

Maik Arnold *Editor*

Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education

Theories, Methods, and Practices in
Higher Education

 Springer

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Chapter 1

Introduction: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Social Work Management Education in Higher Education



Maik Arnold 

The purpose of preparing social workers for management positions is to enhance the effectiveness of professional practice in such settings. The issue is of practical relevance to social work educators as well as to practitioners. (Pflanczer & Miringoff, 1978, p. 98)

Abstract *The Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education* provides insights into social work management education in at least 12 countries on four continents, documenting recent developments, and challenges the status quo in the discipline in both developed and developing economies. In addressing the international community of social work management educators and practitioners, this book provides cross-country perspectives on how crucial points in teaching and learning in the respective field of study can be addressed. The handbook can therefore be understood as a reference source which brings together theoretical concepts, didactic approaches, curriculum contents, and methods of teaching and learning from diverse backgrounds to promote learning across borders. It also documents examples for the constant evolution in terms of curriculum development, accreditation of degree programmes, development of professional standards, and transfer of knowledge between different disciplines, universities, and countries. Hence, *The Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education* provides resources to educators, students, and professionals in social work and management across different countries and societies who respond to the aforementioned challenges in human services at a time when the efficiency and effectiveness of social workers and their methods is under question.

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Last, but not least, the book will highlight the education of social work managers and leaders, and recent developments not only in different educational systems but also in different socio-economic contexts.

The Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education provides insights into social work management education in at least 12 countries on four continents, documenting recent developments and challenges the status quo in the discipline in both developed and developing economies. In addressing the international community of social work management educators and practitioners, this book provides cross-country perspectives on how crucial points in teaching and learning in the respective field of study can be addressed. The handbook can therefore be understood as a reference source which brings together theoretical concepts, didactic approaches, curriculum contents, and methods of teaching and learning from diverse backgrounds to promote learning across borders. It also documents examples for the constant evolution in terms of curriculum development, accreditation of degree programmes, development of professional standards, and transfer of knowledge between different disciplines, universities, and countries. Hence, *The Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education* provides resources to educators, students, and professionals in social work and management across different countries and societies who respond to the aforementioned challenges in human services at a time when the efficiency and effectiveness of social workers and their methods is under question (Lorenz, 2014). Last, but not least, the book will highlight the education of social work managers and leaders, and recent developments not only in different educational systems but also in different socio-economic contexts.

Leadership and management practice in social work and human service organisations are constantly confronted with different needs: first and foremost, professionally trained social work managers must be able to act as entrepreneurs (Nandan & Scott, 2013). An organisation's culture should be developed from a holistic point of view. Self-management in self-organised work contexts is an increasing focus in the field. Additionally, organisations and employees working in public, private, and non-profit organisations must struggle with constant changes in the environment under 'VUCA' and 'BANI' conditions (cf. de Godoy & Ribas Filho, 2021; Mack et al., 2016). More specifically, as Lawler and Bilson (2010, p. 2) noted, human services organisations are continuously challenged by the marketisation of human services, increasing importance of managerialism, and the processes of postmodernisation (e.g., social and economic decentralisation, localisation, and fragmentation) that have been shaped by neoliberal economic and political developments. This diagnosis remains valid in many social welfare systems worldwide: Marketisation necessitates "a significant shift in relationships between agencies, including a more significant role for the independent sector; a changing role for service users, social work users especially, with more involvement in the planning, delivery and evaluation of services being seen as key" (Lawler & Bilson, 2010,

p. 3). At the same time there is a development of ‘professionalism’ and ‘managerialism’, and as such a developing interest in how social organisations should be managed by individual managers that is different from any other professional role or position in such organisations (Lawler & Bilson, 2010, p. 4).

For a long time, there existed the widespread assumption that managerial competencies could be understood as a general and cross-sectoral expertise that can be easily transferred between public, for-profit, and any other organisation in society. Instead, since the 1980s, the development and acquisition of professional competencies in management sciences and practice had been implemented in social work degree programmes such as for social workers, social pedagogics, and early childhood education. Against this backdrop, a question that is often discussed between educators, students, and professionals is how future social work managers can be academically prepared for these organisational and societal challenges. This introductory chapter will therefore first highlight how the social work management education should be understood as a transdisciplinary approach to higher education didactics and how it builds on previous scholarship of social work management education. Thereafter, the transdisciplinary framework underlying the handbook will be introduced, before an overview on the different chapters of the handbook will be provided.

Social Work Management Education as a Transdisciplinary Approach to Higher Education Didactics

A first glance at the literature of social work management reveals a rather mixed picture: countless handbooks, textbooks, and journal articles introduce learners and educators alike to the theoretical background and practical application of instruments to be used in social work management practice. However, a critical pedagogical and didactic reflection on how new knowledge and skills can be acquired is not well represented in the literature, although so-called competence-based approaches to management education in social work have been discussed with regard to the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW, e.g., in Lawler, 1994; Rofurth & Piepenbring, 2019): “Developing new methods of teaching and assessment is essential because the less systematised and the more uncertain the job is, the less appropriate is classroom-based teaching. Social work management clearly falls at the more uncertain end of any such continuum” (Lawler, 1994, p. 80). Nevertheless, we could even go as far as to assume that a subject-sensitive higher education didactics for the specific professional field of social work management is still a research desideratum (Patti, 1978; Watson, 2008, p. 325), although teaching and learning approaches could be applied from both *social work education* and *management education and learning*. It is now more than ever necessary to develop an integrative approach to the didactics of social work management education (Fawcett & Featherstone, 1994) that links knowledge and research from different domains: social work education which is primarily interested in solving

social issues, and management education, which aims at teaching students to become business leaders, managers, and administrators (see also Klafke, Picinin & Arnold, Chap. 18 in this volume; Arnold, 2020).

Traditionally, *social work education*, on the one hand, focuses on client and community interactions in order to provide solutions for social issues and challenges. Social workers acquire knowledge and skills, and internalise values that are applicable at micro-, meso- and macro-levels to work effectively with people from different backgrounds. Furthermore, social work education also emphasises collaborative learning through group and teamwork as well as social research, self-awareness on social justice and civil society, problem-solving, and other transferable skills.

In contrast, *management education* (or business education) primarily focuses on the application of practical knowledge, skills, and business operations. It involves teaching of not only critical thinking, creative problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills, but also flexibility and adaptation to ever-changing organisational needs. Practical classroom learning and work-related learning are used to enable effective learning experiences. Thus, education in management aims to develop students' capabilities to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large, and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy. Despite its focus on higher education didactics, some subject-related topics discussed in the handbook are also connected to vocational (managerial and technical) education and the didactics of vocational learning and teaching.

Social work management education helps to connect training for direct service and management specialists. Moreover, management training in social welfare provides holistic experience to qualified social work professionals, either as individuals or members of organisations. In an early study, Pflanzner and Miringoff (1978) showed that a focus on enhancing social workers' "complementary effectiveness of professional practice" (p. 98) in both social work and management tasks as well as a combination of technical and systemic skills would help best to prepare social workers for management positions. Such courses should include management training as a career expectation, management as an educational objective, and the link between these attributes (see also Rimer, 1991).

As has been shown above, management is a fundamental pillar in social work. Social workers have to be actively educated on the management dynamism in social work organisations. Moran et al. (1995) compared MSW and MBA students on the aptitudes for human service management. Compared to MBA students, the authors argue that MSW students develop specific and other values and personal orientations that help determine their aptitude for human service management. The social work management students were found to have better and more effective leadership of human service agencies. It was concluded in the same study that social work management education is strongly suited to training of future managers.

The same sentiments were shared by Austin and Ezell (2004) in their research on educating future social work administrators. Social workers are advised to focus on management and administrative roles in various capacities. Social work management education ensures that the MSW graduates are well-prepared for their administrative roles. It extends the practice community to produce all-around

administrators. These administrators are equipped with the macro-skills of social work, including administrative, community, and policy practice. They also prepare the required knowledge and skills for research dissemination and application as administrators. Skinner and Whyte (2004) assert that social workers are now more than ever involved in management. This modernisation of social work requires input from all the stakeholders that benefit from the practice and explains why theoretical training in social work has been on the decline to give room for evidence-based practice—social work management education guides on how to base the practice on measure and evaluation. During a modular part-time management programme for experienced practitioners or managers in the field of criminal justice social work settings, “it became apparent that much management activity centred on carrying out procedures and requirements set by more senior managers, and that little room was left for reflection and creativity in managing the organisation’s precious human resource. The prospect of reading about innovation and research was seen as almost unreachable, as was the opening up of the debate around evidence-based practice and evaluation of their own work with senior professional managers” (Skinner & Whyte, 2004, p. 374). They found that ‘evidence-based practice’ provides a suitable culture for organisational learning and, if correctly implemented into the learning organisation framework, could even help to reduce threats that may arise from the “prospect of measurement of effectiveness” (Skinner & Whyte, 2004, p. 380).

Social work management education becomes more effective by involving service users in teaching modules and learning processes. Post-qualifying social work education has been established to be a pillar of the practice in managerial or administrative positions (Farrow, 2014; for continuing education see also Dane, 1983). Since the introduction of this education in social work practice, there have been numerous changes in social work’s professional and regulatory framework. Therefore, meaningful involvement of the service users helps to train social worker’s “skills required to collaborate effectively inter-professionally—for example, creating a shared vision, power sharing, developing trust, role clarification and dealing with conflict and differences of opinion” (Farrow, 2014, p. 845). It will also have a significant impact on “establishing appropriate structures, culture and practice within teams sensitive to the needs of service users and carers” (Farrow, 2014, p. 845).

Social work management education prepares managers to identify opportunities and threats to the services and the organisational environment. Creating and maintaining partnerships in social work addresses the efforts made to keep close contact between the service users and the care providers. In various post-qualifying social work programs, graduate social workers are taught how to improve the quality of services and standards to result in a motivated and stable workforce (Farrow & Fillingham, 2012). Although qualifying social workers in undergraduate or post-graduate education is not directly transferable to the post-qualifying context, social work management education equips these graduates with the cross-sectoral, inter-agency, and interprofessional skills necessary to form workers with distinguishable professional identities such as “creating a shared vision, power sharing, developing trust, role clarification and dealing with conflict and differences of opinion” (Farrow & Fillingham, 2012, p. 845).

Fawcett and Featherstone (1994) provide a rationale for transitioning from social work management to social work education and back. Management in social work involves administrative capacities occupied by qualified professionals. Teaching should include the skills required in the administration of services. Hence, transitioning from management to teaching has to start at the personal level, rising to the organisational and eventually the legislative levels (see also Wendt, Chap. 5 in this volume). For example, social workers can contribute to produce legislation serving the entire professional community. Austin (2019) listed some pathways that promote macro practice in social work education. The transition from management to teaching also involves strategies that can promote macro practice, such as community practice, management practice, and policy practice, in social work education (Austin, 2019, p. 244). Management practice in social work has been part of the education in the social work profession for more than a century. The tree pathways identified by Austin (2019) call for more research and discussion about the integration of macro practice perspectives in social work curricula.

Social work management education can make use of financial management practices such as management audits as a teaching tool (for consideration of financial management in general see Hairston, 1981). Management audits have been used over the years to suggest areas that require improvement. Packard (2000) asserts that completing management audits during study-related internships and subsequently developing an organisational change plan to mitigate risks and weaknesses can enhance the social work administrators' function in management roles. The change models provide comprehensive frameworks to describe the organisational change required in human service organisations (Packard, 2000, p. 41). In this case, social work administrators will be equipped to use data collected over the years to create conclusive audits and change plans. These management audits give "students an opportunity to observe and critically assess administrative practice with reference to standards for effective agency management" (Packard, 2000, p. 49). This approach will be most effective if the evaluation and analysis of management audits is integrated in the whole administrative course work, especially following reading and discussion of social work administrators' role as change agents.

Building on the Work of Previous Scholarship in Social Work Management Education

In the following, a preliminary review of frameworks for management, leadership, and organisational theories will be presented. Following a chronological order, this will highlight previous research in the field of social work management education, on which the scholarship in *The Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education* builds on.

The special issues by Hasenfeld (1989a) provides a first comprehensive collection of articles analysing the professional requirements, conditions, and approaches

to management and leadership in the administration of social work. After outlining different challenges from perspectives of legitimacy, fiscal resources to human services, social needs, and organisational requirements, this special issue emphasises the “interest, both professional and academic, in the role of leadership as a key variable to effective transformation and adaptation of social service agencies” (Hasenfeld, 1989b, p. 7). Besides theoretical orientations and frameworks for understanding the leadership themes and management tasks, the special issue also provides insightful empirical findings on the relationship between leadership, service effectiveness, and the organisational commitment of staff. Other contributions focus on the feminist perspective on social welfare administration, e.g., the centrality of women’s values and power structures, and point also to the fact that “despite the overwhelming presence of women as workers in the social services, they [women] have remained disadvantaged in advancement to administrative positions” (Hasenfeld, 1989b, p. 8). Overall, the special issue provides new directions in social work administration at the beginning of the 1990s. Most notably is Hasefeld and Schmid’s (1989) life cycle model of human service organisations and its implications for administrative strategies. This model helps to integrate most of the previously mentioned themes, illustrating that human service organisations go through various changes, while the executive’s primary responsibility is to use a variety of means to promote organisational renewal, ranging from leadership to client empowerment (Hasefeld & Schmid, 1989).

Hafford-Letchfield et al. (2007) published an essential textbook that gives a comprehensive overview on leadership and management competencies relevant in social care education and practice. This book is a valuable resource for the post-qualifying social work education context. Leadership and management is seen as a field of learning and starts with raising awareness for developing a learning culture in social care, working interprofessionally, and involving service users as partners in facilitating learning and development. As discussed in that textbook, practice could be developed through promoting diversity and equality, assessing, and creating opportunities, and work-based assessment. The development of social care institutions can be best achieved through supporting coaching and mentoring as a developmental tool at the workplace and knowledge management throughout the organisation.

Based on a literature review, Lawler and Bilson (2010) developed a novel management and leadership framework in bringing management, leadership, and organisational theories to social work, and proposed a way forward tailored to the values and contexts in which social workers operate. As mentioned by Cahn (2013, p. 433), the authors imply throughout their narrative in their book that, although identifying relevant norms and competencies is beneficial, restricting management practice to a predetermined set of “fixed steps” has to be considered as risky. Furthermore, as a conventional command-and-control approach to leadership development should be avoided, based on various examples, they claim that a more contemplative multifaceted approach would offer increased benefit. A main surplus of the textbook is that it makes social work scholars, educators, and leaders more acquainted with the literature in the respective field of social work management.

Hasenfeld (2010) offers again a thorough and up-to-date view on organisational issues in human service agencies and enterprises in general and combines theoretical and empirical research in macro theory based on and including case studies from hospitals, schools, social services organisations, mental health centres, and government welfare agencies. Hasenfeld (2010) is a second and largely extended edition. The handbook not only addresses topics such as the influence of the policy environment, emotional labour, and advocacy, but it also provides analytical methods for studying and understanding human behaviour in many circumstances. Overall, the contributions in Hasenfeld (2010) introduce readers to the welfare sector's organisational philosophies, working circumstances, service technology structuration, diversity, and discretion.

Professional leadership is one of the nine areas of the Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Work in England (British Association of Social Workers, 2022). Fairtlough (2016) assumes that this should be commonly considered as the responsibility of managers rather than all professional social workers. This book assists experienced social work practitioners and educators to develop professional leadership capabilities through innovation, practitioner research, and workforce development from two different perspectives: values and knowledge and theoretical models that support professional leadership and reflect on leadership styles, teamwork, and practitioner evaluation and research.

Araque and Weiss (2018) unveil in their handbook the so-called 'I.D.D.E.A Leadership' framework as a competency-based model for leaders in both health and social services. This framework could be understood as an answer to the constant need for leadership growth and dealing with technological, socio-economic, cultural, and other changes and practices within organisations and their environment. If it is the leaders of public and/or private agencies addressing immediate, intermediate, and long-term social needs, it is public agencies (government), non-profit organisations and social architects who are responsible for mobilising their institutions for organisational and social changes and innovation. As Mitevski (2020) noted in their review, each part of the book reflects single "umbrella competencies" (p. 905) necessary for leadership and management practice which include numerous abilities, attitudes, values, and behaviours that leaders should possess. Araque and Weiss' (2018) comprehensive handbook includes the following perspectives: *innovation* (blueprints to build stronger organisations and communities, key leadership styles), *design* (shaping organisational and social landscape via teamwork, collaboration, and motivation, strategic communication and leadership, and community partnerships), *diversity* (meeting the demand of diverse vulnerable and marginalised populations), *execution* (feasible, realistic, and innovative organisational strategic planning, effective supervision, conflict resolution and negotiation strategies), and *assessment* (assessing internal and external factors during innovation by avoiding burnout, developing mindful leadership and continuously evaluating health and human service programs).

Most recently, Rofurth and Piepenbring (2019) provide in their handbook an up-to-date overview on the fundamental theoretical approaches to management and practical leadership skills and strategies social workers need in administrative and

managerial roles in higher education and social service organisations. The book follows a competency-based approach and is arranged by the standards defined by the Network for Social Work Management (NSWM) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). This handbook is unique in the way that it addresses both social workers in higher education administration and social service administrators and provides useful information on the *executive leadership in social work* (leadership and management theory and practice in social work, effective communication and marketing, productive teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making in social work, and professional development and management of organisational functions), *resourceful management practices in social work* (accountability, human resource management, supervision of staff, and information and technology management), strategic management and administrative skills for organisational growth and success in the social work environment (strategic planning, program evaluation, strategic resource development), and *community collaboration techniques and strategies for social workers* (Rofurth & Piepenbring, 2019). Nichols (2020, p. 329) notes in their review of the handbook that “[t]he chapters vary from conceptual, such as leadership theory in Chapter 1, to practical, such as meeting management checklists in Chapter 4. The leadership and management theory chapter offers several helpful articulations of how social work direct practice skills translate to leadership roles.”

As can be seen from this preliminary review of journal articles and handbooks, most of these publications either direct to American and British audiences or, more generally, refer to models and policies in English-speaking regions. Future research and academic scholarship is needed that helps to better reflect the diversity of approaches from the Global North and Global South and provides other theoretical frameworks for the teaching and learning in social work management education. In the following, such a transdisciplinary framework will be introduced which not only provides an epistemological basis for the handbook, but also helps to integrate the theory-practice transfer between social work and management education.

Transdisciplinary Framework for Social Work Management Education

This *Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education*, which is the first of its kind, will provide educators and practitioners with an overview about the applied teaching and learning practices and the implications for social work management education. In compiling these practices and implications, the book comprises a vast range of theoretical and practical approaches to social work management education and to preparing competent social workers for today’s organisations. As there is no best method for teaching and learning, this handbook provides plenty of resources for its readers who are interested in developing their teaching practices and seeing learning from a different perspective. The very notion of this handbook is to follow an inductive approach and to present

various ways to develop management and leadership competencies of learners which can make a real difference in organisations and will help to increase the quality of services that they provide. Notably, it is challenging to compose a handbook about a topic which is currently in development. Although teaching about managerial and leadership approaches has become an integral part of many social work programs, the literature review above easily reveals that social work management as a scholarly enterprise has barely been explored. This handbook should challenge educators, managers, and leaders in the field of social work management alike to reflect on their own theoretical knowledge, practical experiences, and skills of teaching and learning to educate prospective managers in coping with the complexity in social work practice. The handbook is specifically geared to the needs of social work educators, students, and practitioners in academic and agency settings who can acquire knowledge and skills to support the viability, positive functioning of social work organisations, and to engage with other individuals, groups, and other organisations.

The handbook follows an innovative, evidence-based, and sustainable framework to integrate theory-practice transfer along with requirements for teaching and learning to lead the research (see Fig. 1.1). It argues for a transdisciplinary didactic of social work management which combines three inseparably linked dimensions, namely: (1) management as an *object* of social work education, (2) social work management as a *resource* for the theory-practice transfer, and (3) professional *competences* as an integral component of the mindset of culturally competent social workers working with a multitude of individuals, groups, and communities (see for an overview Arnold, 2020).

1. Management as an *object* of social work education: The handbook presents recent research about so-called ‘threshold concepts’ (e.g., the pedagogy of emotional labour, see Chap. 2) drawn from reflections of the social work practice that need to be integrated into management education of social workers. Approaches and concepts such as the action-theoretical teaching (cf. Hortsch, 2005) and linguistic approach of functional-communicative language description (cf. Schmidt, 1981) can provide a didactical basis for the systematisation and development of new pedagogical models and frameworks in social work management education

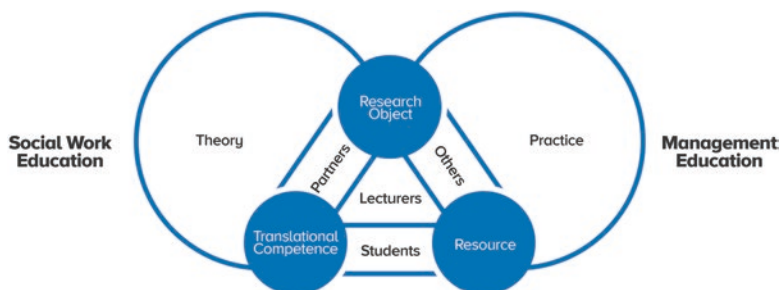


Fig. 1.1 A transdisciplinary theory-practice transfer model. (Arnold, 2022b, CC BY 4.0)

(as shown in Chap. 3). Additionally, well grounded theoretical and practical learning methods based on cognitive sciences and neurophysiological findings can contribute to the development of student-centred and supportive learning and teaching strategies in social work management education (see Chap. 4).

2. Social work management as a *resource* for the theory-practice transfer: Ideas of management and the (social) economy originally emerged from concepts such as the self-organisation of people, managing a household, forming societies and cooperatives; this spirit of partnership and networking is worth to be constantly re-addressed, as shown in Chap. 5 of this handbook, because it might help to rethink public welfare management and neo-liberal governance. Social work managers do not only need to be ‘cost efficient’ managers, but also have to develop an ability to generate new ideas, to find creative solutions, and to strategically lead the organisation through constant changes. Chapter 6 shows how teaching creatively and teaching for creativity can be seen as an analytical tool that supports the development of learners’ mindsets, and to address the grand challenges of society. Furthermore, ethical thinking can also be regarded as a resource for teaching social work management, when teaching staff uses practical-didactical approaches to encourage learners to engage in a critical, reflective, and dialogical discourse with professionals and leaders of social work organisations in order to develop a responsible and advocating professional attitude (see Chap. 7). Last, but not least, social work management education goes hand in hand with the internationalisation of the university and social work practice. Especially, by means of an internationalisation at home and/or an internationalisation of curricula, students can be inspired, for example, to participate in international activities, to study abroad, to better understand different cultural and ethnic backgrounds of people in social services, and to address the global challenges in society (see Chap. 8).
3. Professional *competence* as an integral component of social workers’ mindsets and of social work management degree programmes: The development of these competences includes, for example, the ability to translate from one domain of action to another in order to apply scientific knowledge into practice and to provide a firm ground for decision-making (Arnold, 2020, pp. 112–113). Part III of this handbook provides a long but incomplete list of competence-based teaching approaches, concepts, methods, and case studies to be considered in the training of social work managers such as: universal design to develop an inclusive learning environment (Chap. 9), fieldwork and supervision to constructively reflect on practical experiences (Chap. 10), teaching testable explanations (Chap. 11), service learning for applying theoretical and methodological knowledge in professional practice (Chaps. 12 and 17), development of critical digital literacy skills (Chap. 13), value-based education (Chap. 14), analysis of mission statements to reflect on management strategies and anthropological aspects in their work (Chap. 15), promoting self-determination and motivation for the development of leadership skills (Chap. 16), reflection on management education in different academic culture (Chap. 18), and VR-based collaborative learning in transnational projects (Chap. 19). These pedagogies and methodologies can be

understood as an ‘evident sample’ to be adopted in the classroom but have by far not yet been fully exploited.

In this framework, professional competence is understood as a core objective of social work management education that mediates both between theory and practice and between social work education and management education. Social work professionals need to be highly qualified to address the contemporary social issues and realities in all societies. In this context, social work management education has to include not only social work values, knowledge, attitudes, skills, applicable on the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels, but also knowledge from other relevant academic disciplines, e.g., anthropology, education, psychology, sociology, economics, and political science (for an overview see Arnold, 2021, 2022a).

The Structure of the Book

The *Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education* aims to explore theories, methods, and practices of social work management education in the context of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) (e.g., Boyer, 1990). In its three main parts, it attempts (i) to provide an overview of the *theoretical principles on the didactics* of social work management; (ii) to analyse *socio-economic conditions and institutional contexts* for social work management education at higher education institutions; (iii) to gain a better understanding of the different *teaching methods, approaches and learning strategies* in social work programmes in higher education that help to develop students’ analytic, systemic, and communicative capabilities and transferable skills. This is in line with the goal of increasing self-awareness of social justice and civil society, creative problem-solving, collaboration, and other transferable skills which enable students to adapt to ever-changing organisational and societal needs. All contributions to the handbook come from scholars and teachers of different interdisciplinary backgrounds and from various countries across the globe, which provide knowledge, experiences, and insights into the developments in the field of social work management education. The chapters are theoretical and empirical in character, and all the authors make an attempt to examine, expound on, and chronicle advancements in social work management academics in their various countries.

The handbook is divided into three parts: Part I focuses on the theoretical, methodological, and didactic foundations of teaching and learning in social work management education. The chapters in Part II outline different socio-economic conditions and institutional contexts for the field of social work management education. Part III presents a comprehensive collection of country-specific approaches, best practices, and case studies that help to narrow down the scope of teaching and learning to methodological approaches. The handbook concludes with a discussion of the implications, limitations, and directions for future research in the field of social work management education.

The three chapters in Part I explore the learning and teaching in social work management from two different perspectives: the learning object and learning objectives. In Chap. 2, *Gloria Kirwan* and *Breda O’Driscoll* (Ireland) emphasise the importance of the implementation of ‘threshold concept’ theory into the planning and design of social work management training. As discussed, the social work administration threshold concepts to date are understudied, and more debate is needed to generate a better understanding and consensus on what comprises significant concepts in this discipline. In this regard, the key threshold concept of ‘emotional labour’ is explained to bridge the gap between theory and practice of social work management.

Additionally, *Marcel Köhler* (Germany) examines in Chap. 3 the intentional use of the medium “language” in the design of academic teaching/learning processes in the field of social work management in order to improve the transparency and appropriateness of the communication process for starting activities to assess learning results. Based on action-theoretical teaching and linguistic theory of functional-communicative language description, a systematic approach to various types of didactic orders is developed. The chapter concludes with recommendations for the use of didactic orders in social work management training, as well as for continuing education of teaching staff in higher education. In Chap. 4, *Alexander Thomas Carey* (Germany) also considers the development of the skill set especially of individuals who – for a variety of reasons, such as a negative learning experience, a sense of being too old, or angst-ridden – have to face challenges of learning in educational settings. The author reports from 15 years of experience of successfully implementing several “learning factories” around Germany and Austria with diverse target groups (e.g., the long-term unemployed, people experiencing school absenteeism, academic staff, and qualified personnel with anxiety symptoms). Thus, this chapter focuses on relevant theoretical and practical learning approaches via the lens of gamification and neurophysiology that can support social workers’ active learning strategies.

Part II collects four intriguing chapters that deal with different socio-economic and institutional requirements and conditions in higher education. In terms of German study programs in social economics and social management, in Chap. 5 *Wolf Rainer Wendt* (Germany) notes that they are now founded on an understanding of the business of social enterprises and so emphasise business administration. As a result, the various study programs maintain their distance from the basic notion of social work, although the social economy arose from individuals organising themselves for their own survival, e.g., in the form of cooperatives and mutual relationships. This structural shift in social welfare necessitates collaboration with its beneficiaries in a spirit of partnership among all parties concerned. Thus, Wendt stresses that such transformation should be reflected in the learning design in the fields of social work management and social economy. Future curricula might begin with personal well-being and progress to social well-being. Public welfare also involves management and governance responsibilities that should be included in teaching in the terms of organised solidarity and working “for the people and the world.”

In Chap. 6, *Luca Fazzi* (Italy) highlights the fact that with the emergence of new public management and neoliberal policies, the demand on social work managers to learn cost-cutting and service-management abilities has intensified. In changing societal requirements, technical advancements, and service provision, novel professional capabilities are needed to produce creative ideas. Recognising that creativity is a critical component of the profession means including it into the curriculum design of social work management. Moreover, it is argued that educational programs should enhance future social work managers' creative abilities, which also poses a significant challenge for social work management education.

In Chap. 7, *Markus Andrä* (Germany) emphasises that social work management is a component of social work science programs and so is ingrained in the broader framework of this scientific discipline. Ethical reasoning may be a tool for navigating the interdisciplinarity of social work and social work management. The author assumes that normative professional standards for professional actions cannot be enforced, but must emerge from a critical, reflective, and dialogical dialogue among practitioners and leaders of social institutions. Based on the theory of interaction ritual chains and the concept of resonance as a relationship to the world, Markus Andrä provides a theoretical foundation for developing practical didactic tools that support a theory-practice transfer from management of ethics to ethical management. *Brigitta Zierer* (Austria) remarks in Chap. 8 that the European Union's (EU) multilevel governance makes a plea for more international competencies of managers in the social economy and non-profit organisations in order to address global challenges. The author discusses the social economy's position in the EU and the issues facing higher education institutions, particularly those specialising in social work management and the social economy and concludes with recommendations on how internationalisation issues can be integrated into curricula of master's degree programs.

Part III presents a comprehensive collection of country-specific case studies that highlight a number of teaching and learning approaches to social work management education. In Chap. 9, *Gloria Kirwan* (Ireland) and *Antonio López Peláez* (Spain) demonstrate that the development and implementation of social work management education may benefit significantly from universal design ideas. As a result, the concepts of universal design coincide with the underlying ideals of the social work profession, as well as the objectives of social work practice in a range of social work contexts. Respectively, the authors discuss the relevance of universal design in social work practice and make the case for a greater emphasis on its usefulness in social work management education.

Evidence shows that fieldwork and supervision in social work could be a useful teaching method and learning strategy, say *Magdalena Calderón-Orellana*, *Daniela Díaz Borquez* and *María Paz Martínez Rubio* (Chile) in Chap. 10. Both seminar work supervision and field supervisors play an important part in field work settings, which brings together students on a weekly basis with their instructors. The authors from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile developed a training model for social work field supervisors. With this objective in mind, the chapter begins by introducing the Chilean framework for social work administration, which is

characterised by social service privatisation. Following that, the supervisor training programme and its conceptual underpinnings are presented, along with the outcomes of its implementation and future research directions. In Chap. 11, *Carolyn Gentle-Genitty* (USA) asserts that there is a significant knowledge and skill gap, since the majority of people who finish graduate social work programmes move on to work as managers or leaders. The SALT model – Strengths, Area of Focus, Limitations, and Theories to Redress – is one method for teaching testable explanations and could be used to educate students in social work and social work management. In teaching and learning, the SALT enables managers to monitor competence, increase knowledge, and comply with regulations while having a minimal influence on academic freedom – regardless of their teachers. Comparative findings from analysing an urban university’s learner group indicate that SALT promotes critical thinking and information literacy, requires ethical and theoretical application, and also incorporates personal practical knowledge to guide final judgments in future social work managers. In Chap. 12, *Shorena Sadzaglishvili* (Georgia) applies service learning as a pedagogical technique to conventional field assignments by providing students with different learning experiences to enhance their practical abilities. With the transition from content- and structure-based to competency-based approaches in social work education, service learning is an excellent technique for building students’ practical social work abilities. The author discusses various service learning projects that were utilised as a teaching approach in the Social Degree Development and Evaluation course in Ilia State University’s Master of Social Work programme.

In Chap. 13, *Joachim K. Rennstich* (Germany) focuses on the development of critical digital literacy skills in order to prepare future social workers for a professional work environment that is increasingly hybrid in terms of administrative work environments and social space settings. This chapter covers the issues faced by social workers today as a consequence of the change of traditional social spaces, as well as the administrative challenges posed by digitisation and greater informatisation of professional social work settings. Conclusions are drawn from key findings in a research methodology module taught at the bachelor and master levels in both traditional on-campus/face-to-face and online formats, and it is discussed how students can acquire and discover critical digital and data literacies in a safe learning environment that adheres to best practises. Building on the findings of a qualitative study that included students and faculty members at ten institutions in the Visegrad nations (Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Poland, and Hungary; collectively referred to as “V4”), *Katerina Glumbikova* and *Jelena Petrucijova* (Czech Republic) examine in Chap. 14 the potential for value-based education in the field of social work. The research reveals four possible educational settings in relation to values development in social work students: theoretical teaching without (necessary) dynamism, non-existence of a system and disconnectedness of values, and the ideal of an integrated approach to values building in social work education. The chapter concludes with a discussion of implications for the field of students’ values development in social work management education.

In Chap. 15, *Dörte Görl-Rottstädt*, *Markus Andrä* and *Maik Arnold* (Germany) report how students in social work management studies benefit from using mission statements as learning tools to develop, implement, and critically reflect on teaching in social work management education. Their research is based on the undergraduate module “Introduction to Anthropology” offered as part of the interdisciplinary study programme Social Pedagogics and Management at a German University of Applied Sciences. The module’s objective is to familiarise students with various theoretical approaches in anthropology and cultural studies, to encourage critical reflection on concepts of humanity and ethical issues, and to gradually develop practical attitudes toward applying newly acquired knowledge to various professional situations. A component of this course’s teaching and learning is to analyse mission statements of social service organisations. This chapter offers a didactic example to demonstrate how theory and professional practise might be combined in a reflective and collaborative teaching and learning process.

In Chap. 16, *Frank Unger* and *Uli Sann* (Germany) present Deci and Ryan’s self-determination theory as a practical conceptual framework for social management degree programs and leadership development. Additionally, Miller and Rollnick’s motivational interviewing technique is used as an essential tool to bridge the gap between the benign assumption of participant-centred teaching and its practical and sustainable application. The authors identify appreciative, dialogical engagement between instructors and students as a critical component of both successful teaching and effective leadership behaviour. The way teachers and instructors act and are seen by their students and workers is seen as a critical educational intervention for intrinsic motivation and long-term learning success. Eventually, the authors draw conclusions for future theory-practice transfer and application for professional activities.

In Chap. 17, *Maik Arnold* (Germany) presents results from a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) project that examined the problem-based learning process of students enrolled in an undergraduate crowdfunding service learning course at a German University of Applied Sciences. Based on a qualitative empirical examination of students’ learning processes during a crowdfunding campaign, students gained a deeper understanding and exploration of a new topic, enhanced their entrepreneurial, intra- and interpersonal communication, and team skills, engaged in community service, and developed a greater appreciation for social responsibility in a challenging field of society while putting theories, concepts, and methods into practise. They also gained experience in youth work at the undergraduate level. As part of the conclusions, the author presents a framework for service-learning that guides its implementation at the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels of higher education institutions.

In Chap. 18, *Renata Vidart Klafke* (Brazil), *Claudia Tania Picinin* (Brazil) and *Maik Arnold* (Germany) reflect on teaching practises as lecturers in management education in the social sciences in Brazil and Germany. After a discussion of teaching and learning perspectives in general, the two main sections of the chapter deal with teaching challenges in those two countries. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of those experiences for the field of social work

management. And in Chap. 19, colleagues from three different European countries – Maik Arnold (Germany), Stefan Jung (Germany), Helge Fischer (Germany), Jazmin Zaraq (France), Pierre-Charles Chevallier (France), Andreas Efstathiou (Cyprus), Nikolaos Boukas (Cyprus), and Christakis Sourouklis (Cyprus) – reflect on virtual collaborative learning and teaching while using an immersive technology designed to develop critical competencies such as problem-solving, social, and digital skills. Based on the formative assessment of those skills in the Erasmus+ Hotel Academy project, the research team developed and implemented a transnational and transdisciplinary desktop/VR-based roleplay. In the chapter, research is presented that demonstrates the potential of virtual reality and learners’ experiences of presence and immersion during experimentation with it. Additionally, insights from the summative validation of the underlying pedagogic framework provide empirical-based proof of transnational and cross-institutional blueprints for implementing this specialised VR environment in higher education institutions. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the future use of such role plays in social work management education.

Last, but not least, the book concludes with an outlook for the future development of the field of social work management education. Overall, the book can be understood as an attempt to contribute to the greater discussion about elevating social work and management education on the one hand and the development of professional practice on the other hand in an international context.

Conclusions

Concerning other handbooks and textbooks in the field of Social Work Leadership and Management, *The Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education* is innovative and different concerning previous handbooks such as *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Social Work Education* by Sajid S. M. et al. (2021). The book will serve as a reference to social work management education at universities and degree programmes at under- and postgraduate as well as doctoral level worldwide. Additionally, the book will give insightful theoretical background, evidence-based tools and resources from an interdisciplinary, international, and intercultural perspective for the social work professions. The handbook is based on the aforementioned transdisciplinary framework that incorporates a two-side theory-practice-transfer. Moreover, a translational model of social work management education (adapted and modified from Arnold, 2020, 2021, 2022a) is used that incorporates the relationship between social work and management education and differentiates between their objects of research, resources to enhance the practice of social work managers, and the competencies of prospective professionals in this field. The book can help readers to integrate a competence-based view on conceptual and practical leadership theories (Lawler, 1994; Lawler & Bilson, 2010) as it was brought forward by Rofurth and Piepenbring (2019) which will also align with learning objectives related to the Network for Social Work Management (NSWM)

and Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) competencies. Hopefully, educators, learners, and practitioners can apply the different contributions to their own teaching and learning, and to consider what may be adopted or modified for certain situations.

As a handbook, it presents state-of-the-art social work management education as an essential primer for readers' bookshelves. Above that, it also includes new approaches which have not been thoroughly discussed in previous books of social work management education, e.g., hybrid teaching, threshold concepts, VR-based learning, universal design and many other topics. The handbook itself is geared specifically to the needs of social work educators, postgraduate students, and practitioners in academic and agency settings.

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Part I
Theoretical Concepts, Didactics and Scope
of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social
Work Management Education

Chapter 2

Applying Threshold Concept Theory in Social Work Management Education: The Pedagogy of Emotional Labour in Social Work Practice



Gloria Kirwan and Breda O'Driscoll

Abstract This chapter proposes the incorporation of Threshold Concept theory into the planning and design of social work management education. The identification of social work management Threshold Concepts is an unfinished field of enquiry and further discussion is required to build knowledge and agreement as to what constitutes key concepts in this field. In an attempt to broaden the debate on key Threshold Concepts in social work management, the concept of emotional labour is outlined and its relevance to the theory and practice of social work management is discussed.

Introduction

Threshold Concept theory sits within a perspective that views learning as a process whereby learners successfully traverse a set of knowledge portals on the road to gaining expertise and mastery of their discipline. This chapter provides an introductory overview of Threshold Concept theory and discusses its applicability in social work management education. By way of example, the topic of emotional labour is outlined and proposed as an important Threshold Concept in the social work management education curriculum, due to the many emotional dimensions of social work practice.

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Threshold Concept Theory

What Is a Threshold Concept?

