining 92% agree that the annual medical examination is necessary. Among the control group respondents, the indicator of responsible attitude to own health was found out in 60% of respondents, and the students emphasized that they were ready not only to visit doctors but also keep regular hours, go in for sports and lead an active lifestyle.

A considerable difference is also observed in the respondents' answers concerning their readiness for home improvement. Among the orphaned students graduated from the residential educational establishments, only 31% of respondents are ready for active actions, while 70% respondents note that an opportunity to have own housing is minimum and they are not currently ready to improve the rented housing. Among the interviewed graduates from general educational institutions, this indicator achieves 78% that is due to that their parents have own housing, and only 22% of respondents say that this issue is not currently relevant and they will consider it when the time is due.

In his research, V.V. Kuzmin offers own author's model to be used for solving social problems appearing during study of the orphaned children at the universities. This model is based on three periods. The most difficult period is the first, the adaptive, period during which the diagnostics is performed and social problems are identified. After the diagnostics, the social work technologies that are the most reasonable for solving these social problems and oriented towards the adaptation period reduction are determined [8].

The second period is basic and oriented towards determining the actual mechanism of socialization of an individual with specific needs and providing social-psycho-physical and educational support to overcome difficulties appearing during this period.

The third period is final and oriented towards preparing a student with specific needs before completion of the educational process and continuing own area of professional activity [1; 2; 3; 4; 7; 8; 13; 12].

Irrespective of the orderliness of the model specified, the following explanations have been made for it in course of time:

1. At the first, adaptation, stage, the social interaction of the orphaned student is based on establishing an emotional contact within a small group (with roommates in the dormitory, groupmates) that provides for activation of socialization agents. The problems of correct career choice and change in behavioural reactions that is more vividly manifested at the first stages of the adaptive period are also relevant. When the high-quality social support is provided, using such methods as social diagnostics, interviews, support in solving domestic and organizational issues can promote for considerable reduction in the adaptation and socialization period of the orphaned children.

2. At the second, basic, stage that assumes the II-IV years of study, provided that the adaptation has been successful, the social support can be provided in the area of health maintenance, involvement of the orphaned students in the public activities and giving the high-quality professional education.

CONCLUSIONS

Special inclusive educational environment is required for more and more students from year to year. Its absence leads to aggravating the multiple social problems of students that require considerable resources of the higher educational institution to solve. Otherwise, a considerable part of students will have no opportunity to continue education and expelled due to low level of performance or displays of deviant behaviour. That is why every university should strive for creating the efficient educational environment. The two categories of students who require inclusive educational environment are the orphaned and disabled students. The problem of creation of the inclusive educational environment for the orphaned children is relatively new as there is a stable social stereotype that the inclusive educational environment is relevant for the disabled people. The relevant models of the inclusive educational environment should include a diagnostic stage in the frameworks of which the diagnostics of the students' educational needs is directly performed. The subsequent stages should include practical social support technologies for students with specific educational needs. The efficiency of such approach is evidenced by the results of our empiric research provided in the article.

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