The roots of Threshold Concept theory can be traced to the *Enhancing Teaching-Learning Environments in Undergraduate Courses* project, which was carried out approximately 20 years ago in the United Kingdom (Entwistle, 2003; Hounsell et al., 2005). Arising from that study and publications by Meyer and Land (2003, 2005), the examination of Threshold Concept theory has continued since then, expanding our understanding of this theory in considerable depth and scope. Threshold Concept theory proposes the existence of discipline-specific core concepts that learners must grasp in order to become proficient and expert in the knowledge base of their chosen discipline. These concepts were identified by Meyer and Land (2003) as Threshold Concepts, namely, key ideas or theories that enable learners to traverse the portal of knowledge through which the learner passes when they gain insight into the key concepts essential for an understanding of the wider body of knowledge in their specific subject area or discipline specialism. Threshold Concepts, by their nature, vary from discipline to discipline, or even within discipline specialisms. The shared characteristic that classifies and unifies Threshold Concepts as a collective is that they encapsulate necessary, essential, knowledge-related insights that a learner must grasp in order to acquire proficiency in their specific disciplinary studies.

Threshold Concepts can be said to unlock the learner's deeper understanding of their subject or discipline. In this light, Threshold Concepts are not only about knowing a subject area better, they are about knowing it differently. In 2003, Meyer & Land offered the following definition of Threshold Concepts:

A threshold concept can be considered akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something. (2003, p. 412)

The portal analogy is now a familiar, often-cited depiction employed to convey the process of concept learning, conjuring up, as it does, the image of a knowledge passageway through which the learner progresses during their learning journey. As they travel through the learning portal, the learner gains an understanding of a particular concept after which they emerge or cross into a place of higher understanding. Meyer and Land (2005) describe the knowledge portal as a 'conceptual gateway' on the other side of which the learner will be better equipped to deal with the theoretical framework of the subject or discipline they are studying.

Learners often experience the process of grasping Threshold Concepts as challenging and complex in terms of letting go previous perspectives and embracing new forms of understanding or mastery. The wider Threshold Concept literature addresses in some detail various pedagogical strategies that aim to help learners navigate the learning pathway attaching to difficult or hard-to-grasp concepts (Meyer & Land, 2005; Meyer et al., 2010). During that learning journey, the learner may experience a stage of liminality in which they struggle with the concept(s) they

are learning. There is considerable interest within the literature on Threshold Concepts regarding ways to help learners traverse this liminal stage (Cousin, 2006; Land et al., 2014). Drawing on Mudge (2016) and Fleming (2016), Timmermans and Meyer (2019) highlight how learners engage with conceptual knowledge in different modes, including through “cognitive, affective, psychomotor, social, ethical” domains. From this standpoint, it is important for curriculum designers to offer learners a variety of learning modes to help them on their learning journey.

As the learner grasps their discipline-specific Threshold Concept(s) and passes through the portal of knowledge, their understanding and proficiency is widened, deepened and enhanced. This is often referred to as the “aha” moment (Higgs, 2014). For example, Bhat & Goldszmidt (2020, p. 1088), writing in the context of medical practitioner education, describe the acquisition or grasping of a Threshold Concept as akin to a situation “where we had an epiphany or ‘aha’ moment, a moment where it felt like a switch had turned on and we saw something in a whole new light and, seeing it that way, we could never go back”. Meyer & Land (2003, p. 412) explain that moment of Threshold Concept enlightenment as a changed state of awareness that “represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting or viewing something without which the learner cannot progress.” From early in their theorisation of Threshold Concepts, Meyer & Land recognised the transformative impact of Threshold Concepts, suggesting that “as a consequence of comprehending a threshold concept there may thus be a transformed internal view of subject matter, subject landscape, or even world view” (2003, p. 412).

Disciplinary knowledge is typically constituted by an interwoven matrix of knowledge points, or what Timmermans & Meyer (2019, p. 360) refer to as a “complex web of concepts”. In this web, Threshold Concepts can provide connecting points of understanding, aiding learners to grasp the broader canon or corpus of disciplinary knowledge. Timmermans & Meyer (2019, p. 357) use the term ‘threshold-crossings’, which refers to the transformative, developmental dimension of knowledge acquisition whereby the learner’s sense of knowing is changed and altered once they grasp a relevant Threshold Concept (see for example, Joyce, 2012; Timmermans, 2010). Furthermore, Timmermans and Meyer (2019) make the point that Threshold Concepts are not confined to what might be described as content-based or external forms of knowledge (sometimes referred to as tangible knowledge), but can also include internal knowledge, such as how people in a particular discipline interpret, process or relate to information, situations or experiences.

Examples in the academic literature of the application of Threshold Concepts theory in teaching and learning settings expand year on year and are increasingly distributed across an ever-widening set of disciplines, including, by way of example, engineering (Foley, 2014), residential care (Steckley, 2020a, b), science (Taylor et al., 2012), women’s studies (Launius & Hassel, 2018), anaesthesiology (Barry & Littlewood, 2017), and social work (Kirwan, 2014; Morgan, 2012).

Key Characteristics of Threshold Concepts

Cousin (2006) summarises the generally accepted characteristics associated with Threshold Concepts. Firstly, she refers to the transformative quality of Threshold Concepts, noting the 'conceptual shift' or 'turn in understanding' (p. 4), which the acquisition of Threshold Concepts can herald for the learner. Secondly, she notes the irreversible quality of insight gained through Threshold Concepts – once a learner grasps a Threshold Concept they are unlikely to revert to earlier positions of knowing in relation to the specific topic. The integrative capacity of Threshold Concepts to shed light on linkages between one knowledge point and others was highlighted by Cousin as important in revealing connections within knowledge disciplines. Cousin (2006) also highlighted the bounded nature of Threshold Concepts (Barradell & Fortune, 2020) as well as the propensity for these concepts to be 'troublesome' by which is meant that they are often complicated to grasp, obscure or counter-intuitive and may be difficult for learners to master (see also, Carlisle, 2016; Perkins, 2006).

The pedagogical imperative for educators arising from Threshold Concept theory speaks to education provision that prioritises opportunities within the curriculum for learners to engage with and understand the key Threshold Concepts relevant to their chosen discipline or subject area. With this in mind, the next section considers the relevance of Threshold Concept theory in social work management education. The concept of emotional labour is used in this chapter as an example of a Threshold Concept in social work management education, and consideration is also given to the degree to which it fulfils the key characteristics of a Threshold Concept as outlined above.

Threshold Concept Theory in Social Work Management Education

In practice contexts, social work managers typically operate in highly pressured and/or complex work arenas where a range of management skills and knowledge is required. For many social work managers, their previous work as a social work practitioner may be helpful to them in mediating the demands of their management role, but often it provides an incomplete foundation for their role as managers. Social work management education can play an important role in bridging the gap between social work practice expertise and the specific management-related expertise required by social work managers. Identifying and addressing core, essential concepts suitable for inclusion in social work management education is essential for educational providers, both in terms of the learning outcomes that can be achieved for learners and because the structure and content of educational courses can influence what learners bring back from the classroom into the real world (Steckley, 2020a). Ideally, social work management education will rest on a curriculum that

seeks to build and strengthen the knowledge and skills of social work managers as well as to build capacity in the field of social work management. To that end, it is imperative that social work management education includes content that is applicable and useful in the practice contexts within which social work managers operate.

Threshold Concept theory offers curriculum designers a useful signposting approach to help them identify essential, relevant and practical content when designing educational courses. However, the literature on Threshold Concepts for the discipline specialism of social work management is quite sparse and there is work yet to be done on identifying and agreeing on the core Threshold Concepts that are pertinent to the social work management curriculum.

It is helpful, therefore, to refer to the wider literature of management studies where the identification of Threshold Concepts that apply in the general discipline of management has attracted some discussion (Hibbert & Cunliffe, 2015; Wright & Gilmore, 2012). A range of Threshold Concepts have been identified that relate to the theory and practice of management including, for example, the distinction between ‘managing’ and ‘doing’ in the managerial role. The managing-versus-doing dichotomy is proposed by Donovan (2017) as a Threshold Concept because it leads to an irreversible and transformed worldview on what the role of the manager entails and how it can best be performed. He explains this as follows:

Managers need to understand the distinction between managing and doing and they need to divine an ongoing balance between these two approaches that is appropriate to their context. Successful managers.... understand this balance. (2017, p. 840)

According to Barradell (2013), there can be challenges in securing total agreement within different disciplines regarding what concepts should be designated as core Threshold Concepts. The benefits of persevering with attempts to identify Threshold Concepts for social work in general is highlighted by Foote (2013, p. 426), who underscores the link between the knowledge and skills that social workers acquire and their ability “to think and act creatively and effectively” in complex situations. We suggest a similar argument applies to persevering in identifying Threshold Concepts in the discipline specialism of social work management because the successful delivery of services will follow, to some extent at least, from the skills and competence of those who occupy key social work management positions.

With reference to the earlier point by Steckley (2020a) regarding the need for theory that is useful in the real world of practice, it is helpful if educators can identify Threshold Concepts that will assist social work manager-learners to think and act strategically in relation to the issues with which they grapple in their management roles. For example, there are a number of workforce-related issues, which appear with regularity in the social work literature, that are regarded as important issues for managers to engage with as part of their leadership role in organisations. These issues include the promotion of worker job satisfaction (Byrne & Kirwan, 2019; Ellett, 2009), fostering worker resilience (Collins, 2017; Hurley et al., 2015; Hurley & Kirwan, 2020; McFadden, 2020), and the scaffolding of supports necessary to address worker reactions to distressing situations and vicarious trauma (Ashley-Binge & Cousins, 2020; Bride, 2007; O’Driscoll, 2018a, b; Wilson, 2016).

There are no simple formulae that social work managers can apply to address these types of issues. Bolstering job satisfaction, resilience and coping mechanisms in the social work workforce requires social work managers to engage with multiple factors ranging from individual worker experiences to organisational and societal forces. In formulating their inputs and responses, social work managers will draw on external and internal forms of knowledge including the evidence base relevant to their practice field (external knowledge) and their internal knowledge, which helps them to interpret, process and relate to the situations and experiences they encounter as part of their work. In order to effectively manage these types of issues it is vital that social work managers have a theory (or two!) through which they can understand and respond to the needs and experiences of the social workers based in the services they manage. We suggest that the theory of emotional labour offers a useful explanatory theory through which social work managers can make sense of some of the issues they will encounter within their organisations. The next section takes a closer look at the theory of emotional labour and discusses the basis for proposing it as a Threshold Concept applicable to the field of social work management education.

Emotional Labour as a Threshold Concept in the Field of Social Work Management

The argument that social workers benefit from staying connected to the emotions that their work arouses for them has been a long-running point of discussion in the social work literature (see for example, Ferguson et al., 2021; Gibson, 2014; Howe, 2008; O'Sullivan & Cooper, 2022). These writers have aimed to highlight the emotional dimensions of social work practice and some have explored the predicament of social workers whose emotional response to their work departs from their organisation's expectations (Frost, 2016; Gibson, 2019).

The term emotional labour is attributed to Arlie R. Hochschild (1983) and the exposition in her seminal study, *The Managed Heart*, of the contrasting emotional dimensions of the work carried out by flight attendants and bill collectors. In her study, Hochschild's (1983) definition of emotional labour captured the transactional dimension of emotional management by workers, particularly in contexts where the control of emotions by workers serves a purpose or meets an organisational expectation in the workplace context. Hochschild explained emotional labour as:

the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value. (1983, p. 7)

For Özmete (2011), the key element of emotional labour involves a worker controlling their emotional responses in workplace encounters in order to display the emotional reactions expected of them in their specific, paid role. It follows that the actual emotion experienced by the social worker may or may not match the emotional expression or reaction they perform in the enactment of their work role. When

there is a mismatch between felt and expressed emotions this means that the worker has suppressed expression of their felt emotion as they perform their work duties or they have displayed an emotion that they are not feeling at all or not feeling as strongly/weakly as their behaviour implies. It is important to point out that the management of emotions by the social worker may be carried out as part of their attempt to assist the service user, and research on emotional labour in social service-type organisations such as the Samaritans (McMurray & Ward, 2014; Ward & McMurray, 2016) has indicated that not all emotional labour leads to negative consequences either for service outcomes or for the worker.

As O'Connor (2020, p. 645) reminds us, 'emotions are intrinsic to social work', and emotionally charged experiences are interwoven throughout its "process, content and organisation" (p. 656). O'Connor expands on this statement to suggest that

Emotions are inherent in the relational, organisational and socio-political context of this practice which involves practitioners working with other people's and their own emotions. How these emotions are understood or worked with is relevant to professional knowledge and practice. (p. 646)

Indeed, it is the very nature of social work and the intensity of human interaction involved in it that attracts many social workers to this career in the first place. However, noting the increasingly bureaucratised context of social work practice, O'Connor's (2020) thematic synthesis review of the literature on emotions in social work practice identified the management of emotion as a potential source of strength for the worker but also, at times, the possibility that it can become a source of pressure or tension (see also Ingram, 2015). Winter et al. (2019) import Hochschild's (1983) term 'feeling rules' to highlight how the nature of their work and the professional context of their work can interact, and at times influence, the management of their emotions on the part of social workers.

Ruch (2012), acknowledging the complexities surrounding the emotional content of social work practice, highlights the disjuncture that can arise between the lived experience of working as a social worker versus wider societal expectations regarding the performance of the social work role. This disjuncture may include opposing beliefs regarding what constitutes 'acceptable' expression, suppression or processing of emotion by social workers during the course of their work.

Given the wide-ranging and sometimes intense emotional content of their work (Barlow & Hall, 2007; Collins, 2007; Ferguson et al., 2021; Howe, 2008; Ingram, 2013b, 2015), which for many social workers is typically performed in the context of complex situations and high societal expectations (Ruch, 2012), the concept of emotional labour can provide social workers and social work managers with a lens through which to understand and interpret the emotions they experience whilst carrying out that work. Indeed, emotional labour is a particularly important concept for social workers, including social work managers, because it addresses the organisational expectations and dynamics that surround and permeate the worker's expression (or lack of expression) of their true feelings as well as their reactions to the situations and inter-personal dynamics they encounter and experience.

Ruch (2012) highlights the gap or difference that can exist between organisational expectations regarding the social worker's behaviour and the reality for social workers of their experiences, including their emotional reactions, in the real-life context of service delivery. On the one hand, social workers work with people through professional relationships supported by critical self-awareness and reflexivity (Kondrat, 1999), yet on the other hand, they are often advised to 'manage' their emotions, which in some contexts can include distancing themselves from their emotions and feelings regarding their work. This may appear at first glance as a simple, dichotomous choice between staying in touch with one's feelings or brushing them aside. However, in reality this choice is not straightforward or acceptable. Instead, Leung et al., (2005/2006) characterise the management of emotions on the part of the social worker as 'integral' to effective social work practice due in part to the nature of social work where the worker is immersed in multiple interpersonal exchanges. Developing this point in more depth, Özmeye (2011) suggests that the nature of social work, and the repeated exposure of social workers to individual, family and societal problems, requires social workers to manage their feelings, as to do otherwise leaves them vulnerable to emotional overload. It seems that emotions stirred during the course of work performance can be helpful and unhelpful all at the same time. Unwrapping this seemingly intrinsic contradiction, Özmeye (2011) suggests that the ability to contain (as opposed to denying) one's own emotions is important for social workers (so that they can avoid feelings of overwhelm) and an aspect of practice that can be aided by supportive supervision. Similarly, Rose and Palattiyil (2020) conclude that the ability of social workers to work effectively is not solely due to a set of personal attributes intrinsic to the personality of some social workers and not others. Making a similar point to Özmeye (2011), they highlight the important role of management in providing the resources and supports that social work practitioners require in order to deal with the demands of their job.

Emotional labour offers a means of understanding and engaging with the emotional content attaching to the practice of social work. For example, it is possible that emotional labour serves a range of purposes in social work, including protecting social workers by allowing them to don a cloak of professional detachment when confronted with highly charged emotional situations. However, it also creates inherent contradictions. Within their organisations social workers may be expected to demonstrate emotional detachment from their work, even in work that is highly emotive such as in child protection settings (Ruch, 2012), while at the same time they may be expected to connect with their feelings and process their emotional responses to work-related events in the context of reflective supervision. When performative expectations related to expressed emotion differ from one situation to the next within the same job, this can present social workers with something of an emotional chess board that they find they must navigate as best they can. Social workers may encounter expectations to switch on and off their emotions depending on the task at hand or who they are with. On the one hand they may be expected to remain neutral and emotionally controlled in the presence of the service user, yet fully connected to their emotional self in the supervision encounter provided to enable them to reflect on their direct work. Not surprisingly then, Leung et al.,

(2005/2006, p. 3) suggest that for social workers “emotional labour is demanding” and they emphasise the detrimental impact on worker wellbeing if emotional dissonance leading to compassion fatigue takes hold and is left unaddressed. It seems reasonable, in this light, for Steinberg and Figart (1999) to suggest that emotional labour is a complex and far-reaching phenomenon, which dynamically interacts with many aspects of workplace performance.

Therefore, understanding how emotional labour operates in and influences social work practice becomes important knowledge for social work managers, concerned as they are to reduce the impact of factors that can lead to diminished job satisfaction or other negative consequences in their agency’s social work workforce. In this light, the role of social work managers is important in helping social work staff to stay connected to their emotional responses but at the same time protected from emotional overload. Often, the worker is assisted in the calibration of emotional congruence during or arising out of supervision or supportive inputs from management staff. The role of the social work manager is thus located at the nexus of external practice and internal reflection, positioned in a key role regarding the worker’s overall experience of their work life, including their levels of satisfaction, ability to cope with the demands of the job and the emotional impact of their work tasks. For Rose and Palattiyil (2020) it is this workplace support system that makes the difference between workers who simply survive (if they stay) and those who thrive in an emotionally resilient way. In many organisational contexts, the social work manager plays a pivotal role in drawing in the necessary resources and supports towards their team or unit, and so an understanding of the power of emotional labour and emotional processing for social work staff is a crucial concept for social work managers to grasp.

The presence of emotional labour in social work practice, along with the indications that its impact can be far-reaching, suggests that it is a topic worthy of inclusion in the social work management curriculum. The extent to which it can be regarded as a Threshold Concept in the field of social work management education can be assessed with reference to the key features of Threshold Concepts (Cousin, 2006) as outlined earlier in this chapter.

Firstly, the transformative gain for the learner when introduced to the concept of emotional labour can be understood in terms of the knowledge and insights they gain about the performativity of social work practice, how awareness of this phenomenon exposes the demanding toll that some social workers experience when managing the emotional content and contexts of their work, and the burden of societal expectations on workers who are supposed to carry on without falter even in the face of emotional overload.

Secondly, there is an irreversible dimension to the insight that knowledge of emotional labour provides regarding the management of emotions by workers – once we get a glimpse into this knowledge, it is impossible to shed awareness of its existence. Having gained awareness of the invisible influence of emotional labour on the expression of emotion by social workers in different contexts, it is impossible to revert to previous states of understanding where the power of external forces is obscured.

Thirdly, emotional labour theory helps to integrate or make links between other issues in social work, such as the factors that contribute to stress and burnout, and how practices embedded in social work practice such as supervision (Beddoe, 2000) can offer important opportunities for reflective strategies and self-appraisal on the part of the individual worker.

Furthermore, emotional labour as a topic fits with the bounded nature of Threshold Concepts, but at the same time it is a troublesome concept, as it can be messy to grasp and somewhat obscure. The impact of emotional labour on individual social workers can vary from person to person, it is influenced by context, and it straddles a number of dimensions of lived experience, including cognitive, social and sometimes ethical processes. Nonetheless, for the social work manager-learner, emotional labour is a key concept in their repertoire, as it offers insights into potential causes of individual and organisational processes that can influence the quality of services experienced by clients. Emotional labour as a concept exhibits the essential features of a Threshold Concept (Cousin, 2006) and consequently deserves inclusion in the social work management curriculum.

There are no fixed rules regarding the positioning or sequencing of Threshold Concepts in educational curricula. However, it is axiomatic that they need to be located at points in the curriculum that make sense and that help learners grasp essential concepts at the point in their course when they need them. Hughes and Wearing (2016) suggest that social work managers need to be “competent, strategic and ethical organisational operators” (p. 81). Given the extensive presence of emotionally-laden dynamics in social work service delivery, it seems useful that social work management education will aim to prepare learners to be able to competently address a range of management tasks that have the processing of emotions at their core. This includes the importance for social work managers to operate in general from a position of emotional intelligence (Morrison, 2007), including in the context of social work supervision (Ingram, 2013a). It also includes the need for social work managers to recognise the presence of emotional labour and its impact (positive or negative) on worker wellbeing and organisational performance. Research indicates that social workers want and need a degree of emotional resonance within the organisational management structures in their employing agencies – as Elpers and Westhuis (2008) suggest, social workers want “leadership that engages employees rather than merely manages them” (p. 39). Thus, acquiring an understanding of the concept of emotional labour provides a conceptual gateway (Meyer & Land, 2003) for the social work manager-learner, revealing, as it does, not only the heavy emotional burden carried by social workers at times in their work, but also the extent to which the awareness and handling of emotions lie at the core of effective social work practice and effective social work management practice in a myriad of ways.

Conclusion

Despite the attention to Threshold Concepts in the wider field of management studies (Wright & Gilmore, 2012), there is room for increased focus on Threshold Concept theory in the pedagogy of social work management. Undoubtedly, more work needs to be done to pinpoint key Threshold Concepts that deserve inclusion in the social work management education curriculum. Roche et al. (1999) invite social work educators to view curriculum planning as an opportunity to create a setting for what they term ‘critical conversations’, as it is in learning environments that transformative and integrative thinking can take place. The concept of emotional labour is proposed in this chapter as a Threshold Concept worthy of attention in social work management education and a suitable starting point for critical classroom conversations regarding the role of social work managers in supporting staff to process emotions within social work contexts. There remains a need for further debate on the extent to which emotional labour as a topic qualifies for classification as a Threshold Concept in the purest sense of that term. This chapter has attempted to set out the grounds for such a classification and the arguments for its inclusion as a core topic in social work management education.

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Chapter 3

Systematisation of Types of Didactic Orders to Support Academic Teaching and Learning Processes in the Field of Management of Social Work



Marcel Köhler

Abstract Teaching and learning have always been decisively associated to language, communication and interaction and are inconceivable without the use of linguistic means. Language can therefore be seen as a key element or medium of academic teaching and learning. This chapter deals with the conscious use of the medium “language” in the design of academic teaching/learning processes in the field of Social Work Management in order to make the communication process for initiating actions to assess learning outcomes more transparent and appropriate. The theoretical approach of the study is based on the concept of action-theoretical teaching (cf. Hortsch H *Didaktik der Berufsbildung. Merkblätter.* Dresden, SFPS. 2005) and the linguistic approach of functional-communicative language description (cf. Schmidt W (ed) *Funktional-kommunikative Sprachbeschreibung. Theoretisch-methodische Grundlegung.* Leipzig, Bibliographisches Institut. 1981). On the basis of these approaches, the aim is to develop a systematic approach to various types of didactic orders. In order to achieve this aim, based on literature basic didactic considerations regarding the taxonomy of learning actions and a conceptual-logical treatment of individual types of didactic orders will be used to derive elements constituting these types. Finally, conclusions will be drawn for the use of didactic orders in academic study courses of Social Work Management and for the further education of teaching staff in this field.

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Introduction¹

Academic qualification of Social Work Management specialists for the labour market is one of the core tasks of German universities. The changing and increasingly complex requirements of the working world have a significant impact on the methodological-didactic design of teaching/learning processes in the field of Social Work Management.

Against this background, an influence by these changed conditions on the language use of teachers and learners, which plays a key role in teaching/learning processes (cf. Loch, 1970, pp. 481–528; Kostrzewa, 2009, p. 29), can also be assumed, especially since understanding the language of the teacher is of fundamental importance for the learning process and thus for the learner's acquisition of competences. Language can thus be seen as a key element or medium of academic teaching that contributes to the provision of qualified Social Work Management specialists for the labour market. However, the available research and data regarding academic-pedagogical special language as well as its understanding in academic teaching/learning processes in general and in the field of Social Work Management education in particular is extremely scarce. Among other things, there are hardly any studies on the formulation of didactic orders in examinations.

Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to develop a systematic approach to various types of didactic orders as selected elements of an academic-pedagogical special language. In addition, the chapter will present the main results of an empirical study, conducted by the author, to show the effect of instruction on operators as a core element of didactic orders in processing results and task understanding in written examinations. Findings of this investigation can help to enhance further trainings of academic teaching staff (cf. Köhler, 2017, pp. 328–334) by improving language comprehension in order to make didactic orders in examinations of Social Work Management degree programmes more comprehensible.

Theoretical Background

Academic-Pedagogical Special Language as a Teaching Medium in Management of Social Work

The concept of academic-pedagogical special language is necessarily preceded by an understanding of a general concept of language, which is ambiguous and can only be described by language (i.e. meta-language; cf. Vater, 2002, p. 13). Language

¹ While the contents of this chapter are largely adapted from a previously published article (Köhler, 2021), they have also been further extended to encompass an analysis of the relationship between didactic orders, learning goals, and their taxonomies and to discuss these with regard to the development of pedagogies in the field of social work management education.

subsumes means that humankind has at his disposal for communicating about things. These represent an independent field of action, whose units are language actions (cf. Lorenz, 2004, p. 49).

As a partial language, “special language” is to be distinguished from the general term “language”, since it is related to the thought elements of a certain academic study field, such as technical terms (cf. Hoffmann, 1976, pp. 162–170). Special language is acquired through socialisation and learning processes in a certain study discipline, which go hand in hand with the development of specific structures of thought and communication that are, above all, shaped by the methodology as well as by the knowledge and research interests of the respective study field (cf. Buhlmann & Fearn, 2000, pp. 12–13). Thus, there is not just one, but a multitude of technical languages, which exhibit a varying degree of differentiation depending on the degree of specialisation (cf. *ibid.*). As of now, there are many definitions of the term “technical language”, although in the current research literature, the characteristic of specific language use in separate social contexts is regarded as invariant (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 13–14).

Institutionalised teaching/learning processes in Social Work Management higher education are likewise influenced by this specific social context. It is undisputed that teaching and learning have always been significantly dependent on language, communication, and interaction and thus on interaction through communication and are therefore inconceivable without the use of language (cf. Priesemann, 1971, p. 81; Spanhel, 1973, p. 15; Klingberg, 1982, p. 131). Teachers use language intentionally and purposefully to initiate and regulate learning processes and to receive feedback on what students have learned. Especially this feedback enables teachers to design teaching/learning processes to meet the needs of specific target groups (cf. Kersten, 2009, p. 169).

This is of major importance for the education and training in the field of Social Work Management. Due to the high cognitive requirements resulting from subject- and society-related teaching content, the functionality of academic-pedagogical special language as a means of supporting the learning process must be assured, among other things, by regulating learning actions. In order to clarify its significance, it is useful to outline the functional scope of academic and pedagogical special language, since it encompasses many more functions in the education and training in the field of Social Work Management than just that of communicating about teaching content.

According to Wygotski (1977), in addition to the communication function, there are other language functions, which are likewise relevant to this chapter. He describes, among other things, a signifying function of language, by means of which reference is made to objects. Moreover, language has an indicative function, which is used in intellectual operations to form concepts by extracting individual characteristics and can thus be seen as a primary function of language (cf. Wygotski, 1977, p. 164). In addition, reference is also made to a signal function. This signal function is particularly important for the operators of didactic orders,

because operators are used to indicate a certain action to be performed. The signal effect of an operator can be regarded as realised if it triggers an appropriate reaction of the learner to solve a task (cf. Montag, 1975, pp. 24–25). Another characteristic of language is its intellectual function. This is shown by the fact that language and thinking cannot be separated from each other; rather, speaking, thinking processes, and the development of intelligence go hand in hand (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 38–39). The connection between speaking and thinking is also considered in other works on language as an essential element of teaching/learning processes. For example, Galperin (1966) and Zimmer (1985) describe further language functions through which the process of learning can be initiated, regulated, and supervised. In addition to its exchange or communication function, one can also differentiate between an ordering, a processing, and a recognition function of language (cf. Zimmer, 1985, p. 17). While both the processing and the recognition function serve as essential elements that enable one to acquire learning content with the help of language, the ordering function provides a linguistic arrangement for its orientation of this as a necessary condition for recognition (cf. Galperin, 1966, pp. 33 ff.; Zimmer, 1985, pp. 25 ff.). For a deeper understanding of these three language functions, a distinction should be made between a real action and a mental action. The mental action comprises the mental-linguistic depiction of a model of the real external action and the foreseeing of the possibilities for its execution as well as the course and the result of the real action (cf. Galperin, 1966, p. 33). The ordering function and the processing function of language are closely related. The concepts conceived during this action process are linguistically analysed with the help of the ordering function with regard to their characteristics and relations, put in relation to each other, and then compared with reality (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 46–47). While the ordering function enables orientation by assigning characteristics to terms enables orientation by assigning characteristics to terms and classifications, the processing function comprises the purpose-oriented mental-linguistic increase in the degree of abstraction of existing and new knowledge (cf. *ibid.*, p. 38; Zimmer, 1985, p. 27). The recognition function of language presupposes the two preceding functions. A gain in knowledge, which the ordering and the processing function facilitate, is comprehensively possible only if the content of an action has been completely developed (cf. Galperin, 1966, p. 38). For this, it is necessary, on the one hand, to subdivide the action into its individual operations, and on the other, to emphasise the properties of things, which are of central importance for the realisation of the mental and the real action, before these are generalised in the context of processing (cf. *ibid.*; Zimmer, 1985, p. 22). These considerations have not only theoretical but also practical significance for the work with tasks in teaching/learning processes, as the above-described procedure supports the structuring of thinking processes and enables a didactically justified selection of didactic orders.

Academic Teaching and Learning Processes from the Perspective of an Action-Oriented Approach

The above considerations make it clear that speaking is an independent field of action in the interaction between teachers and learners. In order to take this field of action sufficiently into account in education and training in the field of Social Work Management, an action-oriented didactic approach is appropriate.

The understanding of teaching as an relationship from an action-oriented perspective can be clarified by using the basic didactic relationship according to Hortsch (1994, p. 22), which describes the relationships between the elements “teacher”, “learner” and “content” (Fig. 3.1).

The basic didactic relationship shows two subject-object relations.² In the first subject-object relation (teacher-learner), an interaction involving language is necessary in order to realise the teaching activity of the teacher in his relationship with the learner. This relation also implies that the teaching process is influenced by the activities of and interactions between the teacher and the learners. In addition, it becomes clear that action in general, and the action of the teacher in this concrete context, always have a goal reference and a purpose (cf. *ibid.*, p. 28). The purpose of teaching is to initiate learning actions with the aim of developing the learner’s personality (cf. *ibid.*, p. 23).

In the light of action theory, teaching can be regarded as a facilitation of a relationship between the learner and the content, and it is, therefore, the teacher’s activity that the second subject-object relation (learner-content) emerges from (cf. *ibid.*, p. 22). This relation represents the activity of learning, i.e. the work on and with content or the grasping of objects by the learner (cf. *ibid.*). There, interaction and communication take place between the learner and the content. The result of this learning activity and thus the goal of teaching is the development of the learner’s personality traits on the cognitive, affective, and psychomotoric level (e.g. knowledge, insights, skills, abilities, convictions, and attitudes; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 23–24). If these personality traits are dispositively orientated towards a specific occupational

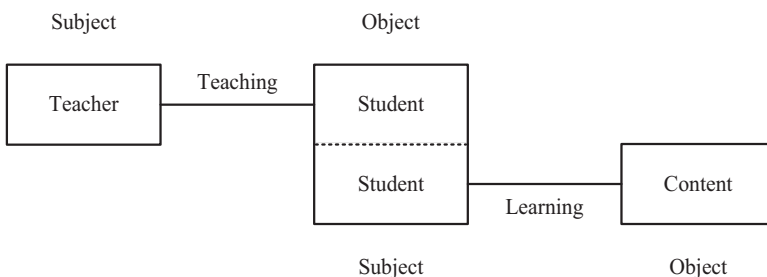


Fig. 3.1 The basic didactic relationship according to Hortsch (1994, p. 22)

²At this point it should be noted that the designation of the “learner” as an object in the basic didactic relationship according to Hortsch (1994) is made for epistemological considerations.

activity, the learner thus attains a qualification, i.e. they become capable of performing a specific action (cf. Hortsch, 2005, p. 10). The expression of these personality traits with decisive consideration of the dispositive components of knowledge (as an informative prerequisite for professional action), ability (as a subjective possibility for professional action), and willingness (as a subjective necessity for professional action) as well as other internal conditions becomes visible in a performance as the result of a certain behaviour (cf. *ibid.*).

As mentioned above, the learning process is generally linked to language and communication. In particular, this also applies to the initiation of performance actions during this process and to the actions themselves (cf. Montag, 1975, p. 3). The initiation of these actions is carried out by the teacher in the phases of the teaching process in various ways by means of didactic orders (cf. Malek, 1977, pp. 33–40), among other things, in order to obtain feedback on what has been learned. The didactic orders must make it as clear as possible what action the learner is to perform or what goal is to be achieved by completing a task (cf. Kersten, 2009, p. 171). A consequence of a lack of clarity can be that the learner carries out actions that are unexpected by the teacher or unsuitable for processing the didactic order (cf. Montag, 1975, p. 32–33). In order to reduce this risk, it is also possible to work with learning goal taxonomies in academic courses. These make it possible to systematically assign actions to be carried out to individual requirement levels according to scientific criteria.

Taxonomic Considerations

Relationships Between Didactic Orders, Learning Goals, and Taxonomies

As has already been pointed out, the execution of (learning) actions is of fundamental importance in academic education. Among other things, the formulation of learning goals serves to support goal-oriented planning and design of teaching.³

³Since the emergence of learning goal-oriented lesson planning based on behaviourist learning theory, a lively scientific discourse has developed in which criticism and advocacy of this type of lesson conception are voiced, especially due to the implications of different scientific points of view (an overview of this can be found, for example, in Peterßen, 1996, pp. 135–142 and in Mausolf & Pätzold, 1987, p. 68–69). Central points of discussion are not only the learning goal-oriented lesson planning per se, but also the preferences of different modes of learning goal formulation. This concerns, for example, the formulation of heuristic learning goals according to Wulf or the instrumental and potentially emancipatory formulation of learning goals according to Klafki (cf. Peterßen, 1996, p. 350–352). For the present chapter, however, this debate is only of limited significance, since the use of learning goals seems compatible with and appropriate to the research perspective adopted here, with particular reference to operators. First and foremost, the operationalisation and taxonomisation of learning goals are in the foreground here, since the use of operators at different requirement levels in didactic orders is directly connected to this (cf. Kühn, 2010, p. 175). Therefore, the chapter renounces on further inclusion and deepening of the discussion on learning goal-oriented lesson planning.

They describe the intended learning outcomes at the end of a learning process (cf. Schelten, 2010, p. 207; Mager, 1983, p. 19). Various classification systems have been developed to illustrate legal or systematic relationships between learning goals at different levels. These systems aim to arrange learning goals according to their characteristics and the relationships between them under specific aspects (cf. Peterßen, 1996, p. 353; Mausolf & Pätzold, 1987, pp. 54–73).

Dimensioning is possible, for example, under the aspect of subject-relatedness in general and subject-specific learning goals (cf. Deutscher Bildungsrat, 1971, p. 82–84) as well as differentiation into formal and material learning goals (cf. Klauer, 1974, p. 81). Furthermore, learning goals can be assigned to several hierarchically related classes, among other things, under the aspect of their level of abstraction. According to Möller (1976, p. 73), a widely used hierarchy of learning goals differentiates between indicative, general, and fine goals. On an abstraction continuum, the highest degree of generality is attributed to the indicative goals and the highest degree of concreteness to the fine goals (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 72–80).

Three essential criteria for the purposeful and “clear” operationalisation of learning goals can be found, for example, in Mager (cf. Mager, 1983, p. 21): according to him, learning goals should firstly describe the observable and thus verifiable behaviour that the learners are able to carry out at the end of the lesson. Secondly, it is useful to specify the conditions under which the activity is to be carried out by the learners and under which it can therefore be controlled. Thirdly, the description of the objective should include a benchmark against which the outcome of an activity can be measured in order to assess the degree of its achievement. If one juxtaposes the considerations made in this chapter on didactic orders with the statements made here on learning goals, it becomes clear that there is a connection between didactic orders and learning goals. This is particularly evident in the structure of didactic orders, which in the case of a task, for example, have the three constituent components “condition”, “operation”, and “goal” (cf. section “[Operators as a systematisation basis for didactic orders](#)”). An essential difference between a didactic order and a learning goal is that a goal is a state or a situation that is planned in the present and desirable for the future (cf. Hortsch, 2005, p. 38), whereas a didactic order aims at initiating an action. However, the didactic order can be used to achieve learning goals, as these are directed towards the personality development of learners through learning actions (cf. *ibid.*).

Regardless of their concept-specific hierarchical classification, learning goals should have both a content and a behavioural component in their formulation, where the latter can be differentiated into three behavioural domains or learning goal dimensions and their associated behavioural levels (cf. Schelten, 2010, p. 210). The behavioural domain can be divided into a cognitive, an affective, and a psychomotoric sub-domain (cf. *ibid.*, p. 208; Bloom, 1973, p. 20). In the past, several taxonomies of learning goals were developed for these individual sub-domains in order to hierarchise the behavioural levels or requirement levels. Taxonomies can be described as systems of order in the sense relevant here, which serve to systematically record and represent the sequence of learning goals (cf. Peterßen, 1996, p. 345).

In didactic orders, there is a reference to the behavioural domain and the behavioural level, especially in the use of operators. The action to be performed to which the operator calls can in turn be assigned to one of the behavioural domains mentioned.

In Fig. 3.2, the relationship between learning goals, behavioural domains, and behavioural levels is visualised for the assignment of learning goals to individual taxonomic domains.

The developed taxonomies are based on behavioural area-specific classification criteria, according to which the learning goals can be systematised.

Several taxonomies have been conceived for the psychomotoric domain, which are based, for example, on the degree of coordination of the behaviour belonging to the psychomotoric domain or its complexity as systematisation criteria (cf. Peterßen, 1996, p. 345).

In the possibly most important learning goal taxonomies that originated in English-speaking countries (Bloom, 1973; Krathwohl et al., 1978), the criterion of complexity in the cognitive domain and the criterion of internalisation in the affective domain form the basis of systematisation (cf. Peterßen 1996, p. 345). Often, the cognitive sub-domain becomes particularly significant, as it is cognitive learning goals that are predominantly used in academic study programmes.

In 1973, Bloom devised a six-level taxonomy for systematising cognitive learning goals and pointed out that the main task of any taxonomy was to secure a shared understanding among its users (cf. Bloom, 1973, p. 24). Cognitive learning goals or the behaviour described in them can be assigned to the taxonomy levels that Bloom differentiated between on the basis of their degree of complexity. To this end, Bloom identified six main levels, of which the lowest one is knowledge reproduction and the most complex one is the evaluation or assessment of learning content. The hierarchisation of this classificatory ordering system arises from the assumption that complex cognitive behaviour is composed of simple cognitive behaviour units that

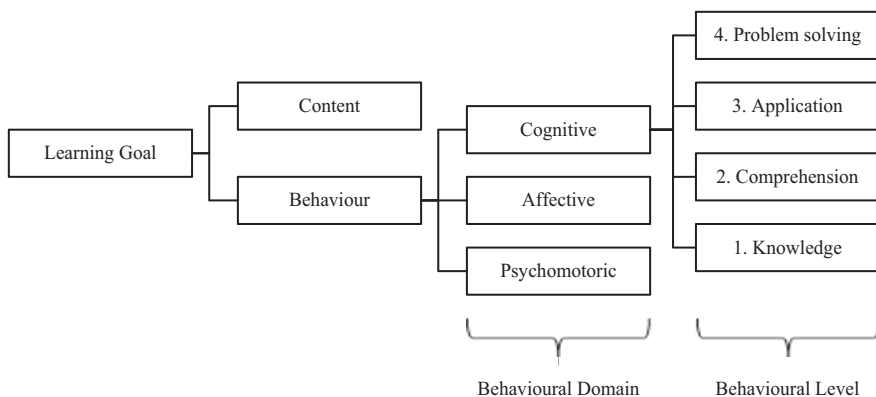


Fig. 3.2 Relationship between learning goal, behavioural domain, and behavioural level according to Schelten (2010, p. 210)

build on one another with increasing interconnectedness (cf. Peterßen, 1996, p. 346). Meyer (1979) emphasises that in order to achieve complex learning goals in a defined content area, mastery of the content at all preceding levels of the hierarchy is a necessary prerequisite (p. 108; cf. Bloom, 1973, p. 130). Building on these insights, the increasing complexity of the six taxonomic hierarchy levels (Bloom, 1973, p. 31) of the cognitive behavioural dimension can be outlined in the following way:

The terms listed in Fig. 3.3 on the right are to be understood as the main levels of taxonomy and are described in Bloom's remarks in a much more detailed manner than is possible within the framework of the present chapter. In summary, however, they can be characterised as follows:

1. While at the level of knowledge, the behaviour of remembering and reproducing individual pieces of information is the most important, this level also includes terminological knowledge and factual information of concrete individual cases as well as methodological knowledge in order to be able to work with concrete details (cf. Meyer, 1979, pp. 71–97).
2. The subsequent level of comprehension comprises the ability to include the meaning and intention of information in its comprehension, whereas

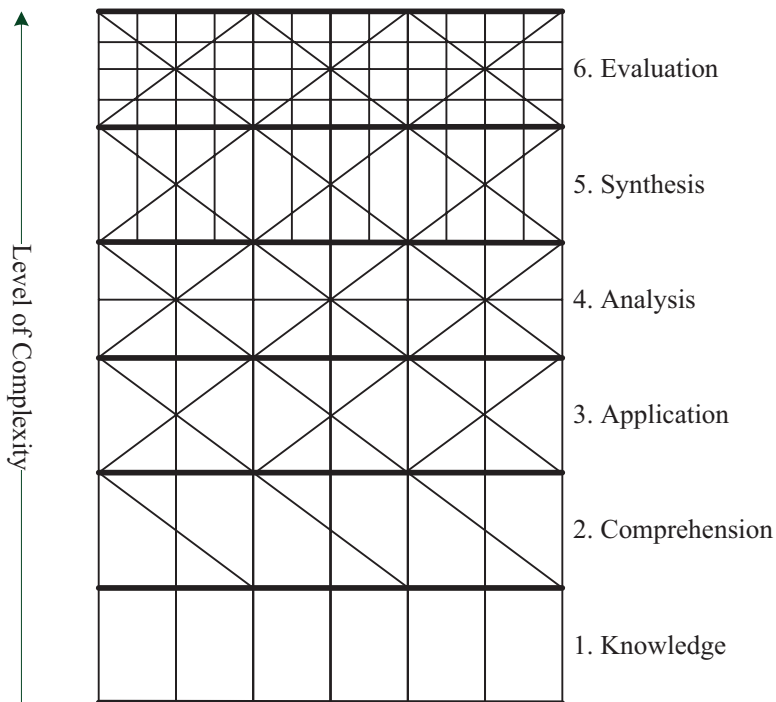


Fig. 3.3 The hierarchical structure of the learning goal taxonomy according to Bloom with increasing complexity of the individual hierarchy levels according to Meyer (1979, p. 105)

comprehension behaviour can be differentiated into several subtypes (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 98–99, p. 156).

3. The application level, which builds on comprehension, aims at abstracting what is known in such a way that problems can be solved independently on the basis of existing knowledge and understanding (cf. *ibid.*, p. 130).
4. The fourth level of taxonomy, analysis, requires behaviour that goes beyond the first three levels. Here, the focus is not only on remembering learning content, but rather on dissecting the material into its individual units and finding the relations and organisational structures or principles existing between these units (cf. *ibid.*, p. 156).
5. Cognitive behaviour is assigned to the level of synthesis, which brings about the joining together of individual units to form a whole (cf. *ibid.*, p. 174). Synthesis is not only to be understood as a categorical contrast to analysis but also includes creative behavioural components on the basis of which new types of information and action patterns emerge (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 174–176).
6. Evaluation is the central link between cognitive and affective behaviour, and according to Bloom (1973), it forms the most complex level of the learning goal taxonomy. Evaluation is defined here as the purpose-bound quantitative or qualitative assessment of objects of appropriation with the inclusion of certain norms and (value-bound) criteria (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 200–202).

Despite criticism of its theoretical justifiability and empirical verifiability (cf. Meyer, 1979, p. 104), Bloom's taxonomy also gained enormous influence in Germany. In 1970, for example, the German Education Council published a structural plan for the education system that contained a gradation for the systematisation of learning goals in the cognitive domain based on it (cf. Peterßen, 1996, pp. 354–355). This plan describes a four-stage model for the systematisation of cognitive learning goals, which distinguishes between the successive stages of (1). reproduction, (2). reorganisation, (3). transfer and (4). problem solving (cf. Deutscher Bildungsrat, 1971, pp. 78–82).

Proposal of a Taxonomy with Reference to Action

For the majority of academic study programmes, no guidelines are currently available that govern the use of operators in didactic orders. This applies to regulations in which the meaning and handling of the operators are stated. In addition, there are no binding regulations which makes it possible to assign operators to taxonomically systematised performance levels on the basis of scientific findings.

Against the background of these considerations on the action-oriented design of academic teaching in the field of Social Work Management (cf. section “[Academic teaching and learning processes from the perspective of an action-oriented approach](#)”), it would be appropriate to devise a learning goal taxonomy that takes into account the development of professional agency. Due to the lack of theoretical justification for Bloom's learning goal taxonomy and the purpose of action-oriented

teaching, Hortsch et al., (2000) developed a taxonomy based on Aebli’s (1980, 1981) theory of knowledge and action and Wygotski’s (1977) zone theory, which is oriented towards the independence of knowledge reproduction, knowledge reconstruction, and knowledge transformation as well as the complexity of the actions to be performed. In this taxonomy, professional actions are arranged on the following five levels that take into account the increase in independence in the execution of the action (Fig 3.4).

The term “pattern of action” which was adopted from Aebli’s theory (1980, 1981) has its origin in the concept of “action structure” (cf. Hortsch et al., 2000, p. 271). Special knowledge structures are referred to as action structures that are created through an active, acting engagement of an individual with reality, dissolve after the action has been carried out, and can be reactivated as needed with a specific purpose and under consideration of actual conditions (cf. *ibid.*). Accordingly, an occupational action pattern comprises suitable or expedient sequences of actions and procedures for coping with typical tasks and problems (cf. *ibid.*). Basing on Hortsch et al. (2000) taxonomy, it is possible to differentiate the degree of difficulty of tasks, which range from the reproduction of learned and consolidated action algorithms at level 1 to the solution of problems without available action patterns at level 5 (cf. Kersten, 2009, p. 174). Following this approach, academic teaching can be used to initiate a change in professional patterns of action in students with the help of didactic orders as well as to acquire a goal-oriented execution of actions with an increase in independence and thus to promote professional action capability (cf. Hortsch et al., 2000, p. 271).

Due to a lack of current research in the field of Social Work Management regarding the topic of this chapter, the taxonomic approach presented here requires the inclusion of scientific literature on descriptions of actions to be carried out, which the operators in didactic orders call for, as well as on the meanings of the individual operators. In an empirical study, Köhler (2017) conceptually explicated the three operators “analyse”, “justify”, and “compare” on this basis. In addition, a proposal

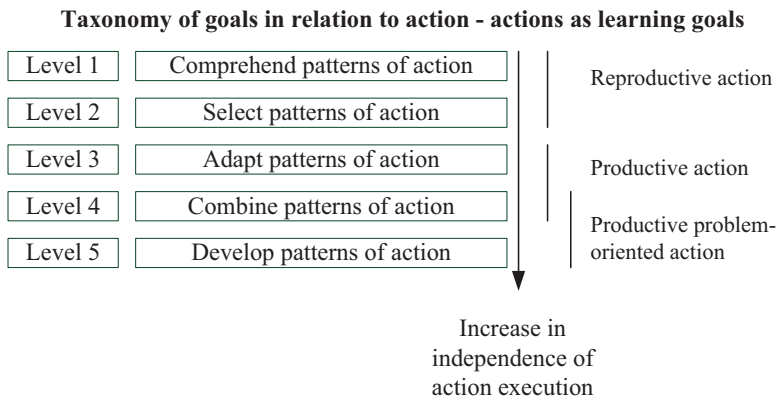


Fig. 3.4 Taxonomy of goals in relation to action according to Hortsch et al. (2000, p. 270)

for implementing the required action was made for each of these (cf. section “Summary of the Empirical Study”). However, the explication of central operators for the field of Social Work Management is still pending, and further research is needed.

Operators as a Systematisation Basis for Didactic Orders

As already shown, the precise formulation of didactic orders is necessary to increase their unambiguity and to avoid the execution of inappropriate actions during task processing. The verbs or operators used to call for action name a specific action and initiate its execution.

These actions are aimed at different levels of performance. For this reason, the German Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) adopted Uniform Examination Requirements for the Abitur Examinations (EPA) in the individual subjects of the upper secondary level in Germany as early as 1979 (cf. KMK, 2008). On the one hand, some of these EPAs contain overviews in which the semantic meaning of important operators is fixed (cf. Mendez, 2013, p. 16). On the other, the individual EPAs define the following three requirement areas with increasing requirement levels:

- Requirement area I aims at the simple reproduction of subject-related learning contents as well as the description and presentation of learned working techniques;
- Requirement area II requires reorganisation in the form of independent explanation, processing, and ordering of known learning contents as well as the application and transfer of what has been learned to new situations;
- Requirement area III comprises the problem-related and problem-solving independent application of complex facts as well as their evaluation, conclusion, and interpretation (cf. KMK, 2006, p. 11).

Subject-specific operators are assigned to the individual requirement areas. For illustration purposes, Table 3.1 shows an example of the operators currently assigned to the three requirement areas in the EPA for Educational Science (cf. KMK, 2006, p. 12).

A search of existing documents conducted in 2009 revealed that no such recommendations or guidelines existed for vocational education and training (cf. Kersten, 2009, p. 173) with the exception of “Berufliche Gymnasium” (BGy) and “Fachoberschule” (FOS), which belong to the scope of the EPA, were exceptions in this respect. To date, this situation has remained unchanged in both vocational and academic training, especially in the social professions and thus also in the field of Social Work Management (cf. Kochendörfer, 2012, pp. 262–264; Köhler, 2017). This problematic situation is additionally exacerbated by the well-known debate about the appropriateness of performance requirements, in which the balance of different requirement levels of didactic demands is partly questioned, and where it

Table 3.1 Examples of requirement area-specific operators in the EPA “Educational Science”

Requirement area I „Reproduction“	Requirement area II „Reorganisation and Transfer“	Requirement area III „Problem solving “
Define...	Label...	Review...
Highlight...	Characterise...	Discuss...
Work out...	Explain...	Draw conclusions...
Elaborate...	Clarify...	Take a position...
Set out...	Analyse...	Develop...
Summarise...	Compare...	Make a reasoned decision...
	Evaluate...	
	Transform...	
	Convert...	
	Apply...	

is assumed that the demands on learners tend to be too high (cf. Richter, 2002, p. 20; Kersten, 2009, pp. 173–174).

Furthermore, due to increasingly complex tasks and the lack of uniform examination requirements for vocational and academic education, there is a danger that the expectations of the teacher and the performance of the learners will increasingly differ due to the ambiguities in the didactic orders or the incorrect understanding of didactic orders on the part of the learners (cf. Kochendörfer, 2012, pp. 262–263). A difference in understanding between teacher and learner can occur as the complexity of a didactic order increases, for example, due to an associated increase in complexity for the individual learner. This can, in turn, have a negative effect on the action to be performed and thus on the performance to be achieved.

It is therefore all the more surprising that research in the area of an academic-pedagogical terminology is scarce, especially against the backdrop of current discussions about the shortage of skilled workers, academic teaching quality, competence orientation, and the comparability as well as flexibilisation in (academic) education in the context of European development (cf. Lüders, 2003, p. 13; Richert, 2005, p. 7; Weiß, 2011, p. 40). Not to include the central element of teaching language more intensively in these discussions is hardly understandable, since the teaching/learning process is constituted by language, among other things, and the structure of teaching/learning processes is likewise shaped by it. There is only sporadic research on pedagogical language, and in particular on language comprehension in the area of lower secondary education, and there are even fewer studies on this subject with regard to general education and in upper secondary vocational education as well as academic education in Germany (cf. Lüders & Rauin, 2004, p. 702; Köhler, 2017). To the knowledge of the author, comprehensive research on this topic, e.g. in the field of higher education, does not exist at present.

These considerations make clear that an academic-pedagogical special language is of decisive importance for action and thus for the acquisition, structuring, and modification of knowledge by learners in Social Work Management teaching/learning processes. A central element of this special language are didactic orders, since they are used by the teacher in the individual didactic functions or phases of the teaching/learning process in different linguistic ways to initiate

performance-producing actions (cf. Malek, 1977, p. 33). For example, in written examinations, they serve, among other things, to provide feedback on the learning success of the learners for the teacher and the learners themselves.

As shown above, there are hardly any scientific publications on the term “didactic order”. In the following, the term will be defined and discussed in detail. Segeth (1974) emphasises that in general, orders are mental entities for guiding or regulating human action and behaviour by connecting knowledge and action. Their use prompts the execution or omission of actions, actions, or operations and often involves special terminology that has an ordering character (1974, pp. 32–33). He cites the terms “instructions”, “guidance”, “tasks”, “orders”, and “reminders” as a subset of orders relevant to educational institutions and points out that extensive interdisciplinary research would be needed alone to explore the meaning of these terms and types of orders (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 34–35). Furthermore, he points out that a complete order is constituted by three components: “conditions”, “operations”, and “aim” (cf. *ibid.*).

When transferring the general concept of order to pedagogy and specifying it as a “didactic order”, Malek (1977, p. 39) also points out that fully formulated didactic orders include all three components mentioned. For the transfer of the concept of “didactic order” to the pedagogical field, this means that a didactic order should provide learners with both the parameters for the action to be carried out (e.g. a concrete situation or the object of action) and the operation necessary for it (e.g. with the help of an operator in tasks) as well as an aim reference (cf. Malek, 1977, pp. 39–40). In addition to the formulation of orders and statements, these three components of an order enable the formulation of questions that are relevant for the examination process (cf. *ibid.*). This shows that the terms “task” and “question” both fall into the overarching category of “didactic orders” and that their synonymous use should be avoided. In Malek’s (1977) pedagogical discussion this aspect is examined, and the “task” and “question” are identified as only two possible types of didactic orders. Consequently, he makes a proposal for the systematisation of didactic orders (see Table 3.2).

With the previous considerations in mind, the term “didactic order” can be defined in reference to Köhler (2017, pp. 27–28) as follows:

Table 3.2 Classification of didactic orders according to Malek (1977, pp. 47–48)

Types of orders	Components of the order		
	Condition	Operation	Aim
1. Task	x	x	x
2. Incomplete task	–	x	x
3. Problem	x	–	x
4. Instruction	x	x	–
5. Guidance	–	x	–
6. Question	–	–	x

x = available; – = not available

Didactic orders are linguistic initiatives of teachers with varying degrees of intensity to make the learner carry out an expected or defined action on an object relevant to the acquisition. Didactic orders contain linguistically coded information regarding the expected action in teaching/learning processes, which is used in a planned manner within the framework of didactic functions.

The present classification of the individual types of prompts requires the differentiation of didactic orders into a direct and an indirect form. This is due to the fact that in didactic orders, the character can be present not only directly in an imperative sentence, but also indirectly in a question with which the achievement of a certain pedagogical action goal is pursued (cf. *ibid.*, p. 42; Köhler, 2018).

Following Montag (1975, pp. 18–26), Hortsch makes a very similar differentiation. Here, from a structural point of view, a differentiation is made between direct (prompt structures) and indirect (question structures) didactic orders (cf. Hortsch, 2005, p. 61).

Following this differentiation aspect, the presentation in Table 3.2 makes clear that didactic orders have specific structural features depending on their direct or indirect prompt character. Hortsch explains that didactic orders generally have an obligatory and an optional structural component (cf. *ibid.*). In the case of prompt structures, the specifics of the obligatory part consist of the verb requesting to act and the object of the action. The optional part of the didactic order can contain the subject of the action, (action) conditions as well as the objective of the action (cf. *ibid.*).

Question structures, on the other hand, have a question word and other sentence elements in their obligatory part. Both the direction and the subject area of the search can be assigned to the optional part of this type of prompt (cf. *ibid.*). These considerations are presented in the following two figures (Figs 3.5 and 3.6).

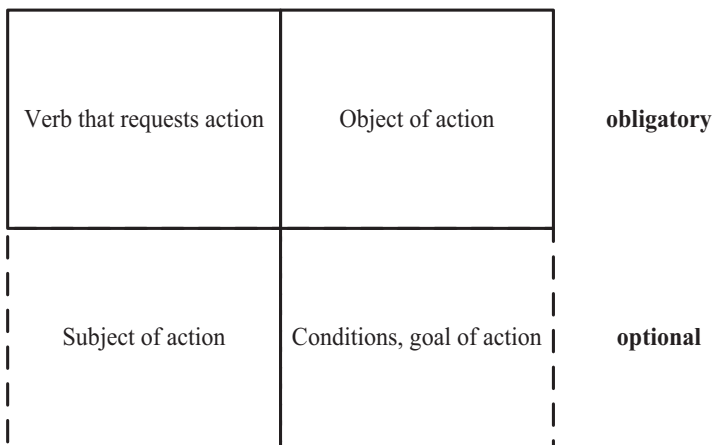


Fig. 3.5 Prompt structures according to Hortsch (2005, p. 61)

Question word	Additional clauses	obligatory
Search direction	Subject area of searching	

Fig. 3.6 Question structures according to Hortsch (2005, p. 61)

However, because language has a natural semantic imprecision (cf. Montag, 1975, p. 24) and because the construction of knowledge dispositions of the communication partners is individual (cf. Hortsch, 2005, p. 64), it can lead to comprehension disorders in the communication process due to different types of information encoding and decoding. One consequence of this can be that the learner carries out actions that are unexpected or do not match the teacher's didactic order in an examination situation (cf. Montag, 1975, pp. 32–33). To avoid this, a precise formulation of didactic orders is necessary. For this purpose, operators are used to request the learners to perform actions. With an operator, a certain action is named, and its execution is initiated (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 22–23).

It can be concluded that for working with operators in tasks and understanding them, not only the teacher but also the learner should know what action is required by the operator. For an adequate presentation of the learning success, it is also necessary to compare the operator with the context of the task and to derive the individual steps requisite for the action in order to be able to work on the task in a goal-oriented way. Thus, for the tasks to be workable, it must be clear which action the learner has to perform, or which goal is to be achieved by working on a task (cf. Kersten, 2009, p. 171). This clarity requires that the learner and the teacher have a shared understanding of the didactic order or the task. It is therefore didactically useful if the teacher's conceptual understanding of common words and operators in didactic orders is made accessible to the learners, and if the meanings that are suitable for carrying out the action are agreed upon.

Summary of the Empirical Study

Research Question, Study Design, and Investigation Process

In an empirical study, Köhler (2017) explored the question of whether teaching on the meaning of operators and the actions these require leads to an improvement of the written examination results as well as to a shared understanding of tasks among teachers and learners.

To this end, a quasi-experimental intervention study in a pretest-posttest design with one control group (G_C) and one test group (G_T) ($n = 42$) was conducted. The experiment involved two school classes of “state-approved childcare workers” – a recognised occupation that requires formal training. While the sample did not include any Social Work Management students, both fields of study and professional work share some similarities that make the study results likewise relevant for Social Work Management education. Also, familiarity with the professional activities of state-approved childcare workers is essential for the employees in Social Work Management to be successful in their own field of activity.

To increase the internal and external validity by controlling central situation and time-related confounding factors, a parallelisation of both classes was carried out (cf. Klauer, 2005, pp. 80–81). The parallelisation took place at the level of training organisation and at the level of instruction.

In contrast to the control group, in the test group, an intervention in which the handling of operators was discussed and practiced during the lessons took place between the pretest and the posttest. The intervention was carried out by a teacher whom the students had known since the beginning of their education and who had a high level of expertise in examination task design. In preparation for it, the teacher had received instructions on the contents of the test and the planned procedure. For the development of the intervention it was necessary to consult scientific literature on the description of the actions, which the operators ask for in tasks, and on the meanings of the individual operators.

The sources consulted for this purpose were found in encyclopaedias of philosophy and epistemology (cf. Audi, 1999; Blackburn, 1996; Sandkühler, 1999; Halder, 2003; Mittelstraß, 2004), German language dictionaries (cf. Klappenbach & Steinitz, 1966–1978; Pfeifer, 1989), and especially linguistic research literature. The latter source encompassed publications from the research area of functional-communicative language description, mainly from the 1970s and 1980s (cf., e.g., Conrad & Zenker, 1977; Harnisch, 1977; Schmidt, 1981; Michel & Wilske, 1983; Michel, 1985; Weber, 1985), that offered some didactically relevant findings on operators. Their perspective on the communicative procedures as types of linguistic-communicative action (cf. Harnisch, 1977, pp. 1–9; Harnisch, 1983, p. 41) tied in particularly well with the understanding of the operator as an action-requesting verb in didactic orders that likewise formed the basis of the study. For this study, the meaning of the operator “analyse” was explained. In addition, a proposal was made

for the implementation of the required action in written examinations (cf. Köhler, 2017, pp. 190–205).

Since it is not possible to directly check the understanding of the task in a quasi-experiment, an operationalisation was carried out on the basis of Aebli's theory (1980, 1981) to develop the research instrument (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 136–143).

In order to be able to draw scientifically justified statements after the quasi-experiment, the collected data were evaluated by means of descriptive statistics and, depending on the data level and the sample size, by means of inferential statistical procedures comparing the two points in time (t_0 und t_1) at which the quasi-experiment was conducted (Wilcoxon-Test; McNemar-Test) and between the control and test group (G_C and G_T) (Mann-Whitney-U-Test; Chi-square Four-Field-Test with Continuity Correction; Exact Fisher-Test) (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 208–215). With an error probability of $\alpha < 5\%$, a test result is classified as significant and with an error probability of $\alpha < 1\%$ as highly significant (cf. *ibid.*).

Summary of the Results

The results of the empirical study support the earlier-discussed theory. With regard to the results of the task, the operationalisation focused on the structure, the systematics, and the correctness of the content of the processing results of a task in a written examination. The indicators included the expectations of the teacher (for examples see Table 3.3).

The findings in Table 3.3 show that the processing results of the written tasks of the G_T learners in the posttest are statistically significantly improved as compared to the pretest. In addition, statistically significant differences were found between the results of the G_C and G_T learners in the posttest with regard to the structure, the systematics, and the correctness of the content of those results, whereas such

Table 3.3 p-values (Mann-Whitney-U-Test; Wilcoxon Test) of the processing results

Indicator	$G_C - G_T$ (t_0)	$G_C - G_T$ (t_1)	$G_C(t_0 - t_1)$	$G_T(t_0 - t_1)$
	p (Mann-Whitney-U-Test)		p (Wilcoxon-Test)	
Structural response components correspond to task definition according to expectation	.942	.000	.367	.000
Structurally logical structure of the response components according to expectation	.750	.001	1.000	.000
Course of action of the answer leads to the result of expectation	.861	.000	.774	.003
Factual and logical structure of the response	.366	.087	.754	.172
Parts of knowledge to be reproduced are contained in the response according to expectation	.260	.042	.140	.031

differences could not be found in the pretest. The following results of the investigation deserve a special mention:

- The findings of the experiment show no statistically significant differences between G_C and G_T in the measurement of the first point of time (t_0) at which data were collected.
- Moreover, as expected, there were no statistically significant changes between the two survey points ($t_0 - t_1$) for the control group (G_C).
- As expected, the calculations showed statistically significant differences between G_C and G_T for a large number of items, when measuring the second point in time (t_1). Only one item was found for which no statistical significance could be determined.
- For the test group (G_T), the findings of the investigation between the two survey dates ($t_0 - t_1$) show statistically significant changes in accordance with expectations regarding the systematics, structure, and correctness of the content for all items, with but one exception (cf. Köhler, 2017, pp. 324–327).

With regard to the development of a shared understanding of tasks, operationalisation was carried out across several index levels (cf. *ibid.*). A distinction was made between the course of action and the result of applying the operator-specific mental representation to the task to be worked on, on the basis of which a shared understanding of the task by the teacher and the learner can be tested. Based on the theory of Aebli (1980, 1981), a distinction was made between three types of schemes (concept, operation, and action scheme). The formed indicators were differentiated with the individual action steps of the operator used in the tasks (for examples see Tables 3.4, 3.5).

The findings of the quasi-experiment in Tables 3.3 and 3.4 show improved results for the learners in the G_T , especially with regard to the course of action in the

Table 3.4 p-values (Mann-Whitney-U-Test; Wilcoxon Test) of a shared understanding

Indicator	$G_C - G_T (t_0)$	$G_C - G_T (t_1)$	$G_C (t_0 - t_1)$	$G_T (t_0 - t_1)$
	<i>p</i> (Mann-Whitney-U-Test)		<i>p</i> (Wilcoxon-Test)	
Correct connection of operator steps				
Analysis criteria and assignment of the dissected content	.615	.000	.316	.000
Structured learning situation characteristics and orderly examination	.540	.000	.692	.000
Orderly investigation and derivation of conclusions	.013	.000	.002	.000
Derivation of conclusions and formulation of investigation result	.043	.001	.001	.000
The overall structure of the processing result corresponds to the taught structure of action	.768	.000	.289	.000
Taught operator-specific action goal is achieved	.752	.000	.688	.001

Table 3.5 p-values (Chi²-Test; Fisher Test; Mc-Nemar-Test) of a shared understanding

Indicator	$G_C - G_T (t_0)$		$G_C - G_T (t_1)$		$G_C (t_0 - t_1)$	$G_T (t_0 - t_1)$
	<i>P</i> Chi ² - Test	<i>p</i> Fisher Test	<i>p</i> Chi ² - Test	<i>p</i> Fisher Test	<i>P</i> Mc-Nemar- Test	<i>P</i> Mc-Nemar- Test
Implementation of the operator steps						
Short summary	.354			.537	.003	.020
Analysis criteria	.381		.019		.125	.002
Content dissection		.041		.152	.125	.109
Investigation	1.000		.000		1.000	.003
Conclusions		.221	.011		.008	.000
Analysis result	const. value		.066		.016	0.008

application of an operator-specific conceptual scheme and the result of applying an operator-specific operational scheme in the posttest. On the one hand, statistically significant differences between the posttest data of the G_C and those of the G_T were found. On the other, the understanding of the written tasks of the students in the G_T in the posttest showed a statistically significant improvement as compared to the pretest.

The following significant results were determined in the the quasi-experiment:

- The findings of the experiment show statistically significant differences between G_C and G_T in the measurement of the first point of time of the survey (t_0) for only a few items. There are significant differences in the items for the course of action in the application of an operator-specific operation scheme when processing a task. The data evaluation of the test at t_0 for one item shows a statistically significant difference for the course of action in the application of an operator-specific action scheme when processing a task. The findings also show a statistically significant difference for the result of the application of an operator-specific conceptual scheme in case of one item. The same applies to the result of the application of an operator-specific action scheme. Furthermore, no statistical significance is shown in the findings of the first measurement point.
- In contrast, the calculations for measuring the second survey point (t_1) show statistically significant differences between G_C and G_T for a large number of items, in line with expectations. The only exceptions are two items for which no statistical significance could be determined.
- The findings also show statistically significant changes for some items between both survey dates ($t_0 - t_1$) for the control group (G_C), contrary to expectations. This applies to the items of the application of an operator-specific operation scheme in the course of processing and the items of the application of an operator-specific action scheme in the course of processing. Concerning the results one item also shows a statistically significant difference between the two survey points on the results of the application of an operator-specific conceptual scheme.

With regard to the results of the application of an operator-specific action scheme, the findings show statistically significant differences for one item tested. As expected, the calculations for the remaining items do not show any statistically significant changes for the control group between the two survey points.

- For the test group (G_T), the findings of the investigation between the two survey points ($t_0 - t_1$) show statistically significant changes, in line with expectations, for all items of both the the application run and the application result when processing the task of an operator-specific conceptual scheme, action scheme, and operation scheme (cf. Köhler, 2017).

In summary, the test results show that an explication of the meaning and the handling of operators in written tasks has a positive effect on the processing of a written task by the learners. With regard to the promotion of a mutual understanding of tasks, positive changes can be seen due to the teaching of the meaning and the handling of operators of written tasks. This is especially true with regard to the course of action in the application of an operator-specific conceptual scheme and the result of applying an operator-specific operation scheme. This is proven by the statistical analysis of inference data. For the other operator-specific schemes of the course of action in and the result of the application of the written tasks, this cannot be proven to the same extent. Thus, basing on the available results of the study, the development of a shared understanding of tasks among teachers and learners can only be assumed (cf. *ibid.*).

Discussion

The chapter has so far presented a systematisation of selected elements of an academic-pedagogical special language and summarised an earlier relevant empirical study to show the effect of an explication of operators as a core element of didactic orders on processing results and task understanding in written examinations.

There are several conceivable causes that may impair the proof of the development of a shared understanding of tasks in the context of the quasi-experiment. A randomisation of the samples used for the quasi-experiment was not possible in the context of the study, so that existing natural groups or school classes were involved. The recourse to existing social aggregates for quasi-experimental investigations is not unusual (cf. Lamnek, 1989, pp. 5–6; Kromrey, 2009, p. 504). At this point it should be pointed out that a non-randomisation of the sample is only one possible reason for the lack of evidence of a shared understanding of tasks, which can also occur when one works with a randomised sample.

Another source of error might be the person of the teacher/instructor involved in the experiment. In spite of the instructions given, their personal performance might have influenced the course and the results of the quasi-experiment.

Furthermore, it should be noted that individual interpretative components in the understanding of the tasks to be worked on by the individual test persons cannot be excluded, although these components of understanding have already been limited by the design of the quasi-experiment and are not in the focus of the present empirical study due to its theoretical foundation. Despite the high degree of generalisation of Aebli's theory (1980, 1981; cf. Pastohr, 2008, p. 62), these parts of the understanding of tasks could be a possible cause for the difference in the results of the work, and it is to be noted that the cannot be fully controlled. The same applies to possible unintended learning effects and further unknown variables that may have occurred during the experiment. Another important point of discussion is the need to carry out further studies that replicate this research design presented here. Such studies, especially if carried out with larger samples, would have the scientific benefit of extracting generalisable statements with a greater scope and possibly also for individual occupations, occupational groups, or fields of work investigated.

Conclusion

Considering the results of the present investigation, the consequences for the systematisation of didactic orders as part of a conscious use of the medium "language" in the academic education and their use in academic study courses of Social Work Management and further education of teaching staff can be summarised as follows:

When preparing examination tasks, it is recommended to ensure that the expected performance is clearly defined, and that ambiguities in the didactic orders are avoided. This requires an analysis and description of the required actions.

From a didactic point of view, the development of a shared understanding of didactic orders among teachers and learners is important for their successful processing. The teacher's understanding of a didactic order forms the basis for developing it in a goal-oriented way. In order to achieve a shared understanding among teachers and learners, all those involved need not only to have a general understanding of didactic orders but also to know the meaning of operators and the specific action required by a given operator in the field of Social Work Management.

Since didactic orders and operators are elements of an academic-pedagogical special language, it is appropriate to address them in the Social Work Management education. An academic-pedagogical special language enriched by explicated operators promotes a confident use of the terms in teaching/learning processes and contributes to the development of the learners' competence to act.

Against this background, further didactic training of lecturers who are active in the degree programmes of Social Work Management Education should be considered. On the one hand, these lecturers are partly responsible for the conception of tasks for subject-specific examinations, and a further didactic training could therefore contribute to the quality assurance of academic teaching in Social Work Management. On the other hand, such trainings could endow the lecturers in Social Work Management with the knowledge required to describe the specific

professional activities in this field and to distinguish these from the activities of other professional fields of Social Work. This knowledge is particularly important for dealing with operators during the teaching/learning processes in Social Work Management, for it allows to depict and describe operator-specific actions in a way that is both theory-based and practically relevant. Trainings on the significance and handling of operators thus offer a good opportunity to improve the link between theory and practice and to further professionalise teaching staff and Social Work Management Specialists.

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Chapter 4

The <<Learning Factory>>, or How to Teach Learning for People Who Have Forgotten to Learn



Alexander-Thomas Carey

Abstract In social organisations, e.g. welfare associations, social NPOs, public administrations and universities, there are many people who would like to upskill themselves, but – due to different reasons, such as bad learning experience, feeling to be too old (regardless of the real age), or being angst-ridden – struggle with renewed learning in educational settings, and especially within requirements of efficiency tests. For over one and a half decade, the author undertook many “learning factories” all around Germany and Austria with all kinds of different people (e.g. long-term unemployed, people with school learning experience that was far back in the past, academic staff and qualified personnel ridden by fear) with an overwhelming success. The feedback was extraordinary. Therefore, the author wants to appeal to (not only those) readers and instructors, that learning can be fun **and** efficient as well. Thus, this contribution focuses on “good” theoretical and practical learning methods based on the gamification-approach and neurophysiological findings leading to active learning strategies for social work contexts.

“Learning and not thinking is inane. Thinking and not learning is exhausting”.

“Learning and continually practising”.

“To adore wisdom without adoring learning: this darkening leads to aimlessness” (Confucius [K’ung Fu-tse], Analects, 2008 [ca 5th century B.C.], II, 15; I, 1; XVII, 8).¹

The bulk of our institutionalised educational endeavours has the aim to trivialise our children. [...] Since our system of education strives out to procreate calculable citizens, its purpose is to deactivate all of the annoying inner states that enable unpredictability and creativity. It obviously appears in our testing method, which only allows for questions for which the answers are already known (or selected) and accordingly the pupils only have to know them by heart. I shall name these questions ‘illegitimate questions’.

Whereas, would it not be fascinating to conceive a system of education, which de-trivialises the ‘to-be-trained’ by teaching them how to pose ‘legitimate questions’, namely questions with answers not yet known? (v. Foerster, 2019, p. 343 f.).²

¹Translated by the author.

²Translated by the author.

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Learning in the Contexts of Social Work, Social Work Management or Social Pedagogy

‘Learning’ is the utmost chatoyant word in scientific, but also in everyday life contexts. The paradox of learning consists in the fact that the best success in learning is to forget (it) again. Or how Berta Capen Reynolds in her famous work *Learning and teaching in the practice of social work* has put it (1942, p. 69): “I know it so well that I don’t have to think about it. It has become a part of me.” She understood learning being a movement about 5 stages in terms of conscious attention (Reynolds, 1942 pp. 73–85): the stage of acute consciousness of self (stage 1); the sink or swim adaptation (stage 2); the stage of understanding the situation without power to control one’s own activity in it (stage 3); the stage of relative mastery, in which one can both understand and control one’s own activity in the art which is learned (stage 4); and the art of learning to teach what one has mastered (stage 5). One might say, Reynold used an anthropological approach to understand learning. She was convinced that teaching social work or social work management on the one hand and clients learning in social contexts on the other are very much entangled and influencing each other. Furthermore, it reveals the five learning stages to be a dynamical process and highly interdependent by most notably intrinsic structures like attitudes. So, in this case, speaking about learning – on the grounds of symbolic interactionism –, it implies the adoption of meanings and symbols by notions and bringing-them-into-relations in order to form “society within oneself”. Thus, learning should be seen highly reflective and as well recursive as v. Foerster (2019) indicated in his studies.³ As a matter of fact, he pointed out learning is strictly coupled with real physical movements. To sum up, the impact on learning depends on the physical state, the attitude and motivation, the living environment, and the social units within learning processes are occurring. Additionally, bearing Peirce (e.g. 1871) in mind, looking onto learning within scientific contexts, scientists who are embedded simultaneously in living **and** reflective interpretational contexts deal with learning processes by misremembering the scientific character through merging with practices of daily life. By drawing on trivial examples, Pierce (1877) shows that learning in everyday lifetime contexts, which is decisive for methodological approaches in social work or social work management, follows the same logical scheme as scientists doing science – or a teacher teaching. This affiliation is due to the cognitive impossibility of leaving the individual’s own exhaustive living environment being a person who is always endeavoured to meet more or less risky surroundings and, even more important, to deal with social protagonists embedded in their own social fields (cf. Carey, 2016). “Because the perceiving subject ‘is’ the social living form,

³Foerster develops learning principles based on Young’s (1965) neurophysiological network (‘mnemon’), which is functioning with the principle of ‘selection’ or ‘looking for meaning’ (constituting the pillar of experience) on the one side and the principle of inseparability or self-reference by *eigenvalue* (generating the second pillar of values) on the other side (ibid., pp. 309 ff.). Both pillars establish the facility of learning.

in which it will be socialised, everything that disturbs the execution of living is an ongoing and provocative issue [in coping with everyday life]" (Habermas 2019, p. 773 f.).⁴ So from the outset, being intersubjectively socialised by communication, we have an ineluctable structural interconnexion of our cognitive performance with the conditions of reproduction. Hence, an ongoing instantaneous process of being observer and participant at the same time, that is being teacher and concomitantly forming a part of the dynamical (learning) group setting. Evidently, the learning process starts with this simultaneousness at the starting point of becoming a living entity – and never stops in our lifetime, because we are ontologically and socially unable to relinquish these conditions of recognition (McCarthy, 1994, pp. 41ff., part I). As a matter of fact, science, be it empirical or academic research, trying to reach objectiveness is generally devised by the constructed base on the view from “nowhere”, looking from the distance on material or social artefacts. This is an abstract myth, indeed.⁵ We try to look from the “nowhere”, but we are part of the social living around us and thus looking through the inside sphere across the other. As a decisive consequence (not only) for learning contexts, human beings consequently effects a fusion of recognition and (at least symbolic) action. This conflation prevails especially in the domains of social work management with three distinct aspects: **social learning** of the clients as such (1), initiation of **incentive learning** processes in the client by the social worker (2), and facilitation of **educational (or vocational) learning** in the students of social work or social work management to be professionally able initiating incentive learning processes for the clients (3). Nevertheless, to top it, this contribution fuses perspective (2) with (1) by assuming the ‘social worker’ and the ‘client’ to be one person. So, in this perspective, it is about educational learning with participants on how to initiate incentive learning strategies for oneself in order to put social learning into effect for others on how to learn. In other words, it is a question of learning how to learn to “forget” the learnings by learning *en passant* within everyday life. By the way, writing this article contradicts this focus crucially. Howbeit, one possible approach to accomplish this task within educational settings is taking the gamification approach as basis for teaching, which the author did numerous times before. So, after brief overview of the gamification approach in section “[The gamification approach within a theory of learning – a constructivist introduction](#)”, the subsequent section will inform about neurophysiology of the brain in section “[Our Brain, Or The Neurophysiological Basis Of Learning](#)”. This helps us to understand how memorising as a requirement for successful learning is functioning at the best. At the end of this section, we shall straighten up with many myths that are widespread in professional discussions and give a first résumé of important facts about the conditions of learning in social work management teaching settings. From the summary of the current state of scientific knowledge in neurophysiology and gamification, we can deduce and lead over to

⁴Translated and insertion put by the author.

⁵Actually, in terms of contemporary philosophy of science, most of our mainstream science schemes is built on a belief system, which merely feigns solid objectivity.

the practical and well-known active learning strategies in section “[Active learning strategies revisited in relation to social work management](#)”, whose positive effects on learning outcomes in social work management contexts are supported by existing evidence – which likewise applies to the gamification approach. To encourage a better understanding of the <<learning factory>>, a general process of systematically learning is presented in the next section “[General Process Of Systematic Learning](#)”, which will constitute the section “[Basic Principles For The Lead Through Of The <<Learning Factory>> In Social Contexts](#)” leading to a list of general principles of applied learning. These principles promote the participants’ learning about themselves and helps them to develop their own recipe for successful learning. The last section “[The task of successful learning in teaching settings of social work management](#)” summarises the gained results.

The Gamification Approach Within a Theory of Learning – A Constructivist Introduction⁶

The use of play elements in teaching, in working situations etc. is called ‘gamification’.⁷ For this reason, the author often uses quizzes in academic teaching settings.⁸ To better understand learning through play we assume a constructivist model of learning (without going into the specific details of the several approaches within this paradigm).

The psychological constructivism of learning was predominantly conceived by Paul Watzlawick, Hans Aebli, George Alexander Kelly and Jean Piaget (cf. Reich, 2006). The theory of constructivism assumes that in the learning process the learner is building up an individual and subjective picture of the environment. With the interaction between the person and the environment, especially in educational settings at the university, learning is happening continuously. These constructions of reality influence each other in turn – and this involuntarily to what this person is seeing, how it is evaluating these “objects of seeing”,⁹ which plans of conduct are being conceived, and how it is acting for real (Bamberger, 1999, p. 10). In contrast to behaviourism or cognitivism, psychological constructivism posits that the individual learning of people is based on their specific acquired experience. Each person has their own special learning needs, learning goals, and it interprets learning contents individually and particularly different to others.

⁶The following is grounded on a chapter of Carey (2018a).

⁷“Gamification is the use of game design elements in non-game contexts” (Deterding, 2012, pp. 14–17); also: Deterding et al. (2011, pp. 9–15). There exists a wide range of studies about the successful use of gamification-approaches (cf. especially Hamari et al., 2014, pp. 3025–3034; Bajdor & Dragolea, 2011, pp. 574–583; Singh, 2012, pp. 108–113; King et al., 2013, pp. 76–78; Xu et al., 2013, pp. 525–537).

⁸Vide also Lee & Hammer (2017).

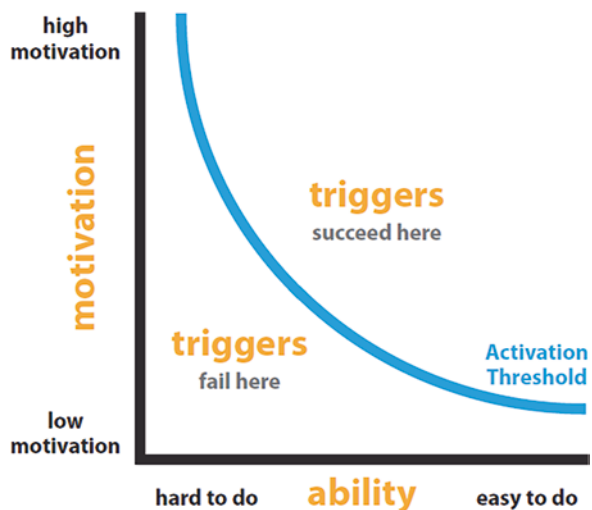
⁹Translated by the author.

In order to see the benefits of the gamification approach more clearly in the practical use at the learning place, one can resort to Fogg's behaviour model. According to Fogg (2009, p. 40), one can count on three moments, which determines action: motivation, ability, and trigger (vide Fig. 4.1). Motivation leads to acting energy, (potential) ability provides the (physical and psychological) acting medium to execute action, and the acting impetus is being initiated by a trigger. For our argumentation, at this point, we do not consider capabilities (Sen, 1993). This model can be easily transferred to the gaming input. The lust for games (or playing in general) supplies the gamers with acting energy to invest time (additionally with high attention). Motivation can emerge from numerous reasons such as having fun, friendly challenges with others (e.g. fellow students), appreciation for problem-solving, self-affirmation, exquisite preparation, and striving for rewards (praise or give-aways where appropriate). The (physical and psychological) ability comes to effect by coupling with existing experiences, know-how or conveyed information from previous seminars or lectures. The trigger of teaching incentives helps gamers to know what kind of action is required at the moment.

To successfully implement the gamification approach in teaching settings of social work management contexts, one mainly needs the following factors (cf. Hamari et al., 2014; Deterding et al., 2012):

- clear aims helping the gamer to know the requirements and to keep orientated at any time;
- complexity levels to foster a build-up of competencies and to reach a sense of achievement;
- regular feedback to have a basis for learning and adapting one's ongoing action;
- group-based communication to form discussions and arguing in order to train discursive practices.

Fig. 4.1 Fogg's behaviour model (2009, p. 40)



Analysing the structure of a general teaching and learning situation, one can discern the following elements (vide Fig. 4.2): intentionality, subject matter, methodology, choice of media (internal elements of a learning situation), anthropogenic prerequisites, and social cultural conditions (external elements of a learning situation).

Looking from a point of view of gaming and epistemic learning, we have a change in the following elements:

External elements:

- *anthropogenic prerequisites*: gaming is a crucial part of our virtue of being, and, functionally speaking, it fosters group cohesion;
- *sociocultural conditions*: in the contemporary societal formations of knowledge societies (cf. Vogl, 2021; Willke, 2001), information as “property” represents an asset or high status, which has a great impact on motivation of the students.

Internal elements (only focussing on aspects relevant to the gamification context):

- *intentionality*: by gaming, intentionality changes in relation to motivation and trigger conditions towards an intense drive for action and involvement;
- *methodology*: gaming models lead to a faster overcoming of the attentiveness threshold;
- *choice of media*: the media-related transformation of teaching contents through playing increases the attentiveness too.

Some studies have been conducted in order to prove the efficacy of gamification approach for good learning outcomes (for example cf. Nicol, 2007, pp. 53–64). The recent meta-analysis by Homner and Sailer (2020) yields significant findings about the positive effects of gamification in learning contexts, especially for cognitive learning outcomes (vide Fig. 4.3). The study differentiates in cognitive,

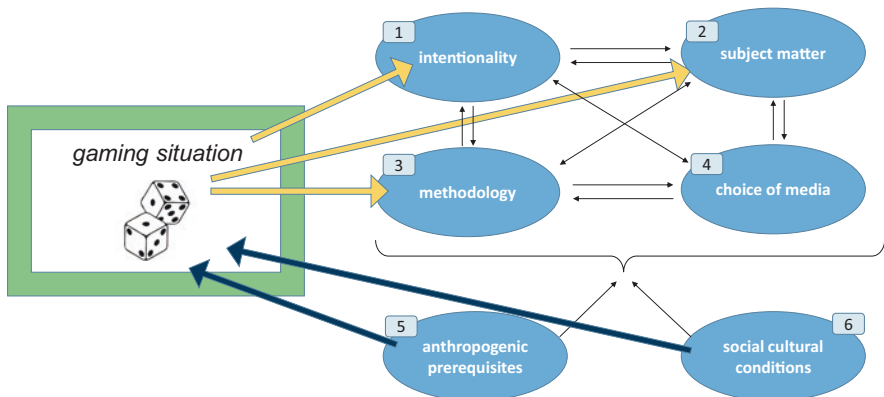


Fig. 4.2 Structural analysis of a gaming learning situation. (Adapted from Jank & Meyer, 2008, p. 263) (The presentation includes the structural analysis of a school situation according to the “Scheme of Berlin”. The original comes from the figure in the textbook “Models of Didactics” by Jank and Meyer (2008, p. 263). It was revised by Sophie Schaper and Franco Rau. Its final revision in accordance with the gamification approach was done by the author)

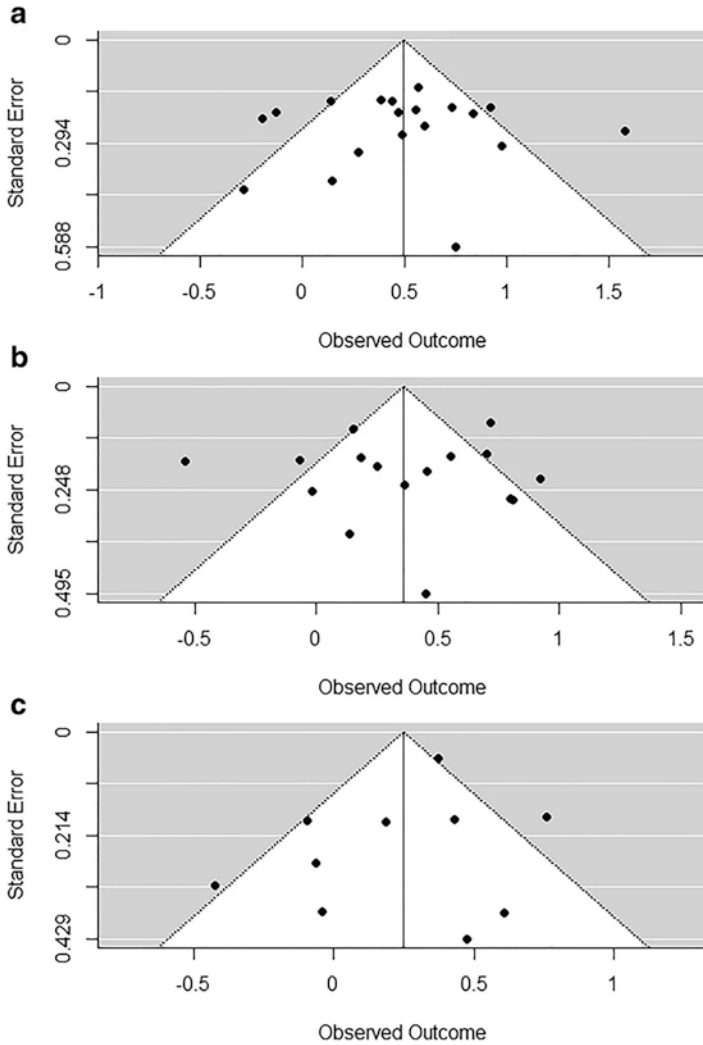


Fig. 4.3 Funnel plot for (a) cognitive, (b) motivational, and (c) behavioural learning outcomes. Black dots indicate studies of the meta-analysis positioned by their respective estimated effect size and standard error (Homner & Sailer, 2020, p. 91)

motivational, and behavioural learning outcomes. One particularly strikes on good stability for cognitive learning outcomes, while the outcomes with the other foci are more divers. Of course, with the limitations of the above study in mind, more research on the special moderators of gamification is necessary. Nevertheless, the results from this meta-analysis point out, that gamification aiming on learning is actually effective. To sum up, there is evidence for a stronger bond to learning contents and more committed and emotional manners on behalf of the participants by gamification.

Our Brain, or the Neurophysiological Basis of Learning

Besides the gamification approach, the neurophysiological basis for learning in teaching settings for social work management contexts has to be kept in mind.¹⁰ It is a well-known fact, that learning has to do with memory. We differ between (vide Fig. 4.4)

- *sensory memory*: very short-term storage of physical features of perceived objects;
- *short-time memory or working-time memory*: short-term storage of small information quantities for fast action planning and action regulation;
- *long-time memory*: long-term storage of most diverse information, which is additionally sorted by functional aspects.

The following chart shows the decisive characteristics of our memory system (Table 4.1).

With reference to learning, it is a well-known fact that retrieved information from the long-term memory works particularly well when this specific information is frequently and repeatedly stored. However, repetition is not the best mechanism in terms of efficiency. In this regard, Endel Tulving's encoding specificity principle is highly important (Tulving & Thomson, 1973). It posits that in remembrance processes only such information can be used effectively that has already existed in learning and storage proceedings before. As a consequence, information intended for long storage must not be memorised in an isolated way, but only with possible numerous references to go with. For example, the contingent learning context can be helpful: is one learning in a specific room, the information to be learned is linked to its spatial features. If one needs this information for an examination, the

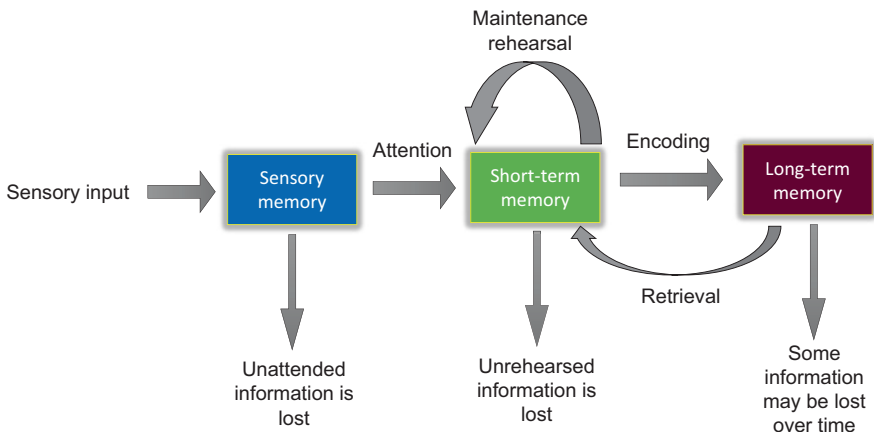


Fig. 4.4 Our memory system. (Stangor, 2010)

¹⁰The following is based on Tokuhamu-Espinosa (2011) and Kaufer (2011)

Table 4.1 Characteristics of our memory system

Memory unit	General characteristics	Duration of memory	Capacity of memory	Codification	Processes of retrieval	Mechanism of mis-remembrance
Sensory memory	Sensory information (namely visual or auditory); only very short-time storage possible. Useful, because the perceiving of the environment takes time to get the full representation.	Depending on the specific sense, the duration of memory lasts between ca. 250 msec for the visual perception (iconic memory) and four to five seconds for hearing perception (echoic memory).	Unlimited; it includes all information that which has been received by the perception system.	Only physical attributions of perceived objects are stored. That implies no meanings of, for example, words are stored, but rather visual features of letters and of the whole word.	Retrieval occurs by selective extraction of information (solely physical attributes, like spatial position, form, colour).	The information fades by itself: Either due the weakening of the neuronal structures or by the active clearing through a new perception (high frequency of sensory impulses leads to a bad recognisability of isolated stimuli).

(continued)

Table 4.1 (continued)

Memory unit	General characteristics	Duration of memory	Capacity of memory	Codification	Processes of retrieval	Mechanism of mis-remembrance
Short-time memory / working-time memory	<p>Received information is processed by means of encoding all kinds of possible (and necessary) presentation forms (e.g. by an analogous code for a notion picture, or a semantic code through development of meaning or the naming of an object). This information is experienced as consciously available. Since this memory is directly involved in the planning and regulation of actions and other deliberate processes, it is also called working-time memory.</p>	<p>Under adverse conditions (continuously perceiving more information with the result that the attention is drawn to something else, so that internal memorising is not possible). The storage lasts ca. 15 to 20 seconds; under favourable conditions (without internal memorising by soundless repeating) ca. 40 seconds. If one uses internal memorising, information can be stored endlessly (as long as one can keep up memorising).</p>	<p>With new information, the capacity adds up to the maximum of four to five units; with familiar information, it reaches up to seven (plus or minus two) units. The amount of units depends upon how the person is organising the subject matter and the organisation of highly assembled order units (chunks).</p>	<p>Referring to older evidence this type of memory was believed to store speech sound only. New findings suggest that all encoding forms are available at this point.</p>	<p>With very familiar or unknown information, the focus of one's attention lies on a parallel process (which means all information at once) of retrieving information from the short-time memory. With information of middle profile, the retrieval is being serially processed (unit after unit) by checking the more information if it is sought-after or not.</p>	<p>Two mechanisms are known. One is the tracking decay: a gradual decrease of the activating strength of an information unit – Provided that there is no internal memorising, which holds the activating strength on a high level. The second mechanism is: Inhibition (or interference) that implies the mutual disturbance of information while retrieving; the more similar the piece of information is to others, the stronger this mechanism becomes. The inhibition effects explain ca. 70% of oblivion.</p>

<p>Long-time memory</p>	<p>The long-time memory includes manifold information to recognise objects in the environment (implicit memory), to execute action (procedural knowledge) and – Moreover – To apply rule and meaning on one's knowhow (semantic memory).</p>	<p>It is not known whether or not there is a limit of duration. We rather see more or less prevailing difficulties to access information. (it seems that we have forgotten information.) Actually, information is not forgotten – Only in traumatic events like brain lesion or illnesses, which reduce brain substance.</p>	<p>It is not known, whether there is a limitation.</p>	<p>All known forms of encoding exist like physical, phonetic, semantic, symbolic, notional attributes.</p>	<p>One retrieves information either by automatic activation, as is the case with recognition of familiar objects and words, or by searching for indications and hints that lead to the sought-after information. Thus, semantically neighbouring representations are activated automatically.</p>	<p>There are no mechanisms of misremembrance in terms of clearing information and permanently losing its availability. If need be, the access for a single information could be more or less hindered. But this is usually only temporarily the case.</p>
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cf. Tokuhama-Espinosa (2011) and Kaufer (2011)

Table 4.2 Illustrations of instructional applications helping to improve memory

Factors that improve consolidation (memory)	Instructional applications
1. Organisation	Creating timelines, labelling, use of visual organisers
2. Rehearsal	Practicing for a play, repeating vocabulary words, using lists, essays
3. Elaboration	Surveying students to gauge their interests, relating concepts, encouraging students to elaborate on their questions/answers

cf. Bang et al. (2021)

remembering is noticeably easier in that room than in other rooms where the recollection would be considerably harder. This works also by merely memorising some details of the room and imagining them mentally. Some memo techniques (mnemonics) are based on this method. Another efficient strategy for memorising is named elaboration. It means organising all of the relevant subject matters systematically, netting everything, storing connections and, if it is not yet the case, linking them additionally (e.g. association with mental pictures). Elaboration is significantly more relevant than mere repetition to accomplish a good memory. Indeed, several studies proved that enriched environments have a good impact on increased learning outcomes (Praag et al., 2000). Furthermore, one has to bear in mind that memory does not work like a computer where the “button to store” can be pressed at any single moment (cf. Bang et al., 2021). Memorising is a continuous process, which stabilises and reinforces the cell connections in the hippocampus. This is called consolidation, and our brain plays a very prominent role in this. Thus, to foster good learning structures, instruction has a key role in this setting. In the following table, one can see well-known instructional applications that facilitate improved memorising for learning (Table 4.2).

Interim Summary of Derivative Results for Social Learning Contexts

At this point, we will briefly pause the argumentation and present the results gained with regard to social learning contexts in 6 summary points:

- 1. One may not equate learning with behaviour modification:** Learning is based on neuronal changes in either the network synapses in the sense of Hebbian learning principle (‘what fires together, wires together’ (Hebb, 1949; Shatz, 1992, p. 64) or the intensity of the firing.¹¹ So one can learn devoid of visibility, namely no changing behaviour in front of the observer.¹² As a matter of fact, using confinements to test the learning grade of pupils or students or anyone else

¹¹ For more information cf. Keyzers & Gazzola (2014).

¹² This an argument continuously made by Heinz von Foerster (2019)

is just absurd and obsolete thinking. For the social worker, observing the learning ability of their clients in social contexts is also more or less looking into the crystal ball. If one can observe clients over a long period of time, then there is a whiff of a chance that modifications of behaviour will be observed. However, by doing this in your social work or social work management duties, you did something terribly wrong, because you have to make yourself rather expendable.

2. **Conversion of the learned subject matters is necessarily dependent on external incentives or stimuli:** Learning is never possible on one's own terms. The evidence is manifold and strong. According to anthropological authorities like Arnold Gehlen (1988) with his term of the 'imperfect being' (*Mängelwesen*), we existentially need external stimuli for development, not to mention mere survival. Alluding to the first section, one cannot differentiate learning processes in educational settings on the one side and those occurring in everyday basis on the other side. Of course, we concede that there are disparities in the focus. At the beginning, we named three levels of perspective for our reflection: (1) social learning of the clients as such, (2) initiation of incentive learning processes in the client by the social worker (2), and (3) facilitation of educational (or vocational) learning in the students of social work or social work management to be professionally able initiating incentive learning processes for the clients (3). The focus of (1) is on learning for and within one's living environment on an everyday basis (**everyday learning**; [*Alltags management*]); the focus of (2) is on **methodical learning** how to foster everyday learning at the client (which is well-known to be a set of professional competence, methodical skills, and interpersonal skills), and, lastly, the focus of (3) is on **cognitive** or **reflective learning** to facilitate the students' know-how and expertise on how to accumulate competencies and skills to master real cases at the requested professional level (which leads to the widespread discourse about the severe controversial professionalisation in the discipline of social work or social work management). Despite these named differences, the learning procedures have similar (neurophysiological) grounds anywhere one learns or teaches (cf. Foerster, 2019). Actually, speaking in a strict sense, it necessarily and effectually depends on a positive change of our locomotive system inducing (new) stimuli (cf. *ibid.*). Only in this manner (additionally, depending on one's equipped quantity of mirror neurons; cf. Keyser & Gazzola, 2014) a new calculation of the firing by the activated synapses can occur and a build-up of experience is feasible. Thus, we inevitably need contingent or systematic stimuli to acquire experience. Yet experience only comes with (long-term) memorising, and only then we are able to learn.
3. **The long-standing and prevailing mainstream Inhibitory Deficit Theory, which posits that from 30 years of age onwards, there is a general cognitive decrease on performance, is untenable:** This thesis is clearly a myth (cf. Lustig et al., 2014 [2007]), which unfortunately still haunts miscellaneous "discussions" and – making matters worse – is the basis for actuarial mathematics of social transfer payments, care insurances and health insurances with the result of systematic discrimination of part-time employees (who are typically women) (cf. Carey, 1990). The state-of-the-art assumption at this point is the model of

lifelong learning (cf. Fleming, 2011). Hence, if there happens to be individual learning difficulties, they are to be accounted for by social, biographical, psychological or somatic reasons. At any rate, the teacher ought to consequently establish a positive relationship with the student or the client to achieve good learning results. We have a wide range of empirically valid studies, which verify this thesis (cf. Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2017; Zeichner, 2002). By the way, in the domain of care and nursery there are two famous historical cases of nurses who state the same: Florence Nightingale (Bostridge, 2009) and Joyce Travelbee (1969). In the end, we can assert that we are able to learn if we intend to do so, at all times, regardless of age. It is ultimately a question of motivation and volition.

4. **Observing the relationship between *angst* and learning performance is crucial for the success of learning:** As already stated above, strong affective arousal, that is, situations of stress, suppression of competition, and *angst*, impinges extremely negative on learning performance. Thus, the teacher is called upon not only to establish a good relationship with the student or the pupil, but to ensure a good learning setting arrangement so that individuals acting in this setting feel at ease. Conversely, it implies having time to become acquainted with “new” settings like occasions of examination or (possibly seeming) “lack of time”-situations. We can deduce two results from this. First, before starting to learn for real, there is major need for a training on effective or efficient time management: how to find, assess, and absorb data and then to recall information for a special purpose or in relation to a special time dimension, that is, in preparation for testing, delivery or deadlines.¹³ Second, we particularly have to use simulating techniques, such as assessment tools, lecturing by students, gaming approaches, case studies, projects, science lab, etc., in our teaching setting wherever possible.
5. **Looking at the neurophysiological learning and performance ability:** Actually, one can presume that neurophysiological processes decelerate with increasing age. This certainly does not mean a “global” decline of performance, but “merely” a differentiation of variable temporal sequences of development, such as e.g., minute motor skills, and cognitive efforts. On the contrary, we can even state, for example, an increase on imagination in the elderly people. The same also applies to semantic memory or prospective memory (e.g., recollecting where the keys have been put). Research shows that older people are better in decision-making, because they are less impulsive than younger colleagues and understand the weight of each decision. Indeed, significantly more empathy. That is to say late middle-aged adults demonstrated more empathy than other age cohorts. Last, all biological organs including neuronal functions can be trained (by analogy with doing sports) by their steady and frequently use (cf.

¹³ Considering Foerster information arouses from our memory not from storage media like the internet, hard disk or piece of paper (ibid.). Information is exclusively and strongly linked to our meaning reservoir.

Knowland & Thomas, 2014; Praag et al., 2005, pp. 8680–8685). This leads to the last point.

6. **Duration of learning:** We know from research (Knowland & Thomas, 2014) that learning capacity changes throughout the span of life due to cerebral specialising. However, depending on existing complex skill learning settings, there exists a considerable potential for both structural and functional ageing (naturally conceding to the genetic make-up of the white matter structure). By all means, sensitive periods in our biological development are not a serious limiting factor, but they may have an impact on our rate of learning. The study of Dehaene et al. (2010) revealed an important indication in this regard.¹⁴ One can say that middle-aged and elderly people are able to learn the same things as younger ones, but the learning takes longer and the representation what one has learned occurs more or less slowly. In the domain of nursing and care, there is likewise no indication that working and learning with elder people is more complicated than with younger ones, even though impediments or inefficiencies may exist (cf. Koskinena et al., 2016).

In conclusion it should be said that we are always adaptive in terms of learning and representing regardless of our age and the “functionality” involved. It is simply a matter of motivation – and of a suitable learning environment for gaming. The more we are used to learning diverse subject matters (even it is only a bit) the merrier.

Active Learning Strategies Revisited in Relation to Social Work Management

The well-known active learning strategies can be directly construed from these previous results by combining neurophysiology and the gaming approach in this argumentation. Active learning studies are understood to be “any instructional method that engages students in the learning process” (cf. Prince, 2004, p. 1; Bonwell & Eison, 1991). In a narrow sense, active learning strategies imply student activity and engagement in the learning process – in contrast to traditional and passive handling of information by students. A similar concept can be found in the notion of collaborative learning, which is defined to be an instructional method, in which students work together in small groups toward a common goal (cf. Smith & MacGregor, 1992, p. 10ff.). The overlap of these two concepts is very large. Both have requirements, that can be deduced from the gaming approach as well from neurophysiological grounds: individual accountability, mutual interdependence, face to-face promotive interaction, appropriate practice of interpersonal skills, and regular self-assessment of team functioning (cf. Prince, 2004, p. 1; Stahl, 1994). There are some studies, which are focusing on the question, whether or not active learning strategies are

¹⁴In this study, the ex-illiterate adults performed nearly as well as their literate peers in terms of reading accuracy, but they read more slowly (ibid.).

working. As a matter of fact, we can state that active learning strategies like gamification have an impressive positive effect on learning outcomes (cf. Hsieh, 2013). For instance, a study with the particular emphasis on safe learning climate shows good results as well by using active learning strategies within teachings of social work (cf. Raghallaigh & Cunniffe, 2012). If you list the well-known active learning strategies into a co-ordinate plane with the axes ‘organisational complexity’ and ‘expenditure of time’ – including the impact of gamification, you will find the following Fig. 4.5.

All these strategies can be easily – admittedly with some efforts at times – applied in all kinds of instructional settings, whatever specific discipline one studies. To accent this point, they are not a solely proprium of teaching in the domains of social work or social work management. Even more, these strategies can be implemented in all three domains of the methodical ‘trinity’ of case work, social group work, and social community work. As a matter of fact, these strategies are to be steadily utilised in each field of social work field or social work management named above. They are especially appropriate for such methodical approaches like group frames or community offers. In the area of case work, case management, or other consulting services the use of an active learning strategy might be more difficult because of the connecting factor of single person services. Therefore, active learning strategies are more suitable for social group work and social community work. Nevertheless, active learning strategies can always be deployed in academic education.

In the end, we definitely validate a stronger involvement of the students who can achieve – as is proven empirically – better and sustainable learning outcomes just by being motivated (and having fun) in the teaching settings. The next step is to explicate the process of systematic learning.

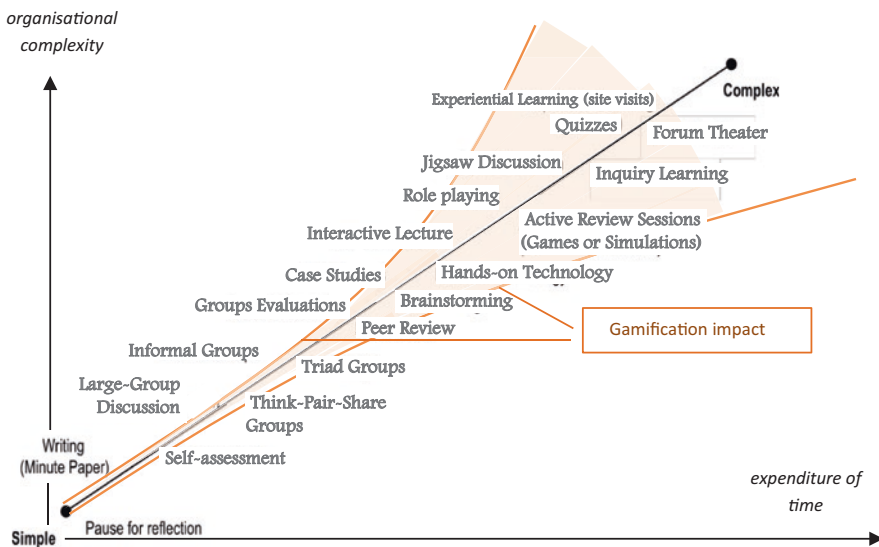


Fig. 4.5 Set of active learning strategies (O’Neal and Pinder-Grover [Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan] (n.d.) – modified by the author inter alia by including the gamification impact)

General Process of Systematic Learning

The next figure (vide Fig. 4.6) shows the typical process of systematic learning. It demonstrates four crucial areas, in which one’s own learning can be optimised:

1. **Information:** selection of information, which is associated with the criteria of scientific quality (reliability, validity, objectivity, generalisation [potential of aggregate]), logic and, most important, trustworthiness. For marketing reasons and in order to improve this process, the author has developed formulae to help calculate information quality with respect to management efforts (cf. Carey, 2018b). For level 1, it is important to identify *simple* information (SI) by assessing the marginal benefit, which should be positive and, better yet, higher than 1.
2. **Acquiring information:** selection of the duration required for memorising, and selection of the perception channel, e.g. in relation to density of information. The above-named indicator for this level 2 (selection of media) necessitates the consideration of transaction costs, at best in a comparison of information effort and information revenue, for example, like the information-ROI (IROI):

$$IROI = \frac{\text{gained revenue with use of information}}{\text{procurement costs} + \text{transaction costs.}}$$

Assessing this formula by monetary units, we may get the following results: IROI < 1, the acquiring of information is too complex and disproportionate to the surplus; IROI = 1, the statement is indifferent and unanswerable without further criteria;

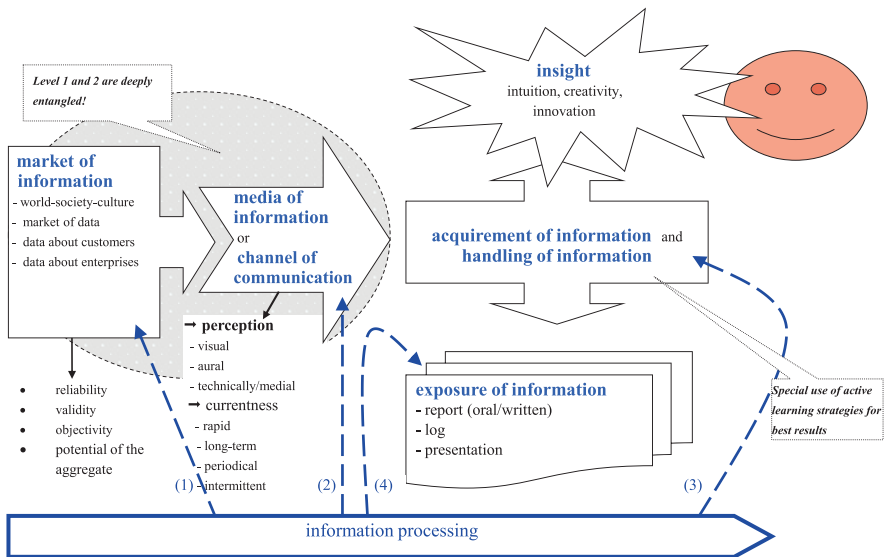


Fig. 4.6 Process of systematic learning (illustration by the author)

IROI >1, the simplicity of the acquisition and the transaction are fulfilled. The larger this metric, the easier they are. Thus, it is all about the *simple channel/media* of information, which is a useful information for campaigning.

3. **Initiation of information processing:** This level encompasses the – mentally impressed – acquirement of information or even more the handling of information that is processed in our brain (see section “[Our brain, or the neurophysiological basis of learning](#)”). It is of special relevance for teaching practices, as it is our toehold for learning. And it is the process that is necessarily based on plenty of creativity, which usually unfolds in a group setting, and/or effects of individual ingenuity, and/or as a mix of both. One can use the full set of the active learning strategies named above. If one wishes to use a metric, one can calculate the *simple handling of information* (SHI) by using the following formula:

$$SHI = \sqrt[3]{\ln \left(\frac{\text{number of results or alternatives}}{\text{general amount of information}} \right) \times \text{needed hours of creativity}}$$

SHI is the cube root of the positive natural logarithm of the relation between the number of (possibly) found results or variants to the general amount of information subsequently multiplied by the amount of the creativity hours needed.¹⁵

4. **Exposure or reworking of information by the selection of a form of presentation:** The last level is about the *simple* presentation of information (SPI), whose exact form is the last selection to be made. It goes by the motto: “As much information as necessary, as little as possible”. To measure the simpleness on this level, one can use the following metric:

$$SPI = \ln \left(\frac{\sqrt[3]{e^{\left(\frac{\text{procurement costs} + \text{transaction costs}}{\text{general amount of acquired information}} \right)}}}{\left(\frac{\text{number of presented information}}{\text{general amount of purchased information}} \right)} \right)$$

This formula is likewise based on the realistic premises.¹⁶ This new metric measures the simplicity of presentation in relation to the amount of acquired and used information on the one side and the procurement costs and transaction costs

¹⁵This is valid for the realistic premises that the number of (new) results may never exceed the quantity of the information, this number has to be greater than ‘zero’ as well, and the number of hours greater than ‘zero’ likewise.

¹⁶The ‘general amount of the acquired information’ and the ‘presented information’ must be greater than ‘zero’, the ‘presented information’ must be smaller than, or equal to, the ‘general amount of the acquired information’, and the ‘procurement costs plus transaction costs’ must be greater than or equal to ‘zero’.

on the other. Zero is the attractor: The more it converges to zero, the simpler is one's presentation of information.

In effect, we have four principles of simpleness: simple information (SI), simple channel/media of information (IROI), simple handling of information (SHI) and simple presentation of information (SPI).

To sum up, a good and systematic learning system has to consider the selection of information and its evaluation, the knowledge about characteristics (benefits, limitations) of the selected information channel or media, systematic methods (especially by using active learning strategies) for gaining and handling information and exposure respectively reworking of information by using apt forms of representation.

That can be translated to competencies. On the first level, one should learn and evaluate (by scientific criteria) how and where to find qualitative and trustworthy information, which provides a basis for good results and learning outcomes. On the second level, one should learn or at least be aware of the strengths, the benefits, and the limitations of different possible channels or media that deliver information (fully aware of the fact that in modern times, information and supporting medium cannot be neatly separated [cf. v. Foerster, 2019]). Speaking in professional terms, one has to be able to use numerous channels or media and to retrieve information with a mix-channel approach. On the third level, one inevitably needs skills in analytical and logical thinking skills. On the fourth level, one has to learn the acme of academic disciplines, which was developed in the famous antique societies of the Greek and the Romans: communication, more precisely the art of arguing.

Basic Principles for the Lead through of the <<Learning Factory>> in Social Contexts

First of all, we have to point out that there is no perfect learning system in general. We all think and learn differently. So, the goal in a learning factory is to make the participants get to know themselves as learning subjects better than before. This aim is independent from social work, social work management, or any other discipline as well as from age, gender, or, in a sense, biography. It is all about establishing and managing your own personal learning system – and at best, with joy and motivation. For the participants, it is mostly a journey to a *terra incognita*. Hence, questions about what type of learner one is and what rhythm of learning suits oneself are to be resolved by this learning activity. At the end of the seminar, each participant should individually answer these questions in a clear way: How can I learn at best? And: Which learning system is the most convenient for me?

Types of Learner

Based on many years of experience in teaching settings, we can specify into the following types of learners (cf. Schiefele & Schaffner, 2006).

- *Visual type of learner:* This type is best at retrieving information visually, that is from books, newspapers, newsletter, internet, and social media.
- *Aural type of learner:* Such learners predominantly retrieve information especially by listening to, e.g., by lectures, discussions, television, and other oral forms of communication.
- *Experiential learner:* This type is outstanding at memorising by evaluating the pertinence of or by relating new information to their own everyday life or their accumulated personal experience.
- *Short-time type of learner:* This type of learner can memorise extraordinarily well with the short-time memory. However, without further memorising, the storage of this information does not last for long. Some students practice this learning style more or less successfully. It is obvious that this learning is not sustainable.
- *Long-time type of learner:* This type of learner can remember things well for a long time. But information retrieval depends on the circumstances. Information can be well retrieved in a quiet moment, but not so well under stress or time pressure.

Rhythm of Learning

As a result of one's special individual circadian rhythm daily phases exist, in which we process information in a divergent manner. At some point of the day, we can retrieve information with ease, while concomitantly handling or reworking information can lead to have a head. Furthermore, trying to be creative is even more dependant from somatic conditions (for the author, for example, the best creativity time is at night or in the very early morning hours). In this respect, everyone has to discover her/his personal rhythm and identify the ideal times for research, communication and presentation, or being creative (perhaps in collaboration with others). For the sake of good learning outcomes, universities or employers should take this into account when organising services, meetings, or tests to enable the employee or the student to make the best of it. Having said this, the manager of organisations is called upon to rearrange settings from a psychological point of view. For that matter, it is an idiotic drama that in general (even very young) German pupils must go to school¹⁷ at 7:45 a.m., although many studies with proven results demonstrates

¹⁷ Most German schools are built like barracks (a remnant from the era of massive industrialization in the nineteenth century).

that children are not able to memorise information at this early time of the day, let alone learn. Thus, to be efficient respectively effective, everyone should get to know the special phases of the day to do (only) research, recap the subject matter, or learn solely arguing and presenting. In effect, integrating learning in one's own everyday life, the daily routine should be largely reorganised in correspondence to the guidelines of learning.

Place and Environment of Learning

In this connexion, in respect of learning, it is also important to mention that one should look for a temporally and/or spatially special place for joyful learning. Such places can differ from person to person. We can differentiate between an **affective** learning situation, a **spatial** learning situation, a **ritualistic** learning situation and a **temporal** learning situation.

An **affective** learning situation could be a group situation with much laughter and a good collaborative working atmosphere. Having joint breakfast "meetings" or staying in the outdoors can make learning more unwound. Sometimes the author does in seminars a surprise quiz or even a paper chase on a planned topic in a wide area, be it city or countryside. The student's enthusiasm and their learning results are extraordinary. Furthermore, the author applied the 'Aristotelian', 'peripatetic method' of giving a lecture just by walking (without any presentation charts, etc.) spontaneously speaking with a group of students (circled around him). There, the arising questions were more frequently than in the lecture room. Even students whom the author has never heard speak before were querying! For people who know that their learning is most effective in affective situations then this would be their choice of means. However, it should be noted that such learning situations also require of course self-discipline so as to not stray off the learning assignments.

A **spatial** learning situation means that the learner has found a place where their learning concentration is highest. The learning place must mentally welcome the learner. A brimful desk with lots of high 'skyscraper'-piles of books and other documents that remind of the outstanding work at hand surely does not invite the learner. One should also pay attention to the requirement of the learning place to allow the learner to spread the learning materials and to have them in nearby position in order not to waste time searching for the things needed. This location should have good lighting conditions (not too dark and not directly exposed by solar irradiation) as well as moderate room temperature. A good circulation of air with a window reducing the carbon dioxide, which makes one tired after some time of intensive working, is likewise important. Lastly, it should be a place that exclusively belongs to the learner, where no sharing conflicts arise and hinder the scholar in effective learning.

A **ritualistic** learning situation has to do with body talk. From the very beginning of human culture development, our social communitisation predominantly relies on symbols and rituals. These are, along with language acquisition, the key elements of communitisation (Chwe, 2013; Harari, 2015). One can regard rituals as the

manifestation of symbols (cf. Mauss, 1990 [1925]). Additionally, rituals go beyond the mere mind structure. “The rite claims to establish the connexion with a preposessed world force by caved-in transcendence” (Habermas, 2019, p. 807).¹⁸ It also has an effect on the soma. By conducting diverse rituals linked with affirmations, one can send our soma special body messages like: “Now, it is time to learn”. It must be pointed out that working rituals have to be distinct enough, so that they do not diffuse with everyday life activities. Possible rituals could be doing sports like jogging, biking, or walking, having a special (non-alcoholic) beverage for a start, playing a small game of cards, solving conundrums, or reading. This way, one can stimulate concentration and awareness for the subject matter.

A **temporal** learning situation is an important topic as well. You have to allot a special fixed-time weekly slot for systematic learning, so that your “neighbours” know that you are not to be disturbed. Your mobile phone, landline phone, gadgetry and possible miscellaneous distractions must be shut off. Doors should be closed – maybe with “Do-not-disturb”-signs on them. Possible sources of noise should be minimised if possible. This temporal learning situation could become a ritual as well.

Systematic Acquirement of Information for Learning Results in Social Work Management Teaching Settings

With the focus on good learning results for students of social work or social work management, the following section concludes efficient systematic principles for acquirement of information that may be of use to them.

Time Management

A study course requires to learn a lot of complex information in a relatively short time. In case a student wants to get good results, they will have to proceed in a systematic manner. The author suggests the following steps:

1. Calculate the period, when the comprehensive information has to be replicated again (for example, examination date).
2. Assess the total amount of relevant information that is needed.
3. Divide the study time idealistic into 3: 2: 1, that is, three temporal units = consumptive use; two temporal units = active learning; one temporal unit = repetition. This leads to the division of the study and learning time into 6 units. Put it on personal calendar: consumptive use, active learning, repetition. No unit should be oversized; it has to be manageable in the framework of the regular individual everyday life.

¹⁸Translated by the author.

4. Translate the three units of consumptive use into calendar weeks and distribute the compilation of this information across these calendar weeks. As a result, one gains a weekly set learning tasks (target planning). If you do not accomplish the weekly set learning tasks, you have to compensate it with an extra time slot.
5. The further “drill-down” of the weekly set tasks depends on the individual organisation of one’s own everyday life. It is up to you whether you learn on a daily basis or on special days in the week only. However, it is important to undertake consumptive use and active learning continuously and regularly.
6. After the consumptive use, the phase of active learning starts. At this point, the things to be learned comprising 2 units are likewise translated into the calendar weeks and one executes the own active learning strategy – perfectly matched with one’s structure of everyday life.
7. In the last unit (the last week before the examination, daily set tasks would be optimal) one ought to recapitulate.

Applied General Learning Principles in Social Work Management Teaching Settings (and Beyond)

The continuation of the previous sections, the following general principles should be born in mind:

1. The more familiar one is with the information, the better memorising works. Information should always be learned iteratively.
2. Speaking out loudly while learning is highly helpful for memorising.
3. Combining learning with writing (by hand, not typing a computer!) establishes good learning outcomes. (From the point of view of learning, a crib sheet is indeed good for effective learning results, because one has to write down selected relevant information in succinct manner.)
4. Illustrations can be memorised very easily. Also, they can reduce complexity without being superficial. So, think in images and commit figures and models to memory!
5. Working with self-compiled contents is the very best method of learning. Thus, try to incur as many tasks as possible to get acquainted with the respective application areas and learn the necessary things within the available time.

Selective Methods of Proceeding in Applied Learning

By looking at methods of proceeding in applied learning in social work management teaching settings, one can differentiate between the individual learning and the collaborative learning approaches. Many above-mentioned points can be assigned to the domain of individual learning. Yet there is still one thing to be mentioned. This is the author’s grid of learning scientific or professional themes which makes learning easier inasmuch as it would reduce the efforts of factual learning and

strengthen the comprehension of things in order to “forget” subject matters (as described in section “[Learning in the contexts of social work, social work management or social pedagogy](#)”). To state at the outset, there are three important targets to achieve with procedural learning that helps to get a grip on complex subjects matters or themes:

1. Learning fundamental terms and relevant abstract concepts with the following criteria: context (and/or theoretical framework), statements (respectively connotation), and intentions. It is most important that the mastering of a subject area is regarded on the “right” use of the professional language!
2. Learning by establishing a grid and connexions between different issues so that a) information is memorised at the “right place in one’s brain”, b) new contexts of thinking are made accessible by the reworking of given information, and c) final judgements are rendered by analysing special case studies.
3. Learning the rules that stand behind data. With the adoption of rules, one can explicate phenomena consistently – without time-consuming investigations.

Not only individual learning, but collaborative learning, too, is most helpful in this context, as active contributions to the discussions are made. In this respect, vocalising arguments or actual information in a group has a threefold effect. Firstly, it helps the speaker to better memorise; secondly, unambiguous argumentation can be practiced; thirdly, one can develop their own position in assessing connexions, consequences and aftereffects of issues. This is significant for each “presentation”, be it examination, application, or a job situation.

The advantages of collaborative learning are:

- Building up individual motivation and learning can be countervailed in a group;
- The division of the learning workload in a group makes the learning process easier:
 - You do not have to carry the whole burden of learning by yourself. Everyone can table something and make it available for other group members;
 - Individual fortitudes of group members help compensate for the shortcomings of others;
- “False” information can be quickly corrected by the group (provided that some members are very knowledgeable in this matter);
- Creative thinking is strongly stimulated, by all means.

However, there are also the following disadvantages or risks:

- Emotional disposition is greatly endangered by selfishness;
- Much time is frittered away before the self-organisation of the group has been accomplished: spatial conditions, roles in the group and so on. When establishing and managing a group, you have to consider the following phases:
 - *Constituting the group*: determination of the members, specification of common interests, group organisation;

- *Group allocation*: distribution of roles in the group, creation of the group identity;
 - *(Learning) process of the group*: choice of subjects, regulation by the moderator, gamification of questions and answers;
 - *Ending of the group*: finishing the group work by communicating the achievements and, if applicable, the gained results to the members, making a final assessment of the group functioning;
- Time is wasted for negligibility: “coffee parties”, inappropriate discussions, etc.;
 - Symptom of the copycat: one consumes without delivering anything.

Good Learning Methods in the Realm of Text Analysis

Sometimes one is regularly pinched for time in quickly comprehending information. Therefore, it is crucial to obtain and memorise relevant information systematically and at a fast pace. The author suggests several options for reading texts rapidly:

1. *The Tarzan method*¹⁹: It implies layaway from caption to caption. In this vein, one can identify the author’s strategy of argumentation. The concluding chapter is always the best choice of getting a picture of the document in order to collect the most important information of a it.
2. *Index method*: If one has to research into particular facts of a case or needs to find definitions for a term, then it would be the best choice to consult the subject index and gain the most relevant and selective information with the help of the designated pagination. This procedure is time-saving not only in cases of juridical evaluation but also beyond. (When working with codes of law, one can consult either the epitome or the index to get quick results.)
3. *Text-marking method*: Any text that has to be gathered ought to be marked and edited. For example by using different colours: first colour to accentuate the way of the author’s argumentation which can be identified by characteristic sentences; second colour to bring out good and plausible examples; third colour to highlight important numerary, premises, lists, or upshots.
4. *Association method*: Play with terms and notions! Oftentimes terms lead to further connexions. For example, what does ‘customer’ really mean? – The answer is: it comes from Latin *consuetudinarius*, from *consuetudo* ‘habit, usage, practice, tradition’ (cf. Online Etymology Dictionary, 2021). In Shakespeare’s literature, the word can also mean a ‘prostitute’ (ibid.). Interesting, isn’t it? What about the word ‘pedagogy’? Actually, this word is discriminatory. Do you know why? So, when you get ideas about the text or you detect (logical) contradic-

¹⁹In Germany, ‘Tarzan method’ responds to an information acquisition strategy and this term was formed by the author.

tions, then write these down near the respective text passage, so that your thoughts are not shed.

5. *Cards method*: When one encounters relevant terms and definitions, they may be written down on cards. Different card colours can typify different domains. For good learning outcomes, these cards can be worked off gradually and repeatedly.
6. *Patterns method*: We know from neurophysiology that pictures (graphics) and figures can be memorised better than mere text sentences. In order to comprehend complex subjects in the text one should pay special attention to existing visualisations about models or conceptions, or, else, create a structural model for better understanding of, for instance, ‘cause-and-effect chain’, ‘premises-thesis-consequences pattern’, ‘influencing-factors model’ or ‘process-flow model’.
7. *Resolution method*: For quantitative tasks, it is the best and most efficient way to memorise the solution statement, for example what metric is inquired, what kind of key data or operating figures do we have, with which solution method (with which formula) we will arrive at a plausible result?

These different methods of text comprehension and analysis should not be used by pitching solely on one special method, yet are meant to be used complementarily depending on the necessity, complexity, and requirements of the task or the text as well as their suitability for the individual learner.

The Task of Successful Learning in Teaching Settings of Social Work Management

Basing on neurophysiology as well as the gamification approach, this contribution describes the prerequisites and the lead through principles (<<learning factory>>) of systematic learning efforts directed at good learnings outcomes, especially in the contexts of social work management. It presupposes that everyone regardless of age is able to learn, provided they want to. In this regard, one may recall Berta Reynold’s (1942) famous and brilliant anthropological understanding of learning to be a movement on a step ladder of consciousness. This article makes clear that learning is very much a dynamical process, which is deeply embedded in our everyday living environment [*lebenswelt*²⁰]. Considering the multifarious processes of individualisation, which have been taking place since the Enlightenment (cf. Charim, 2018; cf. Habermas, 2019), this issue is very important to be aware of, yet goes often by the board. In this sense, learning practices have an individual and a societal aspect (as well as a spatial one). As a matter of fact, in the contemporary philosophical debate about (“new”) realism (Gabriel, 2015), one can understand the *lebenswelt* as the overall paradigmatic approach of general scientific transactions in modern times,

²⁰That sphere is the very “hinge” between identity, sociality, and the physical nature (Carey, 2020).

irrespective of the scientific domain one works in, be it the ‘hard sciences’²¹ or the natural sciences in Continental Europe (see, for example, the Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle, the relativity theory of Einstein, the quantum theory), the ‘soft sciences’ like humanities in Continental Europe (for example, the philosophy of science, the Gödel’s incompleteness theorem [for mathematics], the linguistic turn in modern philosophy), or the social sciences and social work management as its derivative (by definition). In the *lebenswelt* all above aspects amalgamate like Bourdieu’s social field (Carey, 2016).

Looking at the typical learning contexts for social work management, one can identify three levels of learning settings: the client’s social learning, the stipulating process of learning at the client by the social worker that is based on the principles of social work, and the student’s educational learning directed at social work management. Because of the general focus on social work management in this ‘Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education’, the author’s argumentation melted the level of the student and that of the client to one. Henceforth, for a synopsis of this argumentation the socio-philosophical respectively anthropological groundwork is coalesced, so that the interpretation of the emergence of being human is formed to be in the ‘melting pot’ of everyday living or the *lebenswelt*, with the effect of constituting accruing learning proceedings by evolution *sui generis*. For this reason, good learning outcomes entails forgetting, or, as Reynolds has put it: “it has to become a part of me”. Thus, the instructor’s teaching mastery is to foster learning by letting the participants forget that they are learning. Once the student has made efforts to learn, then it has been an ‘Hard Day’s Night’ – as a Beatles’ song is aptly titled. To overcome this paradoxical state, the author strongly recommends the method of gamification in a wide use – naturally in consideration of the specific circumstances of the setting, especially the teaching time available, because learning by gaming is quite time-consuming anyway.

Having combined some basic insights of neurophysiology with the gaming approach, we have typified three instructional domains in order to generate areas of (empirically proven) better memorising: organisation (of the learning procedures), rehearsal (integration of gamification elements), and elaboration (advancement of participant’s active behaviour). Furthermore, even more important, we have to concern ourselves with the arrangements of settings. In case of one feels uncomfortable, uneasy, or yet takes fright at the learning place no good learning outcome can be expected. Thus, instructors should make it their priority to pay attention to the learners’ individual as well as collective sentiments towards the learning place. By deduction, these arguments bring us to the named well-known and empirically proven active learning strategies, which ensure, given the right time management, positive learning results in most of the fields of social work or social work management on spot (especially in social group work and community work), for all

²¹ In Anglo-American science, one simply distinguishes between ‘hard sciences’, which stand for natural sciences, and ‘soft sciences’, which mean humanities, philosophy, and social sciences as well. In Continental Europe, this differentiation was first introduced by Dilthey (1970 [1910]).

activities within the academic education, by stimulating motivation, interest, and in most turn-outs even joy.

To understand the lead through principles of the of the <<learning factory>>, it has been necessary to introduce the general process of systematic learning and its four dimensions: the value of the information, the quality of acquisition of information and the channel of information, the possible use of instruments for reflection and communication, and the quality of the form of presentation as well as the informational log. For each dimension the quality can be assessed by the above-named metrics. On this basis, the general principles of the <<learning factory>> are presented that help one to identify what kind of learning personality one is. One reflects about variable learning types, different rhythms of and good places for learning (affective, spatial, ritualistic, and temporal learning), efficient methods of text analysis, and, notably, aspects of successful acquirement of information such as: time management, proceeding methods for applied learning, and major learning principles.

By all means, there is no perfect patent remedy for learning in general. Hence, the foremost intention of the <<learning factory>> is to look from the meta-level, to get the participants to know themselves better in order to enable them organising their learning proceedings better than before and, finally, to reach good learning outcomes. Indeed, participants who were open-minded about the subtle teaching process attained outstanding results. However, students who had constrained perceptions and expectations about academic tuitions (fixed to the idea that they should be like monological school tuition), then it was less successful. At this point, we once again observe the societal (cultural) aspect.

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Part II
Socio-Economic Conditions and
Institutional Contexts for Social Work
Management Education

Chapter 5

Thinking Social Economy from the Social Side: A Mutual Relationship Between Social Work and Management in the Social Economy



Wolf Rainer Wendt

Abstract With regard to German academic programmes in social economy and social work management, it can be noted that they are currently based on an understanding of the business of enterprises with a social purpose and therefore focus on the elements of business administration. Thus, the respective studies keep their distance from the very conception of social work. Conversely, there is an approach of a joint meeting of needs. The social economy actually emerges from the self-organisation of people for their own sustenance in the form of friendly societies, cooperatives, and mutuals to which social entrepreneurship has been added. The structural change in social provision requires cooperation with its addressees in a spirit of partnership and networking of all those involved. The learning design in the field of social work management and social economy should match this change. The curriculum can start with personal welfare and move on to common welfare. In the wider context of organised solidarity and working “for people and the planet”, the public welfare household also includes management and governance tasks that should be learned to participate in it at every level.

Introduction

Social economy means doing economic activity for people. Their well-being is its immediate goal. Either people get organised to care for themselves or they are cared for and supported in an organised way. Institutional welfare is in charge of it, and social work sees to its execution. To manage organised activities in matters of people’s welfare and sustainability of common life, competencies are needed. These competencies are trained in specific courses of study at universities. The present text focuses on the knowledge about what is happening in the social economy. This is a

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broad field in transition. It responds to societal challenges, including changes in the world of work, demographic change, health care, digitalisation and, last but not least, climate change. A university course in social work management can prepare students for participation in that transition.

The text does not cover the knowledge of the competencies of leadership and administration in person-centred social work. Its topic is not the management of the *social* in an organisation but the management and governance of the economy in the social task area. The line of argument in this paper is based on ecosocial theory (Wendt, 2021). The reflection lays bare the economic process on several levels on and between which social (individual, collective and societal) welfare is worked towards, also focusing on the ecological pursuit of sustainability. For competency in the various social care areas within and outside of human services, it seems appropriate to embed the application of business administration tools in ethical, civil, and social responsibility and a strategy of sustainability from the outset. Professional skills in cost management, financing and funding, personnel management, quality management, organisational leadership, strategic planning, and social marketing are needed in the social economy. But such skills are also anchored in the actions of its addressees and contributors and in societal aspirations. They are economically significant and are met economically in the structures of the social economy which is also the field of study of social work management. The aim is to show how, on the learning path, the gap can be closed between personal conduct and management of life and personal concerns of actors on one side and sustainable community concerns in dealing with social and individual problems on the other side.

In ecosocial theory, the *household* combines economy and social life. The category of household is central to conceptualising both individual conduct of life and public services of general interest. A household contains resources and opportunities to use them. Within a household, a social entrepreneur acts in an intrapreneurial way. In the process of householding, individuals and communities of individuals manage their resources and opportunities, as do social and civil organisations and the political entities to which they belong. To this end, individuals connect socially and cooperate economically, and the public sector maintains and supports institutions of care. Those who wish to engage professionally in the welfare-related households of individuals and the community should be able to relate their actions to the realities and perspectives of those households. There, cooperation is the guiding social economy principle of action.

Empirically, we find self-organised associations and organisations working on behalf of the public sector in the social economy (Brinkmann, 2014). Organisational models and enterprises in the field of social economy are diverse and include social work and human services of various kinds. To educate for acting and management in this field, one has to know it well. Therefore, first of all, the space and scope of the social economy and its development should be outlined. The following section in this paper is devoted to the difference between social entrepreneurship and solidarity-based cooperatives, and it also considers hybrid arrangements. Development influences the conceptual framing of the social economy, and education that takes this into account must follow. The management of various supply

opportunities requires competencies that go beyond business rationality and are based on ecosocial prudence in social work and care governance. It should promote the welfare of people and the community economically.

Space and Scope of the Social Economy

From a social perspective, the frame of reference of social economy is, on the one hand, the actual situation and life practice of people who are economically and socially seeking their livelihood. On the other hand, social economy operates in the framework of a welfare state's provision of services of general interest, which ensures people's livelihoods in a complementary and compensatory way. Thus, the space of social economy spans the micro level of personal caring and the macro level of public care design. In between, activities and enterprises with a social purpose intervene. Social work, too, operates in this extended space. The space and scope of social economy encompass self-help, professional provision of care and caring communities.

With regard to people's welfare, social work occupies an intermediate position. In the early years of the profession during the Progressive Era after 1900, Edward Devine (1922) accurately described the mission of social work within the framework of the social economy of a political community:

The broad object of social economics is that each individual shall be able to live a normal life according to the standard of the period and of the community. The narrower object of social work is (1) the care of those who through misfortune or fault are not able under existing conditions to realize a normal life for themselves or hinder others from realizing it – dependent children, aged, poor, sick, cripples, blind, mentally defective, criminals, insane, negligent parents, and so on – and (2) the improvement of conditions which are a menace to individual welfare, which tend to increase the number of dependents and interfere with the progress and best interests of others who be in no danger of becoming dependent. (pp. 2 f.)

In Devine's theory, the economics of social work has a much larger scope than its purely practical remit. To grasp its task, theory places social work within the framework of a community's household. In this household, "prosperous and well managed communities may appear deficient in social problems. The social economist, theoretically, would deal equally with the normal operations of social forces working advantageously and equitably and with the pathological conditions which are evidence of friction or failure." (Devine, 1922, p. 1) In the household, these normal operations are carried out by people who conduct their personal lives. For their livelihood and welfare provision, people act alone and together, mostly without professional help. However, they use the infrastructure of the community and "normal operations of social forces".

People's householding for their livelihood becomes social when it is done collectively. In fact, it is collective self-help that gave rise to the social economy in its organised forms of cooperatives, mutual insurance schemes and support

associations. By covering their beneficiaries'/addressees' livelihood needs, the member-serving and public-serving organisations serve as agents of social economy. New legal forms of social enterprises and social start-ups have recently emerged. In member-serving organisations, all members are stakeholders and co-producers. In the social economy, they should also be the addressees of public-serving organisations.

It can be concluded: Social economy functions institutionally and instrumentally in the social welfare household. Social economy ensures that people can cope with their life. To enter the social economy is to start living together with others. It has to be learned 'How to do life together' in an organised and economic way. It includes providing advice and support and also offers new opportunities. The provision of care takes place institutionally in various forms, e.g. how it happens and how changes can be studied. Governance of the social economy involves management of person-centred social work in partnership with its clientele. Conversely, case management in social work includes care management at the system level of welfare provision or in a social economy organisation (as an enterprise). To response to societal challenges, the development of social economy should include old and new ways of dealing with social problems.

Some Remarks on the Genealogy of the Social Economy

The first associations of the social economy were the *friendly societies* in England and the mutual societies (*sociétés de secours mutuel*) in France around 1800. These were member-serving organisations. Self-help and self-sufficiency associations can also include various types of cooperatives that emerged in Europe in the nineteenth century (Demoustier & Rousselière, 2004; Wendt, 2018). They structured welfare production, consumption, and insurance with equal participation of their members. These organisations formed the trunk from which the branches of the "four families" of CMAF – cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, foundations – grew, which allows, for instance the French *économie sociale* to define itself a the non-profit economy in the last quarter of the twentieth century. The above organisations are characterised by voluntary membership, equal participation of their members, self-governance, and a non-distribution constraint.

Understood as the third or not-for-profit economic sector, social economy plays a significant role in the economic policy of the European Union. Brussels discovered the importance of the social economy as a significant factor in employment, regional development, and economic growth. The EU is not primarily a social but an economic union, therefore the "four families" had to rebrand themselves as enterprises. For economic policy, they are but one industry among others. Since 1989, a promotion of social enterprises has been taking place. As public-serving units, the established non-statutory welfare organisations (especially in Germany) were likewise interested in this promotion and joined the social economy with their services and facilities as social enterprises.

In the economic policy of the European Union, the social economy is valued because it offers a great employment potential, strengthens social and regional cohesion, generates social capital, promotes active citizenship, solidarity. In addition to supporting sustainable development and social, environmental, and technological innovation, it is also a type of economy with democratic values at its heart that puts people first. To support and strengthen this multifaceted function, in 2011, the European Commission launched its “Social Business Initiative” with the intention of “creating a favourable climate for social enterprises, key stakeholders in the social economy and innovation” (COM, 2011, 682). This document provides a definition of social enterprises that includes both member-serving organisations and public-serving organisations. As “operators in the social economy”, they are

businesses providing social services and/or goods and services to vulnerable persons (access to housing, health care, assistance for elderly or disabled persons, inclusion of vulnerable groups, child care, access to employment and training, dependency management, etc.); and/or businesses with a method of production of goods or services with a social objective (social and professional integration via access to employment for people disadvantaged in particular by insufficient qualifications or social or professional problems leading to exclusion and marginalisation) but whose activity may be outside the realm of the provision of social goods or services. (Communication, 2011, 3)

The definition remains ambiguous – as do other circumscriptions of the term “social economy” that European bodies attempt.

At the same time as the EU was discussing the role of the social economy, concepts of an alternative, solidarity-based economy were spreading in the countries of the Global South (Defourny et al., 1999). In Latin America, new paths of solidarity-based cooperation and alternative local development in the economy are brokered. These manifest themselves in fair trade, in a sharing economy, in worker-run factories, consumer and housing cooperatives and in ecological agriculture and could be connected with other efforts for sustainability. In the fields of community development, the Hispanic solidarity economy coincided with the social economy in Francophone countries: The term “social solidarity economy” came into widespread use and was made the subject of the “Intercontinental network for the promotion of social solidarity economy” (RIPESS) in 2002. For the universe of organisations that link the interest of their members with the general societal and ecological interest, the preferred term in the political debate of recent years has been *social and solidarity economy*. With the demand for sustainable development, solidarity with all life has been added as an ecological orientation for social enterprises (TFSSE, 2014).

A standard, let alone internationally binding understanding of social economy does not exist. In different contexts, it ranges from firms that seek to balance their economic agenda with a social mission to nonprofit organisations (Mook et al., 2012, p. 3), from alternative projects to social-start-ups, development promotion programmes, community work and personal social services to statutory health care. A common feature in this economy is its close focus on people. “A people-centred economy is one in which the importance of human life, well-being and social development are put above the interests of capital accommodation and greed.” (Amyot et al., 2010, p. 13) While the guiding principle has a universal appeal, the variation

in its local implementation may pose a problem. Yet diversity does not have to be a disadvantage for students who enter the field of governance and management of processes in social economy. What is needed is change and transformation in this field. The wide scope of activities and organisations as well as concepts for them can be seen as a training ground for managerial competency.

The Business and the Lifeworld of Its Addressees

In the neoliberal discourse of recent decades, social economy has been understood as the business of enterprises acting for a social purpose. Therefore, students of social economy and social work management deal with the main elements of business administration while distancing themselves from the very idea of social work. Yet social economy stems from self-organisation of people who seek their sustenance – in the form of friendly societies, cooperatives, and mutual benefit societies. The sustainable livelihood of the people participating is the root and reason of the economic organization. The social objective comes to the fore. The theoretical reflection unveils the economic process on several levels on and between which social (individual, collective, and societal) welfare is worked towards. As part of the process governance, the management tools with which business can be conducted in a socially beneficial manner are also addressed.

At the level of direct social work or other human service, a social economic organisation involves management of individual cases. Care management aligns this individual approach with the need for provision of care, and that depends on the extent to which individuals can manage themselves and their needs. Students who want to work in this field require competency in life situations and conduct of life. Their own welfare has to do with the welfare of others and societal welfare. This connection motivates them to work on welfare. Students can learn to serve their own subsistence needs jointly, thus understanding and reconstructing the milieu of people who want to meet their needs on their own or who are helped to do so. The management of a youth facility will adjust to the lifeworld of young people, the management of a nursing home to the living situation of the very old; who wants to moderate a network of self-help for chronically ill people should know their problems. The design of the work with clients is the business plan of the professional actor or the organisation. The social decisions merge into the economic decisions and vice versa.

Field competence is the prerequisite for action competence. Actors in the social economy use material and immaterial resources to solve people's problems and help them get on well in their lives. The necessary resources are partly taken from the public supply system and partly tapped from the addressees themselves. This is a transaction process in which the institutional capacity is sometimes more decisive and sometimes, the target persons' own efforts are more essential. The mediation skills of professional actors are always crucial. In the transition from previously predominant inpatient care to outpatient services to home-based care, the functional

requirements for management in the social economy are also shifting. This includes the complementary task of organising informal, neighbourly, and civic support in the social space and the local care web with the aim of establishing a *caring community*. For the management in the field of social economy, the governance of a caring community will be a special challenge in the future. (Klie, 2016; Wegleitner & Schluchter, 2018).

Entrepreneurship – The Business Alternative in Social Economy

The social economy has not limited itself to CMAF and charitable services operating in the public interest alone. From the commercial side, players have come along who promise to achieve social goals with business acumen. The actors perform as social entrepreneurs and bring with them the tools of effective business management. These tools should also prove their worth in human service organisations. It was Anglo-American professional discourse that first recommended that social workers become entrepreneurs (Healy, 2002; Germak & Singh, 2009).

The term entrepreneurship can be defined more narrowly or more broadly. It characterises the commitment of a single person but can also apply to a collective. A social entrepreneur is “an individual, group, network, organization, or alliance of organizations that seeks sustainable, large-scale change through pattern-breaking ideas in what or how governments, nonprofits, and businesses do to address significant social problems” (Light, 2006, p. 50). It is left to the creativity of the entrepreneur to decide which problems in society are addressed. The solutions must be economically viable. Entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth and can also lead to a social and ecological reorientation of the economy. Under the impact of crises, the objectives of social entrepreneurship are developing in such a way that they reach into social work and give rise to a reorientation of the social economy.

Social enterprises are economic units that seek entrepreneurial solutions to societal problems. With the promotion of social entrepreneurship by the organisations such as Ashoka or the Schwab Foundation and the European Commission since its *Social Business Initiative* 2011, many start-ups have appeared in recent years that seek to respond to societal challenges. They are mostly microenterprises with a wide range of projects in the circular economy, work integration, fair trade, slow fashion, digitalisation, social coaching, or health promotion. The diversity of business purposes can be reduced to the denominators of an alternative, sustainable and innovative way of doing economy. The entrepreneurial mindset focuses on societal impact. Human services for the provision of social benefits are hardly ever included in the business ventures.

However, the other way to run the economy involves investments in the social infrastructure. Regional economic development focuses on it across different sectors and integrates economic players from the traditional social economy and new

start-ups. In some places, courses of study for social entrepreneurs are following the trend. For example, the Basque cooperative *Mondragon University* offers courses in business administration and management “towards the objectives of a business project and contributing to the development of society” (<https://www.mondragon.edu/en/bachelor-degree-business-administration-management>). In addition, there is a master’s degree in cooperative enterprise and social business management and there are social innovation ecosystem labs. Internationally, the Hispanic solidarity economy is promoting the *Global Curriculum of Social Economy* to overcome sectoral education in this field. A *European Business School on Social Economy* is to be created in interregional partnership. It “will provide teaching and a platform for knowledge exchange and networking between the social economy actors and stakeholders” (European Week, 2021).

Whether these developments have more to do with the alternative solidarity economy or with the social entrepreneurship, what is happening is, in any case, a new framing of the social economy. Social entrepreneurship seeks impact on the lives of people and in the threatened natural environment alike, that is, in both ecological living contexts. The social frame of reference coincides with the ecological one. The economic requirements of sustainability must be met in all areas of life, business sectors, and supply areas. Social and entrepreneurial action is conceptually reflected in the ecosystem of social balance, social support, and the distribution of care work. The social business is integrated into the ecological contexts of individual coping with life, arrangements of formal and informal provisions, and societal affairs, and focuses on the problems existing there. These contexts form the horizon that the social economy unveils for the study of social work management.

Although the entrepreneurial practice largely lacks a theoretical foundation, conceptually, it is close to the discourses of *feminist economics*, which started from the *care work* of women in the household. Feminist economics has placed care and its support systems at the centre of its economic thinking, asserting that a new economy can be built on individual and communal caring. Under the title “Take Back the Economy”, the authors of the *Community Economies Collective* wrote that

Our economy is the outcome of the decisions we make and the actions we take. We might be told that there’s an underlying logic, even a set of natural principles, that direct how economies operate, but most of us can see that the decisions and actions of governments and corporations have a lot to do with how economies shape up. Encouraged by the idea that we can build the economies we live in, individuals and communities across the globe are taking economic matters into their own hands to help create worlds that are socially and environmentally just. (Gibson-Graham et al., 2013, p. XIII)

A concept of social solidarity economy can be connected both to this and to entrepreneurial initiatives in ecological responsibility for “people and the planet” (The Royal Society, 2012; Boyce, 2019). This provides the study of social economy with a broader foundation.

Innovation as Task

Start-ups in the European social economy are credited with offering innovation in addressing social and environmental challenges. One of the tasks of the management of social services and institutions has always been to adapt them to change. To this end, structural changes in the system of care must be initiated. This is different from selected punctual innovations that are introduced by entrepreneurs. For the business world, a social innovation may consist in starting a new activity. In the world of social provision, this means at most a new feature among others without a change in the way the services are provided.

The introduction of social cooperatives in Italy by law in 1991 can be considered an example of real innovation in social economy. It made member-serving organisations thus become central players in the structure of public social provision. An example of addressing community needs is the establishment of multigenerational houses or the networking of formal and informal assistance (for people in need of care or for young people and families) in the nearby social space. Bringing participants and stakeholders together and guiding their cooperation requires competency in the governance of social care. Business administration skills are not enough.

Commercial companies are introducing social economy innovations into their Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices. From a social perspective, innovation in social economy is social work. It is true that in the services and institutions of social economy, social work is anyway carried out at the micro level in relation to individuals. A structural change that has been brought about can be attributed to macro social work. Innovation does not take place within a facility of social service, but in the institutional scene and structure to which the individual facility belongs. For example, youth welfare services break new ground or interdisciplinary centres and neighbourhood management are set up in social hotspots. The social economy goes beyond the organisational units that are associated with it. New forms and models of task fulfilment can be included in the social economy in accordance with its objectives. They may arise from civic engagement or self-help initiatives. Their intention and their responsibility are change in individual and collective life.

The concept of social transformation is key to how organisations in the social and solidarity economy work, and this is, or should be, their central objective. The ideological belief which affirms that economic growth is enough to grant humans their full dignity must be challenged. It is also essential to develop thought and action which allow us to navigate in an increasingly globalized world, working to build a more inclusive and fairer society. (Meredith et al., 2015, p. 7.5)

The social economy makes its contribution to social cohesion and social and economic welfare (and on global level, to the UN Sustainable Development Goals) in the household of the general community. Within this household, the social economy is part of the diverse economic units that have a social and ecological effect and are mostly adjusted to the needs of personal households. It is in this multi-sided frame

of reference that innovation in collective welfare occurs. Study, research, and development in the social economy take place in this broad frame of reference.

A conceptual orientation of human services towards the *production of welfare* allows the inclusion of the whole range of formal and informal provision and promotion activities. They are a response to the climate crisis as well as to educational deficiencies, to deprivation as well as to health risks. Welfare and welfare production are concerned with all this. What needs to be studied at least as thoroughly as the patterns of production is what the welfare of people and common life consists of and how it can be cared for and achieved.

Implications for the Educational Programme

The strategy of feminist economics “take[s] back the economy” (Gibson-Graham et al., 2013), and its view that “economy is care” (Praetorius, 2015) is all the more true for the social economy in the broad sense in which Joan Tronto defined caring as „*a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our ,world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web*” (Fisher & Tronto, 1990, p. 40). The ecosocial approach (Wendt, 2021) agrees with this in its focus on life-sustaining common householding. Within its framework, the commitment and dispositions of persons in care for themselves and the social commitment and dispositions of caring institutions and civil activities are situated in an order of publicly regulated solidarity. According to the ecosocial approach, the strategy of teaching for the social economy should take as its point of departure with the needs of people and society and should focus on the ways in which these needs can be met. The formats of organising social provision in cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, nonprofit and public services, private sector start-ups or public-private partnership as well as the legal status and funding of all these social economy entities can then be discussed. Its activities also include environmentally related projects. The social economy as householding focuses on sustainability and implies working socially and economically for “people and the planet”.

On the learning path, a gap can be closed between the local help in the care for people and the general care for the support of life on earth. Every individual and their conduct of life are affected by the ecological crisis, and at the micro level, care must adapt to the impact of global problems. Therefore, the range of tasks and the sphere of actors’ impact in the social economy extends to both ends. Local conditions change under the influence of supraregional developments. If a social start-up is committed to disabled people, it has to deal with the conditions for the addressees in the social area, such as the housing situation, the work situation, or the transport infrastructure. In the digital age, the information technology equipment is likewise important. In all contexts, the start-up encounters responsible authorities, parties,

and other contributing actors. Networking is essential. The study of social economy delves deep into societal conditions and their ecosystem.

The concept of social work management corresponds to the dimensioning of social economy. It covers, at the micro level, the guidance of individuals' conduct of life in their household, the management of collective action inside and outside organisations, and at the meso level, the management of businesses in their operations. In addition, it covers management of networked and integrated service provision as well as social work management at the macro level of public relations. With regard to the structuring of social provision and the search for answers to societal challenges, it can also act as innovation management. In social work, the reference to the neediness of individuals and groups of people remains central. They are the primary stakeholders in the management of social work at every level of its mission.

In pursuit of their professional goals, social workers can be autonomous entrepreneurs in the sense that they make it their business to perform tasks for a person or the community. For the US nonprofit industry, it was recommended that social workers "stand up and embrace the straightforward business sense found in social entrepreneurship, essentially a hybrid phenomenon of social work macro practice principles and business innovation activities" (Germak & Singh, 2009, p. 79). In countries like Germany, the macro practice of social work takes place in other structures, where the conditions for change work are different.

Stewardship as Competence

In German, the qualification of professionals for the occupational field concerned with provision of social care is referred to by the title "*Wirt*". For example, a business economist is called "*Betriebswirt*". A "*Verwaltungswirt*" has a degree in public administration. In common parlance, a household manager, a host, or a landlord are each a *Wirt*. They preside over a *Wirtschaft* (as a domestic establishment, an inn, or a public house). This term corresponds to the ancient Greek *oikonomia*. In the conception of the ecosocial approach in the social work theory (Wendt, 2018), it is appropriate to refer to the competent agent in the social household as its *Wirt* or *steward*. In social work, a steward acts for the well-being of people by assuming his or her responsibility for the common and personal assets (Wendt, 2021, p. 69). In the social economy, a manager bears a similar responsibility at the organisational level.

Social stewardship can be understood as a mandate given to social work management for caring for people in social work. Caring takes place in a common household; stewardship is where the responsibility for the resources, capabilities, and arrangements in it is borne. A *Wirt* or steward acts in the well-considered and long-term interest of the stakeholders and the common household. Those who belong to it must share the responsibility. As of now, the contexts of application of the concept of stewardship range from personal households to the global household of life on our planet. There are discussions of health stewardship, nursing stewardship (Milton,

2014), urban stewardship (Fisher et al., 2015), ecological stewardship, and earth stewardship (Chapin et al., 2011). In the corporate sector, large industrial companies are now also re-interpreting their corporate social responsibility as social stewardship.

The concept of stewardship gives an ethical spin to management: Where should it lead locally and globally? Safe and just living conditions are to be striven for and maintained. A social steward stands up for sustainable liveable or hospitable (*wirtliche*) conditions. These conditions are sought for all stakeholders: the clients of a social service, the staff in the service operation, and the wider community. In social work management, action must be taken in accordance with the values shared by the stakeholders. This does not mean individual but, rather, common values. Social work realises them in case management, group work, or community work, the social economy in its organisations, and a social enterprise in its field of business. Stewardship is thus a fundamental attitude to learn in the study of social work management.

Conclusion

Social work administration and management of care can be based on a variety of forms of self-care, community care, social service provision, social economy organisations, social enterprises, and civic engagement. Beyond maintaining the operation and execution of person-centred social work tasks, social work management is needed in the design of the social economy at the meso and macro levels of social provision. New structural arrangements need to be made in which formally organised professional services are combined with people's own efforts and cooperation in forms of local communities of care.

Care is far-reaching and comprehensive, and an application-oriented education in social work management should likewise be wide-ranging. In line with the general quest for sustainability, the social economy is expanding its services to "people and the planet". Social work and its management can follow this expansion and undergo an ecological transition. For this transition, the study programme has to focus on how global life contexts influence life contexts at the individual level and how both challenge innovative social and economic action.

From the perspective of social work, the social economy is an area of common care, partly self-organised if needed, partly non-statutory or publicly owned, also offered commercially and often in hybrid structures. The structural change in social provision requires a new conceptualisation of the social economy and thus a novel conceptual framework of education for it that is different from the one used so far. For the road ahead, it seems appropriate to include the broad social, ecological, and economic aspects of sustainable welfare production in an enhanced management curriculum.

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Chapter 6

Introducing Creativity into Social Work Managers' Curricula: Conceptual and Practical Aspects



Luca Fazzi

Abstract Creativity is defined as generating new ideas, solutions or processes in order to tackle problems and address the new challenges of a context. The advent of New Public Management and neoliberal policies has increased the pressure on social work managers to develop skills in cost control and efficient service management. However, the evolving social needs, technological changes and service supply also require the ability to generate new ideas and elaborate original solutions to problems. Recognizing that creativity is a central component of the profession entails introducing into the curricula of social work managers conceptual elements and teaching practices that reinforce such competence. The chapter intends to develop this topic, firstly by addressing the question of what creativity is. Then discussed are the reasons for designing teaching programs intended to strengthen the creative skills of social workers. The following sections deal with the issues of teaching creativity. The conclusion of the chapter is that creative skills must form an integral part of the curriculum of future social work managers, and that this constitutes a very important challenge for future research on social work management education.

Creativity, Social Work, and Social Work Management Education

The term creativity is often used as a synonym for innovation. Although both concepts are part of a single process, they are not the same thing. Innovation means putting new ideas into practice, while creativity deals with producing new and original ideas in order to solve problems (Amabile & Pratt, 2016).

Creativity is a fundamental element for social work management. Today, the so-called Human services organizations (HSO) are confronted with rapidly evolving

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problems that require innovating services and imagining new solutions to face change (Lavalette, 2019; Nissen, 2020).

With the spread of managerialism and evidence-based practices, there has been a strong push in Western countries towards making the profession more technical (Reisch & Jani, 2012; Beddoe & Keddel, 2016; Munro, 2019). Social work managers have experienced a dramatic increase in administrative and accounting responsibilities and have had to work to improve productivity and standard service procedures (Harlow, 2003; Harris, 2003; Kirkpatrick et al., 2005). Several studies show that both social workers and social work managers have been particularly influenced by the principles of New Public Management (NPM) (Healy, 2009; Swift et al., 2016). Some authors suggest that the success of NPM derives from the belief that compliance with procedures and standards guarantees the principles of fairness and impartiality, which are typical of social work (Sullivan, 2009). Other studies point out that social work managers are more vulnerable to the influence of NPM due to the lack of basic technical education as well as to the weak professional identity of social workers (Rogowski, 2011).

Among the effects of consolidating new managerial cultures inspired by NPM is the fact that social worker managers tend to privilege the operational dimension and compliance with procedures on the search for creative solutions to social problems (Shanks et al., 2014). However, underestimating creativity may impede effective management. Many social problems arise in a new form and require innovative solutions as compared to the past. For example, the new flows of migrants require actions that are different from those aimed at the indigenous poor. The forms of social exclusion multiply and must be addressed in connection with the concrete situations in which they occur. Families assume new models and face new challenges in order to protect minors, etc. These changes require constant attention when assessing the adequacy of interventions. Moreover, one may also have to think of new interventions and innovate the established practices where necessary.

The need to integrate creative and ideational skills into the professional background of social work managers has important implications for social work management education. In the current historical context, acquiring technical skills, which are typical of traditional management, is certainly necessary when taking on the role of social work manager. At the same time, however, widening one's curriculum with pedagogies that encourage curiosity, the generation of new ideas and the originality of thought is essential. The challenge of social work management education is to find a balance between the models imported from NPM and business administration that focus on efficiency and productivity with the founding objectives of human services that aim to meet the ever-changing needs of weaker individuals (Hasenfeld 2015; Gardner, 2019).

Creativity and Generation of New Ideas

Creativity implies the generation of new ideas. Research shows that generating new ideas requires the use of specific cognitive skills (Karwoski et al., 2020). In one of the classic studies on creative thinking, Torrance (1966) shows how, when faced with an open-ended situation, individuals tend to respond in different ways according to four primary cognitive skills: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Fluency refers to the ability to provide many relevant answers to a problem; flexibility refers to the number of categories associated with relevant answers; originality refers to the number of uncommon answers, while elaboration refers to the level of richness and depth of the answers provided. Those with these four skills are more likely to be creative thinkers.

Fluency

Fluency is the ability to produce abundant ideas without reference to their appropriateness for solving the problem. The ability to provide multiple answers refers to the existence and formation of background knowledge by individuals. Many studies show that the production of ideas is based not only on direct experience but also on so-called prior knowledge (De Houwer, 2009).

Prior knowledge makes it possible to represent problems in a complex way by grasping the different facets of a given phenomenon. One issue to be addressed when talking about creativity in social work management, certainly from this point of view, concerns students' education in the climate of managerialism. The main concern of NPM-based educational approaches is to provide students with technical and applicative skills in rational work organization, budget control and administration. Narrowing the work's focus to the technical side makes us lose sight of the systemic and political vision of social problems. This inevitably weakens the ability to observe social reality and to find new solutions to problems. It follows that a prerequisite for creative thinking is a solid education based on multidisciplinary and the wealth of knowledge that social workers managers can draw on to carry out their profession.

Flexibility

Flexibility is the ability to change ideational strategy, i.e. move from one succession of ideas to another, from one scheme to another. In order to think flexibly, an essential condition is the ability to make associations. In his classic study of associative elements, Mednick (1962) shows how individuals with low creativity levels are generally guided in their thinking by relatively rigid hierarchies of variables with

limited and largely taken for granted reciprocal links. On the other hand, creative individuals are not conditioned in their thinking by predefined associative hierarchies and can connect phenomena and concepts more freely.

The factors on which the likelihood of an individual producing multiple associations depends are twofold: (i) the amount of knowledge individuals have that depends on the available background knowledge and (ii) the cognitive ease of associating elements with individual concepts. The educational models that value associative thinking are also different from the operations and task-based models prevalent in managerialist approaches. Pask (1976) distinguishes two types of learning in this respect: serial and holistic. Serial learning is based on the acquisition and ability to use appropriate procedures to achieve results. The student must focus on specific topics, construct descriptions related to circumscribed situations, and grasp the procedures and rules most consistent with the cases. The learner moves on to a new area of learning only after the previous one has been adequately assimilated, and this is done primarily through logical operations. On the other hand, holistic learning implies the teaching of analogical thinking, the ability to make generalizations from concrete cases, and the ability to identify the sources of knowledge used in practice. The student is encouraged to describe problems in broad situations, to use images, metaphors, and analogies and to go beyond the task, proposing multiple solutions to individual problems. Pask emphasizes that the distinction between the two types of learning does not mean that one has to take precedence over the other. More pragmatically, it is a matter of enabling students to acquire the tools to use different strategies as appropriate.

Originality

Originality means the ability to produce ideas that did not exist before. Originality is frequently an outcome of fluency and flexibility, although it differs from the two previous skills in one very important characteristic. Fluency and flexibility can lead to the generation of many ideas, but not necessarily original ones. Creativity studies identify three main elements that promote the generation of original ideas: curiosity, encountering different experiences and the willingness / ability to take risks (Scheffer et al., 2017).

Curiosity is an attitude that encourages individuals to not stop at a single solution. Curious individuals are not complacent and are thus more likely to encounter new elements that they can combine with the available ones in an original way (Hagvet et al., 2019). To stimulate the curiosity of ideas, it is first necessary to leave space for students to search for new solutions and reward efforts to find new ways of thinking rather than immediate solutions to problems (Pluck & Johnson, 2011). It is important to discuss topics and propose exercises that capture the students' interest, starting with current topics from which they can form original opinions and

ideas. A pedagogical approach focused on finding the only correct solution to problems is to be avoided.

Encountering diversity is a way to learn to observe phenomena with fresh insight and in an unusual way. Encounters with diversity can be promoted by regular changes in physical, social, and cultural environments, encouraging the search for unusual stimuli. Alternating placements between public and third sector services, organizing meetings with students from other disciplines or encouraging courses in literature and art in the curriculum are strategies aimed at broadening the variety of students' experiences and encouraging encounters with different viewpoints.

Finally, risk-taking is essential in the search for original solutions because originality can appear bizarre or be interpreted as a criticism of the existing. In areas where NPM logic and bureaucratic rules prevail, risk-taking is strongly discouraged as it is seen as a source of error and inefficiency. An attitude of acceptance and respect for original ideas from teachers and supervisors is necessary to increase and encourage risk-taking. The worst disincentive for originality is the social disapproval of new ideas. Risk-taking can also be encouraged by presenting students with challenging situations for which there are no apparent solutions. This type of situation encourages competition between thought patterns and multiple forms of behaviour, giving rise to a mental phenomenon that Epstein (1985) defines as extinction-induced resurgence through which individuals are encouraged to compare old and new experiences constructively.

Elaboration

Elaboration, finally, refers to the ability to formulate answers with a wealth of sensibly connected details. This phase, in particular, highlights that creativity is not a single act but a process to which both generative and evaluative elements contribute (Finke, 1996). Creative individuals combine the ability to imagine new mental models with the ability to evaluate different options and choose the most satisfactory one. The central point highlighted is that creative thinking results from complementarity, not separation, between deduction and intuition. To promote creativity, it is therefore essential that teaching aimed at encouraging imagination is accompanied by support for analytical thinking, a focus on results and consequences, and identification of the appropriateness of solutions to problems. Learning models capable of enhancing analytical thinking skills include those based on reflection on empirical evidence, the guided inquiry model, the model of analytical Thinking Skills Training Process, etcetera. More generally, it is essential that students are offered opportunities to translate new ideas into work objects. The latter should be treated with analytical accuracy and put into practice in a rational way.

Creative Thinking and Social Interaction

There are relatively few cases in which individuals develop creative processes independently, and even when creativity apparently stems from individual intuition, it takes shape within socially constructed processes. Social interaction plays a crucial role in this regard in promoting creativity (Hurst et al., 2013).

In higher education programmes, the interaction aspect often focuses on the relationship between teacher and student. The relationship between teacher and student is essential for stimulating creative thinking. The research shows that in the presence of relationships of trust and collaboration, students' propensity to get involved increases. In addition, the teacher's attitude is crucial for encouraging the student to experiment with new solutions. If the teacher exerts a hierarchical relationship based on monitoring the correct answers, it is extremely difficult for a student to find the courage and motivation to think autonomously and look for non-obvious solutions to problems. To experiment, the student needs positive feedback and the feeling that making mistakes is not a reason for disapproval from the teacher (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Students' social interaction in the classroom group is also a fundamental factor in encouraging and supporting creative thinking.

In the dominant educational models influenced by NPM and neoliberal ideologies, students are personally responsible for their success and their learning. As a consequence, the dimension of collaborative learning is mistrusted and deemed not very functional for the selection of the best students. Such selection must take place through individual objective tests and evaluations.

The individual learning approach underestimates the contribution that can be made to the building of knowledge by groups. The literature shows that promoting group work to solve problems is a particularly effective strategy for generating new ideas. Any comparison with other knowledge and viewpoints makes it possible to put forward new proposals and reformulate existing ones. Several authors show how sharing and building knowledge in group activities encourages the cognitive stimulation that underlies creative thinking (Baruah & Paulus, 2019).

The prerequisite for groups to fulfil their function of supporting creative thinking is collaboration. Collaboration is not something that is achieved simply by putting a few students to work together. For there to be collaboration, it is essential that groups are inclusive, communication is open, and all stances can find space and recognition within them. For some students, engaging in collaborative group work can initially be challenging. Therefore, they must be encouraged and supported in such a way as to enable them to participate productively and actively in group work (Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009). Short preparation sessions for group work are recommended to provide students with skills and psychological security for effective engagement.

In group work, the method of comparing and sharing ideas and solutions to problems has the most significant impact on creativity. Techniques that can effectively promote the exchange and sharing of new ideas within groups are classic verbal brainstorming and brainwriting, which consists of sharing one's ideas after writing them down (Paulus & Nijstad, 2003). Brainwriting can also be used as a working technique on electronic platforms and is therefore also an extremely flexible tool for distance education. The teacher's task is to provide groups with exercises and problems that stimulate the search for new ideas and the identification of original solutions to problems. Group work is also an excellent strategy to encourage students towards research, skills that are often seen as less important to acquire than practical ones. Cooperative learning, in particular, promotes the ability to tackle and solve problems and is an integral part of social work education aimed at acquiring creative skills (Garrett, 1998).

The third type of social interaction essential for stimulating creativity concerns the relationships students are encouraged to have outside the institutional learning context. The literature on creativity has shown the importance of distinguishing between communication within an institutional context and communication that is also open to the outside world. Many researchers consider outward communication as the main predictor of the level of creativity in teamwork (Reiter-Palmon et al., 2012).

There are two reasons why external communication is essential. On the one hand, information may come from outside that the group's internal members do not possess. Secondly, external parties can provide support for testing any new ideas by providing resources, space, or contacts to turn projects into practice.

For social work management education, encouraging open forms of interaction outside the institutional context of the classroom means devising innovative forms of teaching that allow students to come into contact with people other than their classmates or teachers. For example, it may be essential to organize meetings between students and managers of HSO, advocacy associations, user organizations or clients outside the classroom.

It is equally relevant to devise research and observation activities that engage students in relating to different community members to extend their ability to understand social problems and behaviour and incorporate new views and knowledge.

Some authors highlight how socialization to dialogue and openness to external subjects is a prerequisite for implementing the concept of co-creation – also called co-production –, which is considered in the debate as a fundamental element of the innovation of public interest services (Osborne et al., 2016). Learning to be creative by comparing oneself with different subjects is important in this perspective as it increases the sensitivity towards the collaboration among future social work managers when looking for new and original solutions to problems.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

According to several authors, being creative is easier for critically thinking individuals (Padget, 2013). In general terms, creativity is associated with generating ideas, while critical thinking can be described as a reflective and argumentative practice aimed at establishing what is acceptable and what is not (Celuch et al., 2009). Despite these conceptual differences, the two concepts are difficult to separate in practice. Creativity requires not only the generation of new ideas but also a certain amount of critical thinking (Fryer, 2012).

Critical thinking is also an aspect that recent welfare reforms and the spread of NPM have questioned (McDonald et al., 2008). The idea that the educational pathways of social work management education must provide specialized preparation in order to be able to respond to the pressures towards rationalization and efficient management of services may overshadow the need to provide students with the ability to critically reflect on the social, cultural, and political aspects of the new welfare policies.

The call to critical thinking is part of the tradition of Critical Management Education studies, which underline the following:

- (i) management education should address issues that are technical, ethical, and moral at the same time;
- (ii) the students' interest should be directed not only towards the management of the means but also towards the evaluation of the goals that are influenced by systems of power and ideologies, of which there is often no knowledge;
- (iii) management education must be seen as part of the realization of a more inclusive and democratic design of society (Perriton, 2007).

Critical thinking implies following paths other than the tried and tested ones. However, this can be difficult for two main reasons. First of all, individuals are cognitively bound to established patterns. Established routines and habits provide security and reduce the stress and anxiety of constantly having to question behaviour and thought patterns. Leaving things as they are, rather than questioning everything, often seems a more comfortable solution on a psychological level. Therefore, to change what exists, it is necessary to be dissatisfied with the present and take a critical look at established practices. Secondly, creativity is hampered by social and institutional pressures that lead to the stigmatization of new ideas as hostile to groups and organizations. Individuals who are excessively submissive towards norms find it more challenging to think of a reality other than the known one, whereas this appears to be easier for individuals with a greater critical sense.

Critical thinking is, therefore, not a natural predisposition of individuals. Although some individuals may be more prone to criticism, critical thinking is generally a way of thinking that needs to be trained and experienced.

In general, the literature identifies the following cognitive skills required for critical thinking:

- (i) interpretation and understanding
- (ii) the ability to analyse and link concepts
- (iii) the assessment of the legitimacy of different knowledge and arguments
- (iv) the ability to make inferences
- (v) the explanation of the conclusions arrived at through reasoning
- (vi) awareness of the way of reasoning and thinking (Breachin et al., 2000).

Ford et al. (2004) note that these skills do not develop randomly but are linked to the availability of (i) a knowledge base that allows one to critically question oneself and reality; (ii) critical thinking standards; and (iii) strategies for applying critical thinking.

In social work management, the basic knowledge required for critical thinking is made up of various factors: institutions, the logic of social behaviour, power relations between the various parties involved, the economy, culture and, more generally, all the knowledge that enables the problems of everyday work to be placed within a broader framework of meaning. Social work managers' knowledge must enable them to reflect on why certain problems are approached in a certain way, on what ethical and operational principles the organization of services and established professional practices are based, and on what the consequences of different decisions are. A particularly relevant aspect of critical thinking is the ability to incorporate points of view other than professional ones into reflection. For example, the same social problem can be perceived differently by a social worker, an educator, a school principal, an administrative manager, etc.

The experience of so-called clients is also a crucial aspect of the knowledge needed for critical thinking (Gould, 2006). Considering the clients' perspective helps to put the centrality of the point of view of services into perspective and promotes the development of a reflective outlook by putting students in aid recipients' shoes. This is very important because the assumption of a professional role tends to encourage a tacit belief in the validity of the decisions taken. Several observers note in this respect that social workers, like many other professionals, are often reluctant to reconsider their decisions, reluctant to acknowledge mistakes and unwilling to listen to advice and suggestions from 'non-experts' (Munro, 1996; Fazzi, 2019). To strengthen critical thinking, it is therefore essential to introduce skills in the curriculum of social work managers students related to the management of participatory practices that reflect the knowledge and experiences of service recipients and their families or informal carers.

Critical thinking standards are also essential elements of critical thinking. The main characteristics of critical thinking are identified at a general level in the ability to analyse, evaluate, and construct conscious decision making and problem-solving processes (Celuch et al., 2009). Logic, argumentation, accuracy, and linearity of thought are therefore key requirements of critical thinking. Paul (2005) translates these standards into a series of questions that the critical learner must be able to answer: What is the basis of the process by which I arrive at a hypothesis? What are the consequences of my decisions? How can decisions be argued and justified? Why did I choose to follow a particular path of reasoning instead of another? At the heart

of critical thinking skills is the ability to articulate and be aware of the basis for decision making.

The literature provides several suggestions on the most effective strategies for teaching and learning critical thinking standards.

It is widely agreed that critical thinking cannot be the subject of a single course but must essentially characterize the entire curriculum. Some authors recommend introducing work on ethical dilemmas into the curriculum from the first year onwards to encourage students to learn that there are no one-size-fits-all answers to different problems and that critical thinking is indispensable for weighing up the pros and cons of different decisions (Mumm & Kersting, 1997). In general, what is suggested is to teach students to analyse problems, making the rational process followed to arrive at solution hypotheses visible. This includes, first of all, carrying out exercises aimed at identifying and reflecting on errors in reasoning and the influence of prejudices on decisions. Social work management education programs need to emphasize an attitude of acceptance of the possibility of making mistakes. One of the biggest obstacles to learning from mistakes is the so-called ‘blame culture’ (Sicora, 2019). Blame culture discourages students from acknowledging their mistakes for fear of disapproval from teachers and peers. Without the ability and peace of mind to recognize mistakes, there is a risk of training professionals who prioritize task performance over analysis based on reasoning and reflection. Therefore, relationships between teachers and students must be based on trust and active collaboration and less on a hierarchical and prescriptive approach (Loyens & Gijbels, 2008).

Positive effects on students’ critical thinking skills also result from the use of teaching strategies based on concept maps and problem-solving (Behar & Lian, 2011). Such strategies improve the ability to formulate hypotheses, develop an argumentative logic, and encourage students’ construction of a critical identity. Other strategies considered effective in stimulating and developing critical thinking are approaches based on case studies discussed in groups, class debates and inquiry-based learning (Richardson & Ice, 2010).

In general, the more educational programs reinforce critical thinking, the greater the chances of students identifying the criticality of established ways of working and thinking of new and alternative solutions.

Creativity and Motivation

Motivation is a crucial element in any form of thinking. Motivation can be conceived as a set of inner forces that sustain the direction, intensity, and persistence of both acting and thinking (Pinder, 2008). Research has shown that commitment to a task for the pleasure of completing it is an essential requirement of creativity (Joy, 2017).

Generally, this characteristic of motivation for creativity is referred to as intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivations differ from the more classical extrinsic motivations. Extrinsic motivation is based on the principle that commitment to a task can

be incentivized through rewards or sanctions. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation is based on the satisfaction one gets from performing a rewarding task in itself.

Several studies have shown that extrinsic and intrinsic motivations are not mutually exclusive, but the latter is much more important than the former for promoting and sustaining creativity (Hennessey, 2015). Intrinsic motivations support greater involvement in learning and encourage engagement in more complex tasks that allow a feeling of greater competence. Intrinsically motivated students also show a higher propensity to not abandon the tasks they have undertaken, despite the difficulties that such commitments may entail (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002). Other studies show that intrinsic motivation gives students an incentive to seek new learning challenges and new solutions to problems (Harun et al., 2012).

It follows that when intrinsic motivations are enhanced, incentives for creativity increase. If intrinsic motivations are underestimated, the risk is that the opposite will happen.

By emphasizing intrinsic motivations for learning, educational processes can play a decisive role in encouraging or discouraging creative thinking. The evolution of contemporary educational processes is strongly focused on efficiency and standardization. Pursuing the goal of efficiency means educating students on the idea that there is only one optimal solution for every problem and that professional skills consist of knowing how to identify and apply this solution. If it is taught that there is only one valid answer for every problem, the intrinsic motivation to learn may inevitably be compromised. Elements such as curiosity, the pleasure of solving a problem in an original way, and the satisfaction of learning according to one's own interests in an efficiency-centred learning model are diminished, which can have detrimental consequences on creativity motivation.

Learning based on intrinsic motivation requires what Barr and Tagg (1995) called new learning paradigms.

Learning paradigms focus on students' learning processes rather than on institutional learning objectives. The central feature of these processes is to encourage a genuine interest among students to ask questions and not to have to meet only pre-defined performance levels.

Students' expectations and abilities must be placed accordingly at the forefront to build lessons based on topics that can arouse their interest. Current affairs can often be the starting point for drawing students' attention to topics that, when presented only in an abstract way, risk appearing unattractive. Students who want to explore topics of their interest in more depth usually engage more in learning and reinforce their motivation to explore new solutions to the problems analysed.

Creativity through the support of intrinsic motivation can also be encouraged by organizing activities that require students to formulate alternative hypotheses of action to the traditional ones based on their own ideas and skills. According to several researchers, it is precisely 'possibility thinking' that constitutes one of the main characteristics of creativity (Craft, 2003). Encouraging people to come up with new ideas sends the message that independent thinking is an indispensable asset in a student's learning journey and helps them overcome the fear of making mistakes and being stigmatized for it. The role of the teacher or supervisor, rather than

directing towards the right solutions to individual problems, is therefore to stimulate students to ask new questions, which can be used as a tool to assess learning.

Contrary to what one might imagine, students' ability to ask questions is an adequate criterion for assessing learning. The quality of the questions is an indication of background knowledge, reflective capacity, commitment to study and level of subject knowledge. This can be assessed by checking the correct answers and appropriately and competently questioning the problems.

An essential aspect of encouraging intrinsic motivation is the emotional and social learning environment. Intrinsic motivations are closely linked to emotions and feelings of well-being. Therefore, a learning environment in which one enjoys challenging oneself is an essential prerequisite for intrinsic motivation (Fortune et al., 2005). A positive learning climate is achieved when students feel accepted and supported in the learning process by the teacher and their peers. Learning outcomes should be emphasized and not taken for granted, and appreciation of effort is essential regardless of the results achieved. Learning should be a pleasure for the students, and the teacher's task is to find the topics that interest the students and ways to make these topics understandable and usable as a basis for the development of new ideas by the students.

Educational Programs, Professional Identity and Creativity

Empirical research has shown how the political context significantly influences the identity development of professional social workers (Hill et al., 2017). Several authors have highlighted how the rise of neo-liberal ideologies and welfare transformations are producing a profound change in the role and identity of social workers. In general, there is a growing consensus that moral reflexivity is being replaced, especially among the younger generation of professionals, by technical-rational practice (Tabin & Perriard, 2016). This outcome is encouraged by several long-term processes. Firstly, a large body of literature has revealed a marked reduction of interest in the structural foundations of social problems and a consequent depoliticization of social work (Marston & McDonald, 2012).

Secondly, there is a growing acceptance of welfare conditionality and the idea that access to services depends on the responsible behaviour of beneficiaries (Harrison & Sanders, 2014). The responsibility for changing the conditions of social exclusion belongs to individuals and not to the institutions responsible for their care. Thirdly, some authors describe the recent evolution of social work as a process of professional box-ticking (Gillingham, 2011) that privileges the acquisition of technical skills to solve individual problems through relationships between professional and client, over a broader knowledge capable of generating processes of collective and systemic analysis and response to problems.

In this context, social work's constituent aims are being strongly questioned, and social work managers themselves are experiencing a profound identity crisis. What should social work managers do? Is their function one of social control and

performance of technical tasks, or is the tension towards social change and the search for transformative answers to social needs still central?

Several authors highlight that promoting creativity implies putting the meaning of social work and professional identity back at the centre of educational program agendas (Fazzi, 2016; Fenton, 2019). Social work is a discipline aimed at affirming the values of social justice, inclusion, and social rights. In order to pursue such values, one must internalize the idea that social work is a profession and an area of activity that implies a tension towards changing the conditions that hinder the realization of its founding goals. Several studies indicate how the role of social work manager leads to a strong tension between the reference to the values of the profession and the requests and commitments connected to the rational and efficient organization of services (Carey, 2008). NPM discourse in the identity of social work managers is so pervasive that it influences not only thoughts but also feelings, self-esteem and sense of self (Davies et al., 2005).

The focus on change as a key element of professional identity, even in a framework of compromises and tensions, must however be maintained to fuel the ideal drive towards creativity. Only by assuming creativity as an identity element is it possible to reconcile the contradictory drives and the multiple tasks that social work managers have to carry out in the current historical phase. Aronson and Smith (2011) mention 'multiple performances' precisely to underline the importance for social work managers to develop a complex and flexible identity capable of incorporating different and potentially contradictory professional aspects and making them coexist.

The consequence on social work management education programs is the need to continue to make students reflect on the social work values. This can be done through various techniques. For example, students may be asked to solve specific technical and organizational problems by evaluating the consequences of different decisions on professional identity. Alternatively, exercises can be proposed that are aimed at reasoning about the relationship between words used in practice and professional identity. Words such as planning, budget or efficiency should not be the only terms used when referring to the organisation of a women's shelter. By forgetting to use the terms that identify the values of the profession – such as protection of the weak, activism, justice – students risk losing the ability to think about the connection between practice and values and to neglect the identity aspects of their educational path.

The process of identity development and the awareness of social work principles follow the process proposed by Tseng (2011) by implementing these techniques. Initially, the process provides the application of the knowledge acquired in the theory. Then, it provides understanding and reflection on the practical application of theoretical knowledge in terms of values. Finally, a specific professional identity is identified and internalized.

Teachers should be able to accompany this process consciously and competently, including in their tasks the support for developing a professional identity that incorporates the value of change and the search for original and adequate solutions to the complexity of social problems (Ben Shlomo et al., 2012).

Conclusions

Contemporary social economic and political changes have a profound impact on the challenges of social work (Eurich & Langer, 2014). New needs, fewer resources and new technologies require social work managers to improve their skills. On the one hand, they need to increase their administrative and accounting management skills and develop skills to better organize service provision. On the other hand, they must generate new ideas and identify original solutions to problems. The literature highlights how teaching plays an important role both in fostering a positive attitude towards creativity among students and in providing skills to generate new ideas.

To promote creativity learning, it is important to design curricula and educational paths that lead to considering that creativity is a generalized attitude of responding to problems. Kaufman and Sternberg (2007) speak of ‘habit’ in this regard to emphasize that creativity must become a cross-curricular attitude of students and be part of their mindset regardless of the task required of them, which may concern both their professional role and their personal life.

Many creativity teaching techniques can also be recovered in social work management education from existing educational experiences in the field of strategic management or business innovation management. Others need to be developed and tested by considering the particularity of social work and HSO values and goals. This means that future research on social work education should be increasingly oriented towards creativity in order to make use of existing successful educational experiences and to test and develop new ones.

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Chapter 7

Ethics as a Frame to Encompass Complexities: Interdisciplinarity and Resonance in Teaching and Learning in Social Work Sciences and Social Work Management



Markus Andrä

Abstract Teaching and learning in social work management is an interdisciplinary endeavour. Social work sciences refer to interrelated scientific perspectives of disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, or economics. Social work management is part of programmes in social work sciences and is, therefore, embedded in the wider context of this scientific discipline. This positioning is furthermore problematic as economic thinking is closely associated with neo-liberalism. Neo-liberal strategies are a common target of critique in social work sciences. Ethical thinking can be a resource to cope with this challenging interdisciplinarity of social work and social work management. Ethics pervades all related areas of the discipline and social work management as well. Normative guidelines for professional actions with service users and in management positions cannot be applied practically in a deterministic manner but only as a result of a critical, reflective, and dialogical discourse of practitioners and leaders of social institutions. The Theory of Interaction Ritual Chains and the idea of Resonance as a relationship to the world offer a theoretical basis from which we can develop practical didactic means to make the study programme an exciting journey from theory to professional attitude, from management of ethics to ethical management.

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Introduction

The constant use of the term ‘interdisciplinarity’ as just another buzzword like, for example, ‘democracy’, ‘participation’ or ‘inclusion’ should make us doubtful and even more committed to define it comprehensively:

As a programmatic term in higher education policy and a general term in the theory of science, interdisciplinarity refers to the diverse forms of cross-subject and cross-disciplinary cooperation in teaching and research in which mutual benefit and equality can be achieved through dialogical exchange. From an etymological perspective, the term implies a process of work and reflection that operates between (lat. inter) – and not above or even independently of – disciplines (lat. disciplinae). [...] Semantically as well as conceptually, interdisciplinarity thus implies that a discipline is an established individual science defined within its boundaries (Philipp, 2021, p. 163, translation by the author).

But what does this mean specifically for the affiliation of the author of this book chapter? University programmes in Social Work include not just the basic theories of the discipline but perspectives from many other related disciplines, e. g. philosophy, anthropology, sociology or psychology. Speaking metaphorically, no scientific discipline works exclusively in its own field and yields its own fruit. Social work, however, appears to harvest fruit related to those in other disciplinary fields so often that its own crops are barely accepted as a genuine result of autonomous intellectual endeavours.

An example will illustrate this. A highly popular theoretical approach in the German-speaking discourse of the discipline of social work is the concept of “coping with life” introduced by the scholar Lothar Böhnisch (2017; Böhnisch & Schröer, 2017). Böhnisch tries to capture the micro, meso and macro dimensions of the individual’s struggle to keep their own agentic opportunities in balance with social relatedness. His ideas rely on a wide range of influences from sociology, psychology, and economy, such as Ulrich Beck, Donald Winnicott, Pierre Bourdieu or Ingeborg Nahnsen (Böhnisch, 2017, pp. 25ff.).

Furthermore, this challenging interdisciplinarity is increased by the inclusion of social work management perspectives into the study programme. Evidence-based and market- or profit-oriented thinking seems to be in direct contrast to the normative claims of social work. The so-called „managerialism“ (Hughes & Wearing, 2017, p. 20), which has spread since the 1980s, appears to be devoid of content in the sense of the normative claims of social work. However, it can be argued with Herzka (2019, pp. 142ff.) that social work management can also be thought beyond an ideology of profit maximization. But even then, economic considerations remain meta-theoretically rooted in positivism, which is a perspective in the philosophy of science that is widely unpopular with scholars in social work sciences who follow other approaches, namely critical or deontological thinking as well as hermeneutic, phenomenological, systemic, and constructivist perspectives (Engelke et al., 2016, pp. 162ff.). So, the question remains how an economic perspective can be integrated into the discipline and how the notion of interdisciplinarity could be integrated into the teaching and learning in higher education??

In this chapter, the author proposes ethics as a framework for the interdisciplinarity of social work and social work management as it is a dimension that pervades all the related areas of the scientific discipline. Based on this basic assumption, a theoretical perspective on teaching and learning is introduced. Then, this rationale will be used as a starting point for ideas on how to practically deal with the interdisciplinary complexities in the field of social work sciences. Finally, examples from the author's own practice of teaching ethical thinking will be introduced and discussed.

Social Work Management Seen from a Viewpoint of Ethical Thinking

The practice of social work and social work management is inevitably entangled in moral claims. Social work concerns the human individual as a fragile being whose dignity and self-respect depend on the recognition by others (Honneth, 2018). Therefore, in theory and practice, it is constantly confronted with questions about the ethical justification of its helping action. This makes social work – more than any other scientific discipline – to an applied ethics. Social work organisations can therefore be seen as “companies of morality” (Herzka, 2019, p. 224). These institutions and their leaders are always confronted with very high expectations, on the one hand by the surrounding society and on the other by the employees as well. Here, it should be clarified firstly how this challenge affects social work management and especially professionals in management positions in social organisations.

Social work organisations can be seen as “multiple organisations” (Herzka, 2019, p. 220, in reference to Anheier, 2000). Social workers and especially persons in leading positions must consider the expectations of very different groups, such as the clients and service users, the funders of the service (mostly taxpayers), the professional social workers and sometimes volunteering supporters, the superordinate management, and other stakeholders like the collaborating organisations, politicians, or the media. Evers and Ewert (2010, pp. 109ff.) speak of “hybrid organisations” that comprise aspects of state and market as well as those of third sector and community. All these fields follow another basic logic that needs to be addressed. Therefore, Rüegg-Stürm et al. (2015, pp. 4ff.) describe those organisations as “multirational”.

Considering these complexities, a management position in a social work organisation means not just being accountable in economic terms but in ethical ones as well and thereby facing very different groups. Leaders in such organisations have a moral responsibility for their professional action and will be held accountable for it. The ethics of leadership or management involve at least two dimensions. Firstly, they concern the policy of the organisation itself as ‘management of ethics’: do ethical guidelines, e. g. so-called ‘mission statements’ (see Görl-Rottstädt et al., Chap. 15 in this volume) for the employees exist, are they internalised by those as a professional attitude and applied in practice? The second dimension concerns the leaders

and managers directly. Their actions have a strong and widely noticeable impact on the organisation and its members and will be judged according to the postulated standards. Therefore, they themselves need ethical principles ('ethical management') as guidelines for their actions, especially in conflicting situations (Herzka, 2019, pp. 223f.). In other words, there is always an abstract and institutional as well as a very concrete and personal dimension of ethics. On both dimensions, deontic and virtue aspects are addressed (Schmid Noerr, 2018, pp. 64ff.).

As can be seen, social work and social work management need an ethical foundation. Ethics offers a framework that can encompass the challenging interdisciplinarity described at the beginning and has a bearing on all the related areas of the scientific discipline. In the following, this ethical dimension of social work will be expanded and substantiated.

Ethical Thinking as an Integrating Framework for the Discipline of Social Work Sciences and Social Work Management

To describe the conflicting influences under which social workers act, Silvia Staub-Bernasconi (2016) introduced the so-called 'triple mandate'. In addition to the mandate of the service users and that of the state for help and control, it includes a professional mandate for a human rights-oriented social work. This third professional mandate has two essential foundations: on the one hand, it includes theory-based explanations for social issues that can be verified according to scientific criteria and on the other hand, it has its own ethical foundation entrenched in international and national codes of ethics that are oriented towards human rights and social justice. For that reason, social work is often referred to as a '*human rights profession*' (Muckenfuss, 2020, pp. 188 f.).

This human rights tradition in social work can be traced back to the feminist pioneers of the discipline:

It is well to remind ourselves from time to time that 'Ethics' is but another word for 'righteousness', that for which many men and women of every generation have hungered and thirsted and without which life becomes meaningless (Jane Addams, 1902, p. 1).

Here, a first ethical and in that case deontological foundation of social work becomes visible. Down to the present day, reference to the human rights has remained an essential part of the principles of action in social work and can be found in the 'Statement of Ethical Principles of the International Federation of Social Workers':

1. Recognition of the Inherent Dignity of Humanity

Social workers recognize and respect the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings in attitude, word, and deed. We respect all persons, but we challenge beliefs and actions of those persons who devalue or stigmatize themselves or other persons.

2. Promoting Human Rights

Social workers embrace and promote the fundamental and inalienable rights of all human beings. Social work is based on respect for the inherent worth, dignity of all people and the individual and social /civil rights that follow from this. Social workers often work with people to find an appropriate balance between competing human rights. (International Federation of Social Workers, 2018)

However, this positioning raises the question of the justification of human dignity and the legitimization of human rights. One possible answer is the characterisation of the human being as vulnerable and basically dependent on the satisfaction of needs. In other words, needs are ontological determinants of human beings. A dignified life is impossible when an individual cannot satisfy them. The basis for satisfying these needs is first and foremost the integration into social systems. Therefore, human dignity is a social dimension, as the German author Şeyda Kurt (2021) puts it:

Dignity is given to me by society. It is a social category that arises and is realised in interaction with people and institutions. Likewise, self-respect is an experience that I get in exchange with my social environment and that allows me to see myself as an equal and dignified person (pp. 179f., translation by the author).

Based on this image of the human being, human rights form a guideline for living conditions that guarantee the social integration and the satisfaction of the needs of any individual: “The core of a dignified life is the opportunity to satisfy human needs” (Muckenfuss, 2020, p. 186, translation by the author).

Deontological codes of ethics, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the ethical principles of the International Federation of Social Workers, are important signposts that provide orientation for social workers. However, their practice creates dilemmatic situations and is always influenced by societal constraints. It is therefore often impossible to implement their principles in a deterministic manner. This is all the more true for leaders in social organisations. Therefore, social workers need not only normative guidelines, but also applied ethics to negotiate ethical conflicts (Hughes & Wearing, 2017, p. 193).

In his *Perspektiven theologischer Ethik* ([Perspectives on theological ethics] 1988), the German theologian Heinz Eduard Tödt (1918–1991) introduced a step-by-step procedure for an applied ethics. It starts with the identification of the problem: what is the ethical challenge in that case? Questions that guide the process of understanding are developed. Then, the situation is analysed: what is the origin of the problem? What are the relevant influences on the problem? What kind of relationships exists between these factors? Who is involved? Who is privileged and who is rather marginalised? The next step is a discourse about alternative courses of action: which solutions are suggested? Who suggests them and why? What are the motives, goals, means, and consequences of these potential solutions?

Now, the ethical norms behind the possible solutions are explicated and evaluated: are these principles of practice appropriate to justify the decision? Which principles come from one’s own ethical tradition? Which of these norms can be regarded as justified and binding? Which norms have priority as compared to others? A decision follows: a course of action is selected. What are its social and technical consequences? Does one accept these consequences? A retrospective reflexion concludes

the process: ethical judgments must be continuously evaluated, as the contextual conditions change continuously (Tödt, 1988, pp. 29ff.; Heckmann, 2016, pp. 24ff.).

So far, it should have become clear that the competence of social workers can comprise not only theoretical knowledge but also a special ethical attitude. Of course, applied ethics can be described in a list of subsequent steps of action as seen above. However, this list would become just another normative code if these considerations were not also expressed practically as a certain personal attitude that has an impact on any interpersonal encounter. This attitude can be described with the adjectives ‘critical’, ‘reflexive’ and ‘dialogical’ (Herzka, 2019, p. 227; Hughes & Wearing, 2017, pp. 200ff.).

This critical, reflexive, and dialogical attitude can be based on postmodern or, better, post-structuralist ideas. Scholars like the French philosopher and sociologist Michel Foucault (2007) have emphasised that there is no truth as such but, rather, it always is an interplay between knowledge that becomes truth and subsequently power for the individual who is entitled to speak this ‘truth’. As Foucault (2007, p. 47) puts it: „I will say that critique is the movement by which the subject gives himself the right to question truth on its effect of power and question power on its discourses of truth“.

Therefore, being critical and reflexive means to define the position from which we speak and thereby to question the truth we create when we speak. Sellick et al. (2002, pp. 496f.) propose a list of questions to unveil the otherwise hidden relationship between truth and power:

- What frames of mind am I bringing to this situation?
- What am I taking to be the facts of this situation?
- Why did I orient to these particular facts rather than others?
- What am I not seeing in this situation?
- Would someone whose gender, social location, professional indoctrination or culture is different from mine orient differently to this situation?
- Where did I learn this ‘way of looking’?
- Whose voice is being exercised in this knowledge? Is it mine, or someone else’s?
- What are the cultural, gender or epistemic biases implicit in this way of looking?
- Is my own experience represented in this knowledge?
- Is there some personal experience which is silenced by this knowledge?
- Do I recognize myself and my experience in this way of speaking my knowledge?

This critical reflexivity can be found in other sources as well. Professional action should be considered as ‘working in uncertainty’ (Rabe-Kleeberg, 1999, cited in Nentwig-Gesemann et al., 2011, p. 9). One’s own assumptions must be questioned repeatedly. That means reflecting instead of applying fixed (well-meant theoretical) recipes while at the same time negotiating a certain (deontological) ethics with an applied strategy as introduced above.

Coming from a transcultural perspective of the pedagogy of migration, Paul Mecheril (2010, pp. 96f.) describes a similar strategy for being critical and reflexive. He calls it the ‘attitude of not knowing’: The *intercultural* recognition of other in the sense of a ‘culturalism’ must fail due to the complexity of pedagogical situations.

That's why social workers need to interlink understanding and non-understanding. They can recognize others as 'others' in terms of their culture but should avoid prioritising interpretations in accordance with their own assumptions, which mostly consist of a restrictive, defining, and therefore violent (and very often colonial) 'knowledge of others'.

So far, the dialogical aspect of the professional attitude has only been expressed implicitly. It goes far beyond a critical self-reflection. The formation of ethical judgments is, in principle, an incomplete and ongoing discourse with many different protagonists. The participants of this discourse are challenged not only to raise their own voices but also to let others have their say and to listen to their arguments (Hughes & Wearing, 2017, p. 197). Therefore, we need to amend – or re-interpret – the deontological foundation introduced above with a further dimension that is already included in the idea of human dignity as a social category. The philosopher Martin Buber (2019, pp. 9ff.) described the highest quality of the human existence as a dialogical encounter with others without any objectification. He calls this quality 'I-Thou' whereas the position of 'I-It' means to measure someone else as an individual experience without any dialogical relation:

The world has no part in the experience. It permits itself to be experienced but has no concern in the matter. For it does nothing to the experience, and the experience does nothing to it. As experience, the world belongs to the primary word I-It. The primary word I-Thou establishes the world of relation (Buber, 1950, pp. 5f).

This deontological ethics gives practitioners another normative guideline. Again, we must accept that social work is less an implementation of abstract principles than a navigation through dilemmas. Therefore, dialogue as a principle needs to become an applied ethics and another dimension of the professional attitude as well. An opportunity to reach this goal is non-violent communication introduced by Marshall Rosenberg (2002). Non-violent communication is a method with techniques that are described in detail, but – as Rosenberg emphasises – it is basically an attitude: "The awareness and the inner attitude that really grasp non-violent communication as a whole can also be expressed through silence, through a high quality of presence or through facial expression and body language" (Rosenberg, 2002, p. 26, translation by the author). The essential starting point for a dialogical and non-violent encounter is not to follow the method as a given norm but to see the needs of ourselves and the needs of anyone we meet as the source of our feelings.

The described perspectives are limited for the purpose of this chapter. At this point, it can be stated that the ethical framework of the discipline not only includes a theoretical dimension, but also includes the professional attitude of the practitioners and students. Deontological claims such as the dignity of any human being and methods of applied ethics such as critical thinking or dialogical approaches are closely linked together like the different parts of a hermeneutical circle. How these two levels can be conveyed in the teaching of social work sciences will first be derived theoretically and then illustrated with practical examples.

Theories That Guide Teaching and Learning: Theory of Interaction Rituals and Theory of Resonance

Firstly, a theoretical background is needed that describes teaching and learning. Therefore, two theoretical perspectives were introduced in the following section of this chapter: The Theory of Interaction Ritual Chains (Collins, 2004) and the idea of Resonance as a relationship to the world (Rosa, 2016).

The US-sociologist Randall Collins (2004) considers reciprocal references as interaction rituals. At the centre of his considerations are not individuals but situations in which individuals act. Each situation as an interaction ritual is a link in a chain of previous and future encounters between individuals. Identity arises from the affective entanglement of the individual in these successive interaction rituals (Collins, 2004, pp. 4–5).

Collins (2004, pp. 47–101) grounds his theory of interaction ritual chains on several assumptions: for one thing, on the radical empiricism of ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967) – social structures consist exclusively of interactions between people, and only this material forms the basis of scientific analysis; for another, on Emile Durkheim's (1912/1995) theory of ritual and its micro-sociological adaption by Erving Goffman (1996), who considers everyday interactions as rituals.

Collins (2004, p. 7) develops his definition of ritual in this tradition: A “ritual is a mechanism of mutually focused emotion and attention producing a momentarily shared reality, which thereby generates solidarity and symbols of group membership.” In these encounters, symbolic objects or content are affectively charged. They become a sign of communion – like a mutual act of greeting or a joke that one laughs about with others. Depending on the intensity of the encounter, the participants follow the impulse to recall these symbols or to avoid them in the future.

This theoretical approach should be sufficient to capture interactions, thereby taking account of the physical, affective, and cognitive components and placing them in a biographical context for the participating individuals that points beyond the situation itself. On this basis, it is easy to grasp the diversity of social situations and the scope of interpretation that they allow for.

Referring to Collins' ideas, the German scholar Hans-Werner Klusemann (2008, p. 214) calls for means of didactics that create interaction rituals full of emotional energy. All those who are involved in such encounters – including the teachers – are consequently participating in them with enthusiasm or “mutual entrainment” (Collins, 2004, p. 48). Therefore, the paradigm of co-constructivism should be expanded to include an affective or emotional dimension. Learning needs an intensity that allows emotional energy to develop among those who are involved:

In order to achieve this devotion, we need didactics in the sense that interaction rituals are designed in which collective effervescence is the focus and in which all who are interacting – including teachers – are involved consequently with enthusiasm – i.e. mutual entanglement or, as Collins says, mutual entrainment (Klusemann, 2008, p. 214, translation by the author).

More recently, the German sociologist Hartmut Rosa (2016) became popular with his Theory of Resonance. He sees the human being as involved in a reciprocal relationship with the world. This relationship is not a mere echo but includes answers from both sides: while the individual encounters the world with an intrinsic interest and an expectation of self-efficacy, the world can in turn affect the individual, too. But resonance emerges from a dialectic interplay with alienation; therefore, any attempt to control the world makes resonance impossible.

As Rosa puts it: “So, resonance never arises there where everything is ‘pure harmony’, nor from the absence of alienation, but rather, it is the flash of hope for adaptation and response in a silent world” (Rosa, 2016, p. 321, translation by the author). The dialogue with the uncontrollable others in which we are engaged in lectures or seminars does not guarantee experiences of resonance, but it creates the ground on which this ‘flash of hope’ might occur. Rosa (2016, p. 413) sees teaching and learning as a triangle constituted by the teacher, students, and the topic. As a conclusion for teaching, he speaks of a “successful appropriation of the world” through “transformation”, which is only possible when teachers and students are open to be affected by each other and by the content of the seminars and the lectures. Then the triangle becomes a triangle of resonance (2016, pp. 410ff.).

These theoretical perspectives – each with a different rationale – suggest that teaching and learning might be much less of a theoretical or cognitive endeavour than we normally assume them to be. We need to be creative, and dialogical, and playful when we encounter the world as human beings or as teachers, students, or practitioners in the field of social work.

Practical Examples and Implementation to Teaching and Learning in Social Work Sciences and Social Work Management

So far, we have found ethical thinking as the framework that holds the complex picture of social work and social work management together in one frame. And we have learned from the ideas of several scholars how teaching and learning can become an energetic, touching, and resonant encounter for everyone involved. Now we turn from theory to practice. How can these assumptions be applied in courses of study to open up spaces for a critical, reflexive, and dialogical attitude that social work practitioners and especially leading persons of social institutions need (Hughes & Wearing, 2017)?

Lectures are used to create an intellectual ground. Students are introduced to initial questions and basic perspectives of ethical thinking. All starts with a self-reflection: to which moral convictions do we normally refer when we are asked to judge our actions in everyday life? To which philosophers and religious or ideological traditions or everyday theories can these convictions be traced back? Various basic rationales of ethical thinking are introduced. The students get to know several

lines of argumentation of normative ethics. This can be the deontological orientation to follow a given code of ethics without considering the consequences or the foil of the consequentialist perspective that sees the impact of one's own actions as a guideline.

However, since normative ethics cannot be applied to the social reality in a complex world deterministically, a practical or applied ethics is required (Hughes & Wearing, 2017, pp. 197f.). Tödt's method for the formation of ethical judgments as introduced above is tested on exemplary dilemmas (Tödt, 1988, pp. 29ff.; Heckmann, 2016, pp. 24ff.). These dilemmas concern professional actions towards the service users. For instance, a social worker is on duty in a youth welfare institution on Christmas eve. Should the practitioner take the only child that cannot spend this day with relatives into the privacy of their own family if the child would otherwise spend Christmas alone with the social worker in the facility? Another example could refer to the bitter reality that refugees are deported from Germany to their countries of origin, e. g. Romani people to Serbia, even if these countries are not safe places for them. What are we supposed to do if we happen to know the date of an impending deportation of persons we are in contact with? Do we inform the refugees, even if the deportation may be legally correct in terms of a political ideology that arbitrarily defines some countries of origin as "safe"? Are we entitled to support them even though our actions are not legal?

The dilemmas should be expanded to management action: Social workers in management positions have to deal with scarce resources in youth welfare planning. How do they as leading persons decide when the closure of projects or the end of work contracts are inevitable? Which facilities are essential for the service users? Which should be closed in this situation? Who is to be dismissed? How can this be done without embarrassment or even humiliation? How can the decisions be made transparent and comprehensible to the employees and the service users?

Thinking about dilemmas inevitably links the abstract ethical discourse with one's own attitude. The conflict moves closer to one's own identity and can be felt corporeally.¹ But how can this impression be deepened? How can the confrontation with ethical challenges become even more "resonant" in the sense described above? Means of performative teaching can help to achieve this as they go beyond the cognitive transfer of intellectual knowledge. Performative methods from theatre pedagogy might be widely common for so-called 'warmups' or 'energisers' to start seminars or to fill the gaps between lectures. But we can and we should use them as serious means of education as well, especially when we want not just a cognitive but an affective learning. Winkelmann (2020) proposes three rationales that support the significance of performative methods: Firstly, learning becomes an aesthetic experience. It means that space must be given to the variety of sensual perceptions and to the relation between these experiences and the self within one's personal context and history. Secondly, performing with others makes the plurality of the 'lifeworld'

¹ Corporeality or the category of the 'felt body' are phenomenological dimensions to overcome the dualistic Cartesian idea of detached mind in a machine-like body (Schmitz, 2015; Schmitz et al., 2011).

[Lebenswelt] visible: it is foremost the element of improvisation that forces the actors to engage in a dialogue with their counterparts and to face their diversity. And finally, to be part of a play means to overcome binary and hierarchical perspectives: not only the students, but the teachers, too, must be ready to open up for a dialogical encounter in which resonance can emerge.

Scenario 1: Performative Interventions

A short but very impressive example of such a performative intervention is the playful sequence “In the future...”. The students are divided into two random groups. The first group is supposed to adopt an optimistic and utopian perspective on the future, while the others should take up a pessimistic and dystopian worldview. Now, the students are invited to take part in a playful competition. Each side is supposed to convince the other of their opinion by taking turns with spontaneous statements that should all begin with “In the future...”. It can be shouted, whispered, or sung: any form of expression is possible. Perhaps one side begins with “In the future we will all be swallowed up by globalisation!” The other group might react spontaneously with the follow-on “In the future we will be free from work and grow our own vegetables!” The ideological emphasis is often less impressive than the spontaneous expression of an attitude and worldview. The statement “In the future there will be lasagne for everyone every day!” is perhaps more convincing than “In the future we will experience perfectly non-violent encounters, as Marshall Rosenberg has suggested!”

Such a performance creates precisely those emotionally charged interaction rituals and resonant situations of teaching and learning that were theoretically described in the previous section. The participants can feel their attitude towards the world. Theory becomes corporeality. This can happen due to the strong feeling of being ‘one’ with one’s own statement. But it can also happen when the opposite is true – ‘ex negativo’ –, because if we are on the wrong side in this game, we will be reluctant to take part in the competition with the other group and will clearly feel that we would like to take up their side.

Scenario 2: Socio-analytical Self-Positioning

Another method to further strengthen critical, reflective, and dialogical skills is the socio-analytical self-positioning (Schmitt, 2010, pp. 37ff.). It is about defining the societal position from which we speak or act to unveil where *our* truth we take normally for granted comes from. The students are invited to grasp their biography and their own family origins from the perspective of habitus and social stratification (Bourdieu, 2014). For that purpose, it should be emphasised that social influences are often perceived as psychological experiences and are also interpreted

psychologically. The aim of the socio-analytical self-positioning is to overcome this psychological bias and to get to a position of more awareness of social contexts and the constraints which they lay upon us. The following questions can be used to trace back the own position in this society:

- Where did your family live (e. g. urban vs. rural regions, experiences of migration)?
- How did they live (e. g. home furnishings; possibly hobbies, vacations, cars)?
- What cultural ‘tastes’ did they have (e. g. food, music, enthusiasm for sports, tv series)?
- What values did they have (e. g. religion, a sense of ‘duty’ or ‘calling’ [Berufung], orderliness, strictness, significance of the opinions of the neighbours)?
- Which professions or educational qualifications were aspired to, and which were achieved?
- What kind of humour was popular (e. g. a particular joke)?
- What did each generation want to pass on to their children?
- Can you remember typical scenes?

Based on this information, the students deepen their reflection on their own social position: where did this habitualised character fit in their societal environment, exactly? Where did conflicts arise? It can be experiences in school with classmates or teachers, or in a sports club, in other organisations, or in entering a certain institution, for instance, getting enrolled at university or going on a field trip to a museum. These experiences can then be shared and discussed with fellow students in seminars. It becomes obvious how challenging it is to locate oneself in socio-structural contexts and to recognise the impact of one’s position on the course of one’s life.

This awareness is particularly necessary when it comes to teaching social work management, as the contradictions between internalised social structures and their professional positioning increase here. Statistics show that, compared to many other scientific disciplines, many more students of social work sciences study in the first generation. They are the “academic pioneers” of their families (Middendorff et al., 2012, pp. 99f.). Already this first encounter with the world of higher education very often creates experiences of alienation and lines of conflict. These are expanded by the fact that the traditional, primarily critical or deontological meta-approaches in social work sciences cannot be directly linked to a management perspective. Finally, as mentioned above, there is the challenge of the hybridity or “multirationality” of social work organisations. To find orientation for the own professional action within these contradictions, it is essential to be aware of the individual socio-structural descent as the starting point of the professional career.

These practical examples (for a summary see Table 7.1) serve to illustrate how teaching and learning in social work management education can become emotionally charged and resonant and how theoretical and applied ethics as a common framework for social work and social work management can go beyond being a merely intellectual goal and become an internalised attitude of the professionals or, in other words, their ‘professional habitus’ (Nentwig-Gesemann et al., 2011, p. 9). To be confronted with dilemmas, the spontaneous and performative representation

Table 7.1 Scenarios for the implementation of ethics as a framework for incorporating complexities into teaching and learning in social work sciences and social work management

Criteria	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
Aim/learning objective	Cognitive and corporeal awareness of the own attitude	Awareness of the own societal position and its impact
Method/intervention	Performative interventions	Socio-analytical self-positioning
Impact/outcomes	The students experience an emotionally charged interaction ritual. The students realise cognitively their attitude towards the society they live in, and they can feel it corporeally as well. They can reflect, discuss, and contextualise this experience with their fellow students.	The students develop an increased awareness of their societal position. They can identify and understand matching dimensions and conflicting constellations between their individual self including its internalised structures (<i>habitus</i>) and the social structures they encounter. They can reflect, discuss, and contextualise their knowledge with their fellow students.

of one’s own perspective on the world and the investigation of one’s own position in society turns theories – as already demanded above – into attitudes. Only then can normative guidelines become applied ethics, and persons in leading positions in social work can also become representatives of a management of ethics *and* agents of an ethical management.

Conclusion

The starting point of this chapter was the challenging status of social work sciences as a discipline that cannot hide its close interdisciplinary relationship to other fields. Amending social work sciences by a management perspective even complicates this status, not last due to the meta-theoretical contradictions. How can an economic perspective be integrated into a discipline which is guided by critical or deontological paradigms? How can this integration be taught in study courses?

The author proposed ethical thinking as a helpful framework that comprises the interdisciplinarity of social work and social work management. However, an attempt to sketch this framework quickly made clear that not only a theoretical abstraction must be developed but a personal attitude, too, is required in practice and management of social work. To clarify how this challenge can be mastered, theoretical descriptions of teaching and learning were introduced. The Theory of Interaction Ritual Chains (Collins, 2004) and the idea of Resonance as a relationship to the world (Rosa, 2016) may inspire lectures and seminars that are not just intellectual encounters but can affect the participants – students and teachers alike – emotionally as well as corporeally. The examples from the author’s experience as a lecturer in the field of social work sciences have illustrated the theoretical abstractions.

By conveying normative ethics that can be applied practically by social workers with a critical, reflective, and dialogical attitude, social work as a scientific discipline also receives a framework that can encompass and permeate all its related areas. This enables us to master the challenge of interdisciplinarity. For this applied ethics to become part of the professional attitude of social workers and leading persons of social institutions, a teaching is required that is full of resonance and emotional energy.

The approach presented in this chapter should not be misunderstood as a manual one has to follow dogmatically but, rather, as an invitation to initiate vivid discussions in lectures and seminars. Learning is not just an intellectual endeavour. It involves all our senses. Performative actions as described above can be an approach to the plurality of our 'lifeworlds' [Lebenswelten], as there is no performance without encountering the *other*. Furthermore, resonance necessitates a deconstruction of a hierarchically coded dualism between teacher and student, at least to some extent, as it can only emerge if the teachers are ready to make themselves vulnerable (Winkelmann, 2020).

The chapter could possibly be misunderstood as a romantic construction of a 'classic' academic teaching far removed from the digital realities of the twenty-first century. However, the author's experience shows that the argumentation developed here can be easily transferred to digitally expanded forms of teaching. Yet the challenges associated with it have not been considered in detail in this chapter and need to be discussed in the future; this limitation must be admitted.

Finally, as a critical self-assessment, it must be stated that while the author sought to assume an external and impartial perspective on the described context, his perspective as a teacher is by necessity restricted and has a lot of blind spots. Therefore, it needs to be amended by other viewpoints. The simplification in this chapter mainly serves to develop a starting point for future trial and investigation. This research should be pursued in collaboration between teachers, students, and practitioners in social work sciences and social work management.

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Chapter 8

A Plea for a More Internationalized University Education in Social Work Management



Brigitta Zierer

Abstract The multi-level governance of the European Union requires a stronger international orientation of managers in social economic and non-profit organizations to deal with global challenges. At present, higher education in Social Work Management is mainly focused on the socio-political and legal conditions at the state, regional, and community levels. This article describes the role of social economy in the European Union and the challenges of higher education institutions, especially in Social Work Management and social economy, in their efforts to increase internationalization. The chapter also describes aspects for the development of internationalization of degree programmes.

The Social Economy: A New Important Sector in the European Union

The European Union policy concerning social economy has a significant impact on the Higher Education sector in Social Work Management. The importance and long march towards institutional recognition of social economy started in the 1980s. Nowadays, it is – combined with the *European Social Model* – a concept that has emerged in the discussion of economic globalization. In 1989, the Commission introduced the policy paper “Businesses in the ‘Économie Sociale’ sector. Europe’s frontier-free market”, which proposed statutes of a European legal basis for cooperatives, associations and mutual societies (Commission of the European Communities, 1989). Since then, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) have published various other reports, proposals and resolutions highlighting the specific social value of the Social Economy in Europe.

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In the same year, i.e. 1989, the European Commission created the *Social Economy Unit* in the Directorate General XXIII “to take initiatives to strengthen the cooperatives, mutual societies, associations and foundations sector; prepare European legislation for cooperatives, mutual societies and associations; analyse the sector; ensure the coherence of EU policy affecting the sector; liaise with existing representative federations; establish relations with parts of the sector that are unorganised; raise awareness of the cooperatives, mutual societies, associations and foundations sector among decision-makers; assess the problems the sector faces; represent the Commission on relevant matters to the other EU institutions.” (EESC, 2012, p. 93 f.).

Firstly, the European Parliament set up a “European Parliament Social Economy Intergroup” in 1990, and approved a key report on Social Economy (the *Toia report*) in 2009 (European Parliament, 2009). To promote a competitive social market economy, in 2011, the Commission addressed the *Social Business Initiative*; in 2010, the *Innovation unit initiative*; in 2013, the *Social investment package*. Later, the *Single market act 1* (2011) and *Single market act 2* (2012) as well as the *Small Business Act* (2008, 2011) and the *statute for a European cooperative* (in 2003) were adopted.

In 2012, the president of the Various Interests Group European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Luca Jahier, presented a study on the state of the Social Economy in the European Union, which summarized: “*Undoubtedly, the social economy is a sector which makes a significant contribution to employment creation, sustainable growth and to a fairer income and wealth distribution. It is a sector which is able to combine profitability with social inclusion and democratic systems of governance, working alongside the public and private sectors in matching services to needs. Crucially, it is a sector which has weathered the economic crisis much better than others and is increasingly gaining recognition at the European level.*” (EESC, 2012, p. 6).

Miguel Ángel Cabra de Luna, the spokesperson of the Social Economy Category of the European Economic and Social Committee, pointed out in 2012: “*Social Economy enterprises in their diverse forms (including social enterprises) play an important role in increasing the competitiveness and efficiency of the European economy in many different ways: through directing disperse and idle resources towards economic activity, mobilising resources at the local level, strengthening the culture of entrepreneurship, eliminating market rigidities, encouraging the flexibilisation of markets, promoting the multilocalisation of production, just to mention a few. Social Economy enterprises also have a greater capacity to maintain employment and to avoid job losses during difficult economic cycles, as witnessed in the current economic crisis. In the last few years, the sector has also been subject to important improvements in terms of political and legal recognition, both at the EU level (Single Market Act, Social Business Initiative, European Foundation Statute, Social Entrepreneurship Funds, etc.) and at the national level.*” (EESC, 2012, p. 7).

In 2016, the European Commission adopted an initiative containing a section on social economy and social enterprises. On that basis, in 2017 and 2018, the Commission set up and implemented a series of actions for the social economy and social enterprises. In this context, social economy representative organizations, led

by *Social Economy Europe* (the European Parliament Social Economy Intergroup), the European Economic and Social Committee and many member states called on the European Commission to take a step forward towards a European Action Plan for the social economy, which was foreseen for 2021.

“The social economy is made up of a diversity of enterprises and organisations such as cooperatives, mutuals, associations, foundations and social enterprises among other forms that can be specific to each country. They are united around the values of: primacy of people and the social objective over capital, democratic governance, solidarity and the reinvestment of most profits to carry out sustainable development objectives.” (Social Economy Europe, 2020, p. 1)

According to the United Nations Secretary General Report on Cooperatives on Social Development (2017), the social economy contributes about 7% to the world’s gross domestic product (GDP). The European Commission’s reflection paper “For a sustainable Europe by 2030” points out that the social economy is an opportunity and a driver for the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals at the European and a global level. (Social Economy Europe, 2020).

2.6 million social economy enterprises and organizations represent 10% of all businesses in the European Union. More than 11 million people – about 6% of all EU’s employees – work for social economy enterprises. They have different legal forms and various objectives (European Commission, 2020a).

Social economy means offers, types, and eligibility criteria of (non-commercial) public and sponsoring organizations (of the third/non-profit/intermediary sector) as well as social business/entrepreneurship for professional personnel (and voluntary) social services (e.g., counselling and care) to cover needs at the interface between the social sector, health, education, and culture sectors in a sustainable way. Social economy comprises the interaction between different stakeholders (beneficiaries/clients/customers, the state, financiers/sponsors, and the society/environment) and deals with legal and framework conditions of a welfare state concerning social services to fulfil an advocacy function (ibid.).

The political developments and priorities as well as many policy papers of the European Union demonstrate the growing importance of the social sector and the Social Work and Non-profit Management.

European Union Funding for Social Enterprises

Social Work Management is closely connected with the social sector in a specific country, province, or community. Austria, for instance, has a long tradition of cooperation between the public sector and non-profit organizations. Social services are often publicly funded yet created by NPOs. Profit-oriented organizations still have a subordinate role in this division of labour (Pennerstorfer & Zierer, 2018).

Since the late 1990s, many European countries have seen a trend for marketization and economization in the social economy. The focus on market principles

required more management competences in social economy organizations. The paradigm of *New Public Management* in public administration has also influenced social economic organizations (Connell et al., 2009).

Social managers have to be prepared to prove the impact of the offered social services and to calculate the expected ‘social return on investment’ – a method of accounting for the social, economic, and environmental value created by an enterprise. As service contracts replaced traditional subsidies, the managers of social economic enterprises were forced to focus more on quality criteria, performance, efficiency, effectiveness, and output. Performance contracts are often awarded in competitive tendering procedures for public funds along the European Union’s service directives from 2006 and 2016.

Small or medium-sized social enterprises or non-profit organizations are permanently forced to find new ways of funding and (mixed) financing. Consequently, some organizations have specialized in using appropriate “Calls for proposals” from different funding programmes of the European Union to develop and finance innovative projects for the development of new social services and opportunities for their target groups (clients) as well as their employees.

Different funding programmes from the European Union tackle social needs and problems for special target groups in certain regions. The *European Social Fund Plus*, for example, is the EU’s main instrument for investing in people with the aim of building a more social and inclusive Europe. The fund for the programming period 2021–2027 “aims at supporting EU Member States to tackle the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic, achieve high employment levels, fair social protection and a skilled and resilient workforce ready for the transition to a green and digital economy. The ESF+ finances the implementation of the principles of the European Pillar for Social Rights through actions in the area of employment, education and skills, and social inclusion” (European Innovation Council, 2021).

Another new funding programme is the *AMF* (Asylum and Migration Fund), which comprises measures for early integration with the support of local and regional authorities as the civil society (EESC, 2018).

Many social economic organizations have become highly successful in the application procedures of different funding programs like the education programme *Erasmus +* to support the educational, professional, and personal development of people in education, training, youth and sport, to contribute to sustainable growth, quality jobs and social cohesion, to drive innovation, and to strengthen European identity and active citizenship. The focus lies on three horizontal priorities: inclusion and diversity, digital transformation as well as environmental sustainability (European Commission, 2022).

The Citizens, Equality and Values Program (CERV) is another funding programme “to protect and promote Union rights and values as enshrined in the EU treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. It will contribute to sustain and further develop open, rights-based, democratic, equal, and inclusive societies based on the rule of law.” The programme is also used by different NGOs in the social sector (European Commission, 2020a).

For the successful realization of EU programmes, it is important to be aware of the strategic plans and targets of the European Union – such as “*Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030*”. For the period 2019–2024, the Commission defined six priorities: (1.) European Green Deal, (2.) Europe fit for the digital age, (3.) Economy working for people, (4.) Stronger Europe in the World, (5.) Promoting our European way of life and (6.) New push for European democracy (European Commission, 2019).

Many social managers in social economic organizations have already identified the enormous potential of EU programmes; this requires experts who have a good overview of the different funding opportunities. It is first of all a strategic decision if and why social enterprises follow a “Call for proposal” procedure. Despite the opportunities, the risks for the respective organization have to be taken into account as well. The pre-financing of large projects might, for instance, pose a problem for the organization that applies for an EU project. What is more, the financing entities might have an impression that the social enterprise receives additional money from the European Union – although this money has to be used for concrete additional activities outside the main organization that is realizing a given project.

Social Managers: Acting Locally and Thinking Globally

The competence profile of social managers in German-speaking countries has changed and expanded in the last years. To create innovative concepts for new social needs in a certain region, relevant expertise is required, e.g. in the fields of organization, personnel management, labour and corporate law, leadership, cost management and financing, controlling, quality management, social marketing, social innovation and change management, social service design, and international project management – all adapted to the needs of the target groups of social economic organizations (Arnold et al., 2014; Wöhrle et al., 2019).

Understanding international and, particularly, European social policy developments and their impact on social economic organizations is crucial. Obviously, social managers should be aware of the consequences of the multi-level governance of the European Union and the different public and private actors in the EU policy-making process. They need regional, national, and international networking and lobbying to follow local, regional, national, and international developments in politics, economy, civil society, and the social sector. Besides, transcultural competences and experiences that enable the implementation of diversity management in a global context are essential requirements.

The social economy is influenced by global economic and ecological developments; this requires, for instance, a confrontation with the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* of the United Nations in the sense of a careful forward planning in social economic organizations. Social managers need to be aware of the SDGs (e.g., no poverty, good health and wellbeing, gender equality, decent work and economic

growth, sustainable cities and communities) and understand how these they can be implemented in their organizations (UN, 2021).

Study programmes in social economy/management in higher education have to address global conditions and developments by offering internationally oriented curricula. Moreover, universities have many opportunities and a responsibility to create an internationalization-friendly environment.

The Long Tradition of (Comprehensive) Internationalization in Higher Education Institutions

Internationalization has a long-lasting tradition at universities. Jane Knight defined internationalization “as“the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2004, p. 11). John K. Hudzik widened this definition to “*comprehensive internationalization*” that focuses on desirable practices in institutions and their approaches to implement a more integrated, strategic, or comprehensive global engagement across their core missions: teaching, research and service (Hudzik, 2015): “*Comprehensive internationalization is a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility. Comprehensive internationalization not only impacts all of campus life but the institution’s external frames of reference, partnerships, and relations. The global reconfiguration of economies, systems of trade, research, and communication, and the impact of global forces on local life, dramatically expand the need for comprehensive internationalization and the motivations and purposes driving it.*” (p. 6).

Well before the emergence of the nation states in the nineteenth century, some university students and professors had travelled to university cities where they hoped to find knowledge, friends, and leisure. Beside their academic knowledge, they took back home new experiences, ideas, opinions, and political principles and views (De Ridder-Symoens, 1992, p. 280, 302ff.).

The EU programme *Erasmus* (European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) follows this tradition. In 1987, *Erasmus* was established as an exchange programme for higher education students. Nowadays, the programme reflects the reform goals and instruments of the *Bologna process* (1999), which deals with ECTS credits, recognition, learning outcomes, and a qualification frame.

The Bologna process started in 1999 and created the *European Higher Education Area (EHEA)*, which was launched in 2010. The Bologna Declaration was signed by 29 European countries “to collectively work towards an internationally competitive

EHEA, which should promote mobility and employability of its citizens and would aim at a greater compatibility and comparability of the higher education systems.” The key elements of the Bologna Process were: “a three-cycle degree structure; national qualification frameworks; quality assurance; recognition of qualifications and credits, and prior learning, student and staff mobility; social dimension of EHEA” (Huisman et al., 2012, pp. 81, 85).

The term *internationalization* has gained currency in the higher education sector since the 1980s. Internationalization aims to promote international studies, educational exchange, and technical assistance. A lot of internationalization strategies, programmes, and policies have been developed since. In the twenty-first century, too, the international dimension of the university sector has continued to gain in importance and complexity. Recent developments like new quality assurance and accreditation regulations, global higher education ranking systems, international research networks and an increased emphasis on learning outcomes have influenced the tertiary sector and promoted the international dimension of higher education (Knight, 2012, p. 27). Internationalization can be regarded as “*the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions of delivery of post-secondary education*” (ibid, p. 29).

Internationalization as a global phenomenon has been one of the most powerful forces in higher education during the last decades. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, international orientation, characteristics, and programmatic offerings of universities may have been perceived as only an interesting and appealing component of an institution’s profile. Today, internationalization is a core issue of concern to the higher education institutes, which raises questions of social and curricular relevance, institutional quality and prestige, national competitiveness, and innovation potential. Some institutions also view internationalization as a source of potential revenue (Rumbley et al., 2012, p. 3).

Internationalization has been a critical factor shaping higher education in the last decades. The division into the two pillars “at home” and “abroad” demonstrates that “*the international dimension of the curriculum has developed from an area studies and foreign language approach to the integration of international, global, intercultural, and comparative perspectives into the teaching/learning process and program content. Academic mobility has moved from student to provider and student mobility. Cross-border education has gradually shifted from a development cooperation framework to a partnership model and now to commercial competition orientation*” (Knight, 2012, p. 27). In many countries, networking, cooperation, collaboration, and exchange between students and staff members in higher education institutions are well established.

The national governments play a significant role in the promotion of internationalization, as it is the national parliaments that pass higher education laws. Therefore, the national governments have an influence on which universities can become internationally oriented institutions. It is also important that these institutions are entitled to award internationally recognised and accepted degrees. The national legal framework sets the conditions for the employment of foreign staff members at universities as well; it can facilitate or hinder the recognition of qualifications earned abroad.

In some countries, it is regional entities that are responsible for education: e.g., ‘Bundesländer’ in Austria and Germany and ‘Kantone’ in Switzerland (Wächter, 2000, p. 7).

For example, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (2020, p. 8) highlighted the importance of a global and European orientation of higher education institutions by stating that: “*We are living in an age of globalisation – in the ‘global village’ – and national and international changes in the economy, society and environment are all having a global impact*“. Therefore, higher education institutions shall train future leaders with a global vision and a European consciousness. The vision for 2023 states: “*All members of Austrian higher education institutions have embraced internationality as a fundamental guiding principle of their work and activities and are striving to further advance internationalisation. Besides physical mobility, making sensible use of digital information and communications technologies, in particular, also facilitates dialogue across national borders. Higher education students acquire (...) international and intercultural skills; they speak several languages and learn how to think independently, critically and innovatively.*” (ibid, p. 7).

The International and Global Orientation of Universities

Internationalization is not a new concept in higher education. The Bologna process and the Lisbon strategy internationalization in the Higher Education Area (HEA). After initial scepticism about supranational regulations in the university systems, it has become evident that there is a need for coordinated international activities to be more attractive and efficient for global competition.

The recognition of academic achievements from abroad and the support of student and staff mobility in and across Europe is as important as the organization of study programmes or cross-border cooperation concerning quality measurement. Besides, universities have discovered new foreign markets to export their courses.

Barbara Kehm (2003, p. 7) differentiated in the context of internationalization in the university sector between (1.) *Europeanization* (“Internationalization light” as a result of the cultural heritage, the economic, political and cultural “fortress Europe” against the rest of the world), (2.) *Internationalization* (reflection of the world order from the perspective of national states that nonetheless leads to cooperation and exchange between universities), and (3.) *Globalization* which involves global competition and creates envisions of a world order where the importance of national states decreases, and new regional blocs emerge instead of a knowledge-based society. While internationalization focuses on exchange and cooperation, while globalization emphasizes the competitive aspects.

According to Kehm (2003, p. 8), in higher education institutions, internationalization has different reference levels in higher education institutions: a) *the internationalization of study and teaching* aims to develop intercultural competences of all persons involved to create new study approaches and to discuss aspects of quality,

b) *the facilitation of internationally transparent and compatible/comparable structures and standards* (multi-tiered degrees, the accreditation of degree programmes, credit systems, and modularization and the removal of barriers for students from abroad), c) *reforms in the organization of universities* (e.g., the establishment of managers of international affairs, easier access for foreign students), and d) *internationalization of the policy area (education policy) of universities*.

Olga Rösch (2015, p. 19 f.) notes that the *internationalization of teaching* does not only mean lessons in English or with foreign students' presence. The development of internationalization requires intercultural knowledge as well as intercultural competences. International students enhance the heterogeneity of the student body. For integrative teaching, lecturers particularly need open-mindedness, empathy, flexibility, and cultural awareness. While homogeneity is not the goal, students should nonetheless regard themselves as a community. They should get knowledge inputs from other countries in- and outside of Europe; they should get in touch with theoretical discussions from abroad. Students also handle comparative aspects in different topics or carrying out case studies. Naturally, an internationalized curriculum comprises English and other foreign languages. Culturally specific traditions in academic writing concern text structure, stylistics, clarity, the style of argumentation, and the length. The internationalization of teaching means investing additional work and time. Internationalization of knowledge makes a reduction of teaching hours necessary for lecturers to develop innovative, comparative, and interdisciplinary approaches, to enhance their methodology, and to cooperate internationally.

Since the 1990s, a lot of universities have developed international marketing and recruiting campaigns as well as *English study programmes* to attract students as customers from all over the world. English study programmes have been indicators for the quantification of internationalization and the profiling of a university to get better rankings. *Academic multilingualism enables* students as well as teachers to participate in the international scientific community. Although English is well accepted as the language of science, experts very often recommend multilingualism (Rösch, 2015, p. 20 f.).

Internationalization means primarily the physical mobility of teachers and students and cooperation in teaching and research. *Globalization* in higher education predominantly means the commercial knowledge transfer, transnationally offered study programmes and the economization of the university system. Universities are also forced to counter the shortage of experts.

For a long time, the internationalization of curricula had strongly focused on projects and programmes created for a few students only. The EU programme Erasmus was launched in June 1987 as a standalone project for 11 member states (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and United Kingdom) and for 3244 students who could go abroad, providing for many of those their first insight into different cultures and ways of life. In the academic year 2009–10, already 384 intensive programmes took place in 29 countries (European Commission, 2012: 6, 8).

The purpose of different types of internationalization in higher education (e.g., mobility of students and lecturers) led to the conclusion that internationalization is a process of transformation in a globalized world.

To university students, being a globalized citizen in a globalized world means that they have to be prepared to develop global perspectives and ways of thinking between and across cultures. In 2001, Betty Leask stated the importance of internationalized curricula for the graduates to demonstrate an international perspective as professionals and citizens. “*This focus on courses and their teaching, learning, and assessment promotes international education, multiculturalism, and the recognition of intercultural issues relevant to professional practice.*” (Leask, 2001, p. 1). Beside the structural circumstances and pathways for course design when internationalizing the curricula, the international content and ways of teaching and learning can help foster cross-cultural communication skills. Universities can be a transcultural space if, *inter alia*, concepts of diversity and measures like intercultural trainings are visible. Internationalization is a cross-sectional task that affects all levels and sections of a university. Internationalization means broadening perspectives, promoting global citizenship, and supporting employability and networks of teaching and research. It also comprises the physical and virtual mobility of students, teachers, and other university staff.

The European Education Area (EEA) and Selected EU Programmes

In September 2020, the EU Commission adopted two initiatives based on the *Gothenborg Summit* (2017) to strengthen the contribution of education and training to a green and digital Europe: The *European Education Area* was set up as a vision to realize by 2025, and the *Digital Education Action Plan* was established for a high-performing digital education ecosystem with enhanced digital competences for the digital transformation (European Commission, 2020b).

The *European Education Area (EEA)* aims to secure with its policy that spending time abroad to study and learn should be the norm, that school and higher education qualifications should be recognized across the EU, that everybody shall know two languages in addition to their mother tongue, that everyone should be able to access high-quality education (regardless of their socio-economic background), and that people should have a strong sense of their identity as Europeans and be aware of Europe’s cultural heritage and of its diversity. (ibid).

To build the European Education Area, the strategic framework for *European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)* was established as a forum that allows member states to exchange best practices in education policy, to disseminate knowledge, and to advance educational policy reforms at the national and regional level. ET 2020 is based on the lifelong learning approach; it addresses outcomes from early childhood to adult vocational and higher education; it is designed to

cover formal, non-formal, and informal learning. *ET 2020* pursues the following EU objectives: make lifelong learning and mobility a reality; improve the quality and efficiency of education and training; promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; enhance creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship. The EU programme Erasmus+ shall support innovative projects to realize these objectives (European Commission, 2020c).

Erasmus + is the current EU programme that supports education, training, youth, and sport in Europe. Any Higher Education Institution (HEI) that wants to apply and/or participate in the programme Erasmus+ must have a valid *Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)*, the general quality framework for European and international cooperation activities based on the HEI's *Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS)* (European Commission, 2021c). In signing the Charter, the HEIs undertake to modernize their institutions and contribute to the goals of a European Education Area (2017). This strategy acknowledges the key contribution of mobile staff and students, and of participation in European and international cooperation projects, to the quality of its higher education programmes and student experience (European Commission, 2021a, p. 5).

Erasmus+ is the most popular funding programme for universities to promote international exchange. In the funding period 2021–2027, *Erasmus+* pursues four priorities: (1.) inclusion and diversity, (2.) digital transformation, (3.) participation in democratic life, and (4.) environmental sustainability and climate goals. The programme structure of *Erasmus+* includes three key actions: (1.) mobility of learners and staff, (2.) partnerships for cooperation and exchange of practices and (3.) support of policy development and cooperation (European Commission, 2021d).

Students, graduates, lecturers, and university employees have an opportunity to expand their own horizon through an Erasmus+ stay (*international mobility*) abroad. The programme supports students and fresh graduates through study visits, internships, language courses, and digital opportunity traineeships. Erasmus+ encourages university staff to realize their teaching periods in partner universities. It is also possible for staff members to spend a further training period abroad.

Incoming students and lecturers make an important contribution to *Internationalization@Home* and ensure a diverse and multicultural university ambience. *Strategic Partnerships* and *Knowledge Alliances* offer the possibility to develop innovative ideas together with stakeholders from the non-university sector. *Capacity Building* in higher education is an instrument on the strategic level to create structures for sustainable internationalization. *Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees* support internationally oriented master programmes for excellent students. *Jean Monnet activities* promote the exchange between the university sector and political decision-makers to promote peak performances in teaching and research (OEAD, 2021).

Many other bi- and multilateral programmes or funds also support international activities in universities – some of them with a regional focus, e.g., *CEEPUS* (Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies), the *ASEAN-European Academic University Network* or *Horizon Europe* (the EU programme for research and innovation).

Internationalization at Home (I@H) and Internationalization of the Curriculum (IoC)

Internationalization at Home can be defined as “*purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments*” (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 69). It also has much in common with “internationalization of the curriculum“, which emphasizes the importance of internationalizing learning outcomes for all students, not simply those who study abroad. Jos Beelen and Betty Leask (2011) stress that Internationalization at Home is not an aim or a didactic concept, but rather a set of instruments and activities “at home” that aim to develop international and intercultural competences in all students. Just as with internationalization of the curriculum in general, I@H is specific to the context of a discipline and, within that, to a program of study in a given university (Beelen & Leask, 2011, p. 5).

“*Internationalization at Home*” is affected by forces in- and outside the universities. On the one hand, it is influenced by European, national, and regional government conditions as well as programmes that fund internationalization. While early internationalization strategies focused on student and staff mobility, priorities have since shifted towards the encouragement of internationalized curricula and programmes taught in foreign languages. The globalization process has forced worldwide competition and also brought more pressure to higher education institutions to develop an international profile for the recruitment of foreign students (Wächter, 2000, p. 12).

The changing global environment as well as the processes of transformation in higher education call for a debate on the future of internationalization. One of the first steps towards a culture of internationalization in a higher education institution is an internal *internationalization strategy*, which addresses its medium- and long-term aims and the potential and requirements for internationalization. “*Efficient processes of internationalisation also call for stable structures in order to implement the chosen measures as well as adequate provision of resources and a quality management system. Ideally, therefore, an internationalisation strategy will be developed with the involvement of all the members of the higher education institution. This is because the strategy can only be implemented successfully if everyone involved shares a common understanding.*” (Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, 2020, p. 10).

Universities can express their support of internationalization by being open and prepared to support their personnel with an *internationalization strategy* and a related action plan with different activities. It means that a higher education institution has an active *International office* that bundles all these activities. Yet it is just as important that the necessary resources are available to support international experiences and language skills of the personnel.

Elsbeth Jones and Tanja Reifenrath (Jones & Reifenrath, 2018) from the European Association for International Education (EAIE) summarized different key features of Internationalization at Home: (1.) Internationalization at Home offers all

students global perspectives within their programme of study, whether or not they spend time abroad; (2.) moves beyond electives or specialized programs; (3.) involves developing international and intercultural perspectives through internationalized learning outcomes in the formal curriculum; (4.) is supported by informal (co-)curriculum activities across the institution; (5.) makes purposeful use of cultural diversity in the classroom for inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practice; (6.) creates opportunities for student engagement with “cultural others” in the local society; (7.) involves all staff, not only academics and international officers; (8.) may or may not include teaching or other lingua franca; (9.) can include virtual mobility through online working with partner universities; (10.) fosters purposeful engagement with international students. Internationalization at Home means: curricula and programs, teaching and learning processes, extra-curricular activities, liaison with local cultural/ethnic groups and research or scholarly activities (Knight, 2006, p. 27). The lines between Internationalization at Home and Internationalization of the Curriculum are often vague. The additional value of both is of high importance.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defined already in 1996, what an *internationalized curriculum* is: “A curriculum with an international orientation in content and/or form, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally/socially) in an international and multicultural context and designed for domestic and/or foreign students.” (OECD, 1996, p. 6). Betty Leask (2009, p. 209) understands an internationalized curriculum as the “incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the preparation, delivery and outcomes of a program of study.” Internationalized curricula incorporate global, international and transcultural aspects into the curriculum; they include learning outcomes, teaching and assessment methods, and also the relevant service for a study programme. Higher education institutions should focus more on international/transcultural dimensions of skills and learning outcomes than on endless discussions of what internationalization could be or mean.

Quality (Management) in Internationalization in HEIs: CeQuInt

The European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA) presented in 2017 “*The Guide to Quality in Internationalisation*“, which includes three elements that define the intended internationalization: “*the support for the program’s internationalization goals, the use of verifiable objectives to monitor achievement of these goals, and the impact on education that the intended internationalization should have.*” (ECA, 2017, p. 9).

The *internationalization goals* for a study programme shall be documented and supported by stakeholders within and outside the programme. Veritable objectives shall be formulated in a way that allows monitoring the achievement of the programme’s international goals. The internationalization goals include measures that contribute to the overall quality of teaching and learning (ECA, 2017, pp. 9–11).

International and intercultural learning means the way the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes correspond with the programme's intended internationalization, the way how this learning is assessed, and the actual achievement of the international and intercultural learning outcomes after a successful completion of the study programme. Therefore, the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes – as defined by the programme – are a clear reflection of its international goals. The methods for the assessment of students are appropriate for measuring the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The achievement of the international and intercultural learning outcomes can be demonstrated by the graduates (ibid, pp. 12–18).

Teaching and learning affects the setting for students to achieve the learning outcomes; it includes the curriculum, the teaching methods, and the learning environment. The content and structure of the curriculum provide the necessary means for achieving the intended international and intercultural outcomes. The teaching methods are suitable for achieving these outcomes. The learning environment is suitable as well (ECA, 2017, pp. 18–21).

The *staff* (in quality and quantity) facilitates the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. Staff members need to have the right teaching competences, sufficient internationalization experience, intercultural competences, and language skills, but they also need services (e.g., training, staff exchanges) to further develop these competences and skills (ibid, pp. 22–24).

Internationalization should have a direct impact on *students'* learning and their study experience. Hence, three elements are important: the composition of the student group, the internationalization experiences of the students, and the services that are provided. Some popular examples of how internationalization at home could be important for the student group include virtual mobility, collaborative (online) international learning, and the integration of students with immigrant backgrounds. Students need services such as information provision, counselling, guidance, and accommodation (ECA, 2017, pp. 24–26).

The ECA (the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education) platform provides information about the quality and self-assessment on internationalization good practices, as higher education institutions understand internationalization as a pro-active strategic issue – e.g., for joint programmes. Since internationalization is a multidimensional concept, its realization varies in different university settings. The context and different realization concepts have to be taken into account when assessing the quality of internationalization.

CeQuInt (the Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation) was launched by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) as the first European quality label for internationalization at programme and institutional level. CeQuInt provides a methodology for the assessment of internationalization; it focuses on the impact that internationalization has on teaching and learning. “*CeQuInt sets quality standards for internationalisation and aims to reward those study programmes and accordingly, institutions which incorporate internationalisation in a sustainable manner. The diverse contexts in which internationalisation takes place are taken*

into consideration, as well as the process-oriented dimension of internationalisation. The approach of CeQuInt is a holistic one, involving and affecting different stakeholders, taking into account different strategies of disciplines and study programmes and focused on students and their development of international and intercultural competences.” (Brunner-Sobanski & Šehić, 2015, p. 1).

The CeQuInt framework consists of five standards with different criteria. (1.) The standard *Intended internationalization* concerns (a) internationalization goals, their documentation and support by stakeholders, (b) verifiable objectives, and (c) the measures of improvement. (2.) The standard *International and intercultural learning* includes (a) intended learning outcomes, (b) student assessment and graduate achievement. (3.) The *Teaching & Learning standard* comprises a curriculum, teaching methods, and learning environment. (4.) This standard concerns *Staff*. (5.) This standard concerns *Students* (Aerden, 2014).

Leadership and Internationalization Strategies

The transformation of higher education is forcing universities into a more competitive international environment. Each higher education institution can identify an internationalization effort in accordance with its own ability and ambition; every successful internationalized university has succeeded in its own particular way.

Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schön (Argyris & Schön, 1978) coined the term *learning organization* for an enterprise that purposefully creates structures and strategies to enhance and maximize organizational learning. Mark Dodgson (1993) pointed out that the concept of a learning organization shifts from individual learning to organizational learning, as learning is essential for the growth of individuals. Yet it is equally important for organizations.

Organizational culture can be referred to as the glue that keeps an organization together; it is its silent code of conduct. Universities require an *organizational (corporate) culture* and corporate identity that promotes shared learning and experience. Leaders have to recognize that it exists and that it moulds reality for all employees; they have to ensure that the organizational culture does not become dysfunctional.

Internationalization needs essential *enablers* of successful change, and it is the task of leadership to create a participatory vision of internationalization. “*Leadership links the vision for internationalization to the institutional mission, communicates it effectively, and creates the right conditions for its realization*” (Nolan & Hunter, 2012, p. 132).

The risk of implementing strategies and programmes without the commitment of the relevant persons and the *faculty engagement* is well known. Institutional leaders should be prepared to invest time and energy to gain a broad consensus and to identify change agents with the necessary skills to drive a new vision forward. A new commitment to internationalization needs *policy support*. A set of mechanisms has to be established to sustain the process and to realize the common goals. The vision

must be supported by a clear strategy that sets out key objectives, targets, and time-lines. New procedures, policies and processes will be required to implement and communicate the idea of internationalization. People and policies will not be able to achieve much without the necessary *financial resources*. This may require innovative thinking, an entrepreneurial effort, and the willingness to undertake risks (ibid, p. 132 f.).

Universities are challenged to develop their own *internationalization strategy* that covers different requirements: it has to consider worldwide changes and to strengthen global citizenship; it should broaden the perspectives and foster an open mindset of all actors; it has to promote international and transnational competences; it shall facilitate cooperation and the building of networks in education and research; it should promote the employability of students, who get in touch with international perspectives to develop a global understanding of their discipline and their future professional fields. The internationalization strategy should promote the language competence and mobility of students and all employees in a university. Virtual mobility, virtual classrooms, and digital learning materials consider the possibility for internationalizing domestic teaching. An active participation in international projects (mainly supported by the European Union) offers another possibility to experience international cooperation in a concrete way.

The Important Role of the University Staff in Internationalization

Internationalization has been a value-adding process since the foundation of medieval universities, but it has a wider impact for the management of higher education institutions, for the academic staff, and the personnel of universities – especially with a view to globalization. Internationalization contributes to their professional development – also in terms of career promotion.

The fast-changing work conditions (Work 4.0) require the university personnel to do multi-disciplinary work and devise flexible and innovative solutions for current challenges and changes in the society. The university staff needs enhanced language competences to be able to communicate with a wider group of students and staff members from abroad; and make them feel welcome. The ability to communicate in foreign languages widens the opportunities for networking and cooperation in different areas. The secretaries of a study programme, e.g., could use their additional language competences to make acquaintance of their colleagues from other universities with the help of an Erasmus+ personal mobility grant and to exchange experiences of how everyday working life is shaped and professional challenges are met in different countries.

Cross- or transcultural skills support a global understanding of worldwide phenomena and the interest in the unknown. University staff members need intercultural trainings and also foreign language courses to engage in cross-cultural

communication that is free of stereotypes. They also have to be aware of and trained in *work-related cultural dimensions* like power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, or long- vs. Short-term orientation (Hofstede, 2011).

The academic staff recruitment process increasingly takes into account additional language competences and individual international experiences, e.g., study stay abroad, a work placement, or a previous job. New employees must be prepared for interdisciplinary teaching with an orientation towards internationalization and for research, publishing, and project management in languages other than their mother tongue.

Bi- or multilateral *cross-border projects* in teaching and research enable contacts with colleagues from other countries to exchange experiences in different areas and get input on the understanding of social economy, Social Work Management, the non-profit, i.e., the third sector in a country. In that way, academics learn more about the functionality of their own social security systems, as they have to reflect upon it while explaining it to colleagues from another country. They are also forced to read, write, communicate, and publish in foreign languages (and not only in English as a lingua franca). Joint projects broaden the perspectives of those involved and enable an immersion into a different academic system and academic tradition. Working in a real project also means getting in touch with the political, legal, economic, and higher education system of other countries; it allows comparative academic work – e.g., along *comparative case studies* that comprise macro, meso and micro dimensions. These comparative methods enable different people to work on the same case study and develop idiosyncratic solutions along their different national, regional, and disciplinary backgrounds.

Frequently, the professional relationships established during international projects surpass the project duration. This often facilitates further cooperation and new joint activities, teaching or research projects, networks, and publications, beside long-lasting contacts on the personal level.

The academic staff as well as other university employees are important role models for incoming and outgoing students, since they can share their own experience in living international contacts credibly. Students benefit from the direct and informal contacts of lecturers, international coordinators, or secretaries if those have a great affinity to international activities.

Many Students Are Interested in “Going International“

A large number of students has experience with different aspects of internationalization: their families have roots outside of their country of residence, and their relatives live far and wide, they speak more than one language beside their mother tongue, know the educational and political systems of other countries, have spent time abroad on language courses, holidays, or for jobs. They use social media like Facebook™, Instagram™, Snapchat™, Pinterest™, Xing™, Tiktok™, and the

internet to communicate with people all over the world, and watch TV on foreign TV channels.

Students are open for curricula with international orientation; for most of them it is not a challenge that a study programme has elements in a foreign language (mostly English). They are interested in an internationalization-friendly environment at a university and want to be a part of it (e.g., as buddies for incoming students or in university networks).

For many students it is a personal goal to integrate a study period or internship abroad as they know that such an experience widens their social competences – not only for a future job. They also expect their learning outcomes to be accepted by their home university. Especially for (working) part-time students (especially if they have additional care responsibilities), staying abroad for a longer study period poses a challenge. They are happy with short-term study trips to other countries or mobility windows that enable short-term mobility.

Students need support for these activities as well as an internationalization-friendly environment on their study programme: information, practical help with the organization of the study period abroad, financial support, contact persons at other universities, informal information from former outgoing students as well as contact to incoming students. They also benefit from team-teaching of academic staff from different countries and in different languages, from learning materials in other languages, from country reports and comparative statistical data (e.g. EUROSTAT, EU-SILC). They learn a lot if they can work in mixed country groups in a virtual classroom or if they can give a presentation or write essays or reports in a foreign language. Students create their own networks while working together with peers from other universities and countries. They experience the globalized world as a matter of course if they learn about the multi-level governance of the European Union and their relevance in Social Economy.

How a Master Programme in Social Economy Realized Internationalization

The master programme *Social Economy and Social Work (SOWOSEC)* at the University of Applied Sciences in Vienna was developed and established by staff members with a long experience in international networks and projects, particularly those funded by Erasmus. For them it was clear that a curriculum is much more interesting for students if they experience the additional value of internationalization for their future employability.

An intensive curriculum development process and engaged lecturers from different countries can guarantee a strong and sustainable *joint degree*-cooperation. Beside the national diploma supplement, a joint degree offers an additional degree from all other partner universities. The curriculum has to offer the possibility to earn 30 ECTS under the responsibility of another partner university. A joint degree

contract between the seven partner universities (Munich University of Applied Sciences /Germany, University of Silesia in Katowice/Poland, University of Cluj-Napoca/Romania, University of Trnava/Slovakia, University of Ostrava/Czech Republic, University of Debrecen/Hungary and University of Applied Sciences Campus Wien/Austria) forms the legal basis for this cooperation.

A frequent reason for part-time students to apply for this master programme is its international orientation, although the main language of tuition is German. The students get articles and materials in English from the outset. They are invited to contribute their own experiences from their countries of origin. In selected teaching events, they have contact with incoming lecturers from partner universities abroad (mainly in English). In two different semesters, they participate in a conference (Spring School) with international experts, where they also use English as the conference language to work on current topics of social economy, social politics, and social work. A mobility window in the third semester and the support of academics enable the students to complete a two-week study period abroad at one of the partner universities. During that time, they get in touch with social economic organizations in the host country and create a joint project together with their peers from other universities; they present their results and write a final report. Following that, a few students even decide to write their master thesis in English about internationally relevant topics.

At the end of their studies, an academic from a partner university is appointed as the second supervisor of their master thesis. One member of the committee of the master colloquium is also a colleague from a partner university. Apart from that, a few students decide to study for one semester at a partner university or they do a graduate internship at the end of their studies. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic conditions, virtual mobility has gained in importance and will be extended in the future.

To realize such a joint degree master programme, the commitment of the whole team as well as support from the international office and the academic board of the University of Applied Sciences were crucial. It involves staff members going abroad for teaching, working in international teaching and research projects and publishing in cooperation with colleagues from abroad. They all are important role models who inspire students to participate in international activities.

Activities and Offers for Internationalized Study Programmes

Many academics and engaged employees from international offices in different universities developed different activities to promote the internationalization of study programmes in higher education institutions.

For this, Erasmus+ is the most important EU programme “in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2021–2027. (...)High quality, inclusive education and training, as well as informal and non-formal learning, ultimately equip young people and participants of all ages with the qualifications and skills needed for their meaningful participation in democratic society, intercultural

understanding and successful transition in the labour market.” (European Commission, 2021b: p. 4). The programme has, among other things, the following specific objectives: promote learning mobility of individuals and groups, as well as cooperation, quality, inclusion and equity, excellence, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of education and training (ibid: p. 6).

In general, international classrooms allow students of different origins and from different cultural backgrounds to bring an important value to a didactic concept that is focused on problem-based and self-responsible learning. Students from abroad significantly expand the scope of topics and discussions. Hence, students as well as lecturers need special training. The concept itself promotes intercultural (and language) competences for students, who should be prepared for a globalized labour market. *Mobility abroad* is an additional component of internationalization. Individual mobility enables university employees as well as students to develop professionally and personally and to acquire relevant experiences. To study abroad for a semester is as important for Social Work Management students as to complete an internship in a social economy organization during or after their studies. Thereby they become more sensitized to different political, economical, and social policy systems; they widen their knowledge of theories as well as methods in their future field of work.

Mobility windows are a period of time reserved for international student mobility that is embedded into the curriculum of a study programme. The “*curricular embeddedness*” (Ferencz, 2015, p. 26) is operationalized by two criteria: the foreseen mobility period must be an explicit part of both the domestic curriculum and the study plan. Students need to know from the beginning of their studies when and for how long they should go abroad. If study programmes have mobility windows, transparency about the possibility of recognition of the stay abroad is paramount. For Social Management students it is an indispensable experience, if they get an opportunity to make a study trip to a foreign country, where they learn to know lecturers and students from other universities and where they get in close contact with representatives of non-profit organisations in the social sector. At the same time, they make personal intercultural experiences – maybe also in a foreign language.

Virtual mobility is an alternative or complement to physical mobility, since a large number of students are unable to go abroad for social, financial, or other reasons. “Physical and virtual mobility serve different objectives. (...) Virtual mobility creates accessible, flexible, scalable and cost-effective solutions for all types of curricula, especially in collaborative curricula. In principle, all students can participate in virtually mobility schemes” (EADTU, 2018, p. 7). Video Conferencing, webinars or comparative case studies are other opportunities for students, lecturers, and practitioners to get in touch and to work together on one or several different solutions for a case – e.g. in Social Work Management. Another option could be a joint fictitious project that students from different study programmes and different universities develop to seek solutions for a specific problem in a social economy organization. Students could also apply for EU funding to realize such a project during which

they train their social competences and make contacts for future cross-border cooperation.

Double, joint, or multiple programmes with similar curricula are another option to strengthen the international outlook of universities. Such programmes are developed between two or more HEIs and are geared towards a long-term collaboration. The development of such a programme offers the possibility to reflect one's own curriculum while explaining it to the other partner universities. For Social Work Management students – especially with migration background and excellent language skills – it could open up new opportunities in the labour market of other countries.

Multilateral activities between academics can promote an internationally oriented study programme: a multilateral teaching or research project or joined publications about trends and developments in different countries foster the idea of acting globally among all persons involved. *Especially issues affecting current societal challenges* (e.g., *social inequality*) require new forms of international cooperation.

International conferences focused on special topics provide the opportunity to exchange theoretical and practical experience between academics, practitioners, and students in Social Work Management. Students thus learn about current problems in practice and how theories and research can address these. Students can try out their language and presentation skills, and they learn to prove themselves in academic and professional exchange.

International networks (like INAS – Internationale Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sozialmanagement/Sozialwirtschaft, or The Network for Social Work Management) deepen contacts between academics and students in the scientific community.

Activities like *Summer Schools* or *Spring Schools* make it possible for international experts, academics, and students to work on current topics in Social Economy or Social Work (Management). Knowhow and open-mindedness are equally important for finding solutions to global societal challenges, such as sustainability, digitalization, or migration.

Conclusions

Internationalization is not a new concept in higher education, and it did not start with the Bologna process. Since the 1990s, a lot of universities have been promoting the physical mobility and language competences of academics and students, developing more internationally oriented curricula, and realizing numerous cross-border projects – very often with EU-funded programmes.

Internationalisation at Home and virtual mobility have become increasingly important for students who study from home/study remotely; it also enables staff to experience 'cultural otherness' locally. Universities therefore need personnel with an affinity to internationalization, and have to commit to it themselves by creating an appropriate environment and devising a corresponding strategy. This includes

providing the university staff as well as the students with special services, resources, and facilities.

The curricula of study programmes should integrate an international and a comparative content and promote the language and transcultural competences of students and staff members as well as cooperation and collaboration between universities in selected research and teaching projects and publications. Virtual and short-term mobility should offer part-time students an opportunity to experience the additional value of internationalization.

Internationalization makes Social Work Management study programmes more attractive and up-to-date for students and academics and enables them to address global challenges in society.

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Part III
Methods of Teaching and Learning: Best
Practices and Case Studies

Chapter 9

Universal Design and Social Work Management Education



Gloria Kirwan and Antonio López Peláez

Abstract Universal design concepts have much to offer the planning and delivery of social work management education. In addition, the core principles of universal design chime with the core values of the social work profession and align positively with the aims of social work practice in a variety of social work settings. As such, the theory of universal design represents useful knowledge for social workers and social work managers in all fields of social work practice. This chapter considers the applicability of universal design in social work practice and argues for greater recognition of its value in social work management education.

Introduction

The argument in favour of a universal design focus in social work management education can be approached from a number of different perspectives, which this chapter sets out in detail. Firstly, universal design (UD) is recognised worldwide as a sine qua non for the creation of inclusive living environments and as an essential feature of the broader agenda for the advancement of engagement and participation in society for all. Thus, the empowerment agenda underpinning universal design fits comfortably alongside the similar empowerment imperative that flows from social work's global mission (see for example, the IFSW's (2019) definition of social work) that aims to support inclusion, societal participation and a socially just society. Secondly, the incorporation of UD theory into teaching and learning practices, where it has developed into a body of knowledge commonly referred to as universal

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design for learning (UDL), has rendered educational systems more accessible to a widened range of people, including those who live with or experience physical or learning challenges. This has relevance to all educators, including those involved in the field of social work education.

Educators involved in the delivery of social work management education will find it useful to adopt UDL knowledge so as to make their teaching inputs as accessible as possible for all students. In addition, social workers in many fields of practice are involved in helping clients live independently, and UD knowledge can enhance the ability of social workers to appreciate the role of design in facilitating independent living in terms of housing and accommodation, neighbourhood planning and mobility as well as accessibility of digitalised services (Kirwan, 2023).

This chapter provides an overview of the field of practice known as universal design and, using Ireland as an example, it considers the applicability and usefulness of UD design in the lives of people whom social workers may encounter in their day-to-day work. This chapter also considers the relevance of UD and UDL to social work management education with particular reference to its alignment with social work ideals.

Universal Design in the Irish Context

Originally associated with the architectural design of accessible buildings and barrier-free lived environments, universal design (UD) came to prominence in recent decades with the development of innovative breakthroughs regarding the design of easy to navigate environments which could support maximum independence and engagement for all people, including older people or those living with physical disabilities or infirmities (Story et al., 1998). Pisha and Coyne (2001, p. 197) summarise the essential message of UD as a call to “consider the needs of all potential users from the beginning”.

The emergence of the UD conceptual framework marked a significant milestone in the field of architecture and other disciplines involved in the design of living spaces, as well as the design of objects we use for daily life and mobility, including travel outside the home. The effectiveness of UD soon became apparent, not simply as an architectural framework but as a vital ingredient in the political agenda of greater equality and self-determination in society. The potential benefits of UD are referred to in Article 2 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) (UN, 2007), which saluted the role of UD in making a range of phenomena accessible and usable by all people.

The understanding of independence is also broadened through the UD perspective, as it becomes clear that there can be levels of independence achievable for different groups of people, and so being as independent as possible (even where assistance of some form might be needed) becomes an important design consideration. For example, Verma (2019) studied the application of UD in a range of residential settings for older people, including sheltered housing and a group home for

people with declining memory. She found that UD can support the maintenance of community connections for older people, including those experiencing frailty and those living in cared-for environments, by enabling them to access public spaces, stay in touch with friends and family, and participate at many different levels of community and societal activity. Other studies have offered similar evidence of a link between environmental design informed by universal design and the levels of participation that can be achieved by some community members as well as their reported feelings of connection to their community as a result of being able to participate in community activities (Cao et al., 2020).

In the Irish context, the Central Statistics Office (2016) reports that 13.5% of the Irish population canvassed as part of the 2016 National Census stated they had at least one disability. The same Census identified that 13.4% of the total population of Ireland was aged 65 years or more. The experiences of dependency or support needs within these categories are not clear from the Census information, but it can be extrapolated from these figures that the Irish population includes groups of people for whom universal design approaches to the lived and virtual environments may be necessary and useful in helping them to participate in and feel connected to the wider society. In this context, there has been a number of initiatives, such as the Age Friendly Ireland Programme, which incorporates UD concepts as part of an inclusive, participatory agenda (Keyes, 2018). Initiatives under this specific Programme include integrating UD into the design of accessible public spaces, accessible transport and digital devices designed to support enhanced personal security.

Social workers, located in Ireland and across the world, work with ageing and disabled populations and, it is argued here, just as in the case of architects, engineers and digital technologists, UD knowledge can enhance social work practice when it is aimed at helping people to live as independently as possible and to stay connected to, and contribute to, their local community and wider society. In this light, a knowledge of UD theory and principles can assist the work of social work managers who are charged with design and oversight of social work services and social work interventions in many different contexts.

The integration of UD across many fields of design has marked a positive shift in awareness regarding the potential benefits of design-for-all thinking, which reflects and corresponds with the wider push at societal level for greater social equality and the elimination of barriers (of which there are many) that prevent or diminish full participation of individuals in society. Persson et al. (2015) suggest that the drive towards greater accessibility in society (for example, accessibility to and to the use of Information and Communication Technology [ICT]) reflects a shift in basic values that has influenced the societal momentum to support the independence and personal agency of a range of population sub-groups such as older people, people with disabilities and so on. They also make the point that working towards an accessible and barrier-free environment, both physical and virtual, requires inputs from a range of stakeholders, all of whom need to understand the interaction between accessibility and participation. While Persson et al. (2015) do not identify social workers in their categorisation of relevant stakeholders, it is arguable that, alongside many other professions, social work can play an important role in advocating for

inclusive design for those who use social work services, many of whom fall within the population groups that UD supports. In addition, Sousa e Silva et al. (2019) encourage greater efforts regarding the delivery of equality of access to digital resources for all people, and they lament that much remains to be done on this front. It is vital that social work services are instrumental in advocating for equality of access, not only in terms of access to digital devices for all, but also in terms of the provision of UD-informed environments, across a range of environmental, social, and digital domains including digital resources, which facilitate the greatest possible number of people to stay connected to their social environment in practical terms.

As will be outlined in more detail in the next section, UD has also taken a foothold in the field of teaching and learning. Applying UD principles to the classroom has expanded the numbers of people who can comfortably engage in teaching and learning settings. It has also opened up educational opportunities to larger numbers of people who can use virtual learning platforms as a means of accessing the virtual classroom provided these settings incorporate the necessary inclusive design approaches. Just as ICT now provides for synchronous and asynchronous access to education and the use of enhanced approaches to teaching and learning such as gamification, flipped classrooms, and robotics (Fonseca & García-Peñalvo, 2019), so too, the profession of social work has much to gain by considering how the application of UD in physical and virtual social work services could improve participation and empowerment of service users. This is particularly relevant in contexts where social workers are engaged in providing information to groups of service users or the population at large. It is also possible that UD and UDL theory could be relevant in many social work practice sites and contexts beyond information-sharing services. More work needs to be carried out to explore the wider potential application of UD and UDL ideas across social work services in general.

At its core, UD aims to intentionally avoid the creation of obstacles to independent living and engagement in society by ensuring that places, spaces, devices, and the general lived environment are designed for easy use by everyone. In this perspective, participation and personal agency should not be constrained by environments that prevent people with physical, intellectual, sensory or other challenges from comfortably navigating or living in them. Over time, UD theory has gained traction in many fields and disciplines, including that of education, where universal design for learning (UDL) has come to the forefront of efforts to make teaching and learning systems accessible and usable for all people (McGuire, 2011). The next section takes a closer look at developments in the field of education and considers how the emerging field of UDL can be relevant to social work management education.

Universal Design for Learning

The potential of UD to achieve maximum inclusion extends to classroom settings where universal design for learning (UDL) is concerned with the creation of learning environments that can accommodate all learners, or as Capp (2017, p. 791) puts

it, “planning to the edges of the classroom”. Writing in the Irish context, Quirke and McCarthy (2020) explain UDL as an approach to teaching and learning that promotes the full participation in learning environments of all learners to their maximum individual potential. As Johnson and Fox (2003) point out, the UDL model perceives functional impediments to be caused by environments and how they are designed, not by the abilities of the individuals who use them. UDL, therefore, exchanges a focus on individual limitations as they might present in the classroom or virtual learning environment for a focus on eliminating the disabling characteristics of the learning context which serve to stifle student participation and student advancement.

The insertion of universal design thinking into educational contexts has developed over the past four decades. Fox et al. (2003) highlight the evolution of ideas regarding the integration of UD theory into learning environments with early examples including the work of Chickering and Gamson (1987) who laid down good practice guidance for inclusive undergraduate education. Fox et al. (2003, p. 26) distilled a set of essential components of supportive and inclusive learning environments, which includes the creation of a safe and supportive learning environment, explicit information on learning objectives and assessments, timely feedback to students, multimodal instructional methods, flexibility in the choice of assessment methods, and the use of assistive technology.

Rose (2000) suggests that UDL has not only increased access to education, but that it has transformed the teaching and learning environment by supporting flexibility in the design of resources so that the diverse needs of all learners can be accommodated (Rose & Meyer, 2006). Perpetuating the traditional ablist status quo in educational settings is no longer acceptable according to Capp (2017) who points out that UDL offers both a philosophical and practical way of responding positively to an increasingly diverse student population. These practical responses can include the creation of different teaching resources and materials (Courey et al., 2013), valuing the strengths of all students (Fuelberth & Laird, 2014), as well as the use of different forms of assessment that enable all learners to demonstrate their competence in a given topic or skill.

Based on his meta-analysis of the UDL literature, Capp (2017) identifies core elements of the UDL philosophy, which he distils down to three core elements. Firstly, he highlights the use of different ways to represent knowledge, secondly, the use of different forms of action and expression (Fovet, 2020a), which allow students to display their grasp of specific knowledge, and thirdly, the multiple ways of engaging or facilitating the engagement of students. It is vital to keep a clear focus on the aim of UDL thinking, no matter where or how it is applied, because it emphasises how the learning environment must adapt to the needs of the student (King-Sears, 2009). In line with the goal of creating learning environments, which offer each individual learner the best opportunity for maximum participation, the key principles of UDL thus become axiomatic to its success.

Developing these elements, Quirke and McCarthy (2020) highlight a set of key principles that sustain this philosophical base and provide the operational bedrock of UDL for educators in Ireland. These principles (see also, Connell, et al., 1997;

Story, 2001) can be applied in a myriad of ways, depending on the specific learning environment and the specific learner. They apply to both traditional classroom settings as well as digital or virtual resources. Drawing on Quirke and McCarthy (2020), these principles can be summarised as follows:

1. Equity.

UDL aims to make education and learning accessible to the greatest number of people possible. To achieve this aim, learning environments must adapt to the learner and meet their learning needs.

2. Flexibility of Use.

Flexibility in the educational context can involve presentation of learning materials in ways that are accessible for all students. It also incorporates flexibility of evaluation, allowing students to demonstrate their acquisition of knowledge and skills in different modalities with a more prominent focus on learning outcomes, which, if possible, can be demonstrated in different ways depending on the mix of student abilities that are present.

3. Ease of use.

Just as UD first targeted independence for all in the lived environment, now UDL aims to facilitate learning environments that are easy to navigate by as many learners as possible. Adhering to the basic tenet of design for all, it is not the learner who must adapt, it is the learning environment that must be adapted when necessary to accommodate the learner. The advances in assistive learning technology, and wider understanding of UD in the design of digital resources, have supported significant gains in the roll-out of UDL-informed participative learning environments.

4. Accessibility.

This principle concerns the core idea that design-for-all must circumvent barriers to learning and aim to make learning environments accessible to all learners.

5. Tolerance of Error.

This principle highlights the need for easy correction of errors by individual students. For example, a digital learning interface should be designed in such a way that it allows the user to correct an inputting error.

6. Low physical effort.

This principle aims to address and level up the extensive physical differences that exist across the full range of human capability and acknowledges that some learners could be impeded from participating in certain teaching and learning contexts if learning environments are not designed to accommodate their specific challenges. This principle applies to a range of potential obstacles that learners must navigate when trying to engage in education, such as ease of access to educational spaces, be they classrooms or lecture theatres, the design and provision of assistive technology and the provision of learning materials that adhere to inclusive learning guidelines.

7. Accommodating size and space requirements.

This principle flows from the previous principle and aims to address and stress the importance of designing environments, be they physical or digital,

which allow learners to use them. It is a principle that addresses the practical dimension of the learning environment, and it highlights how issues that may seem minor to the majority of learners, such as the height of a desk, can present significant obstacles for some learners.

These principles underpin UDL across all learning contexts. The next section addresses the extent to which these principles are relevant in the design and delivery of social work management education, and beyond that in social work practice itself, given that they appear to tally closely with the core principles of inclusion, non-discrimination, and participation, which lie at the heart of social work values (Thompson, 2002).

Universal Design for Learning and Social Work Management Education

The relevance of UDL to social work management education can be viewed from two perspectives. Firstly, there is the need to ensure that social work education, including social work management education, applies best practice approaches to teaching and learning in the classroom and other contexts, such as field education and in-service learning. Taking this stance leads inexorably towards the incorporation of UDL principles into social work management education delivery. The second point concerns the relevance of UD and UDL theory to social work practice in general, which in turn leads to consideration of the need to include reference to UD concepts in the social work management education curriculum in order to build social work managers' understanding and knowledge of this concept and support their awareness regarding its relevance to the services they are responsible for delivering.

Universal Design for Learning and the Delivery of Social Work Management Education

As detailed earlier, the arrival of UDL approaches into the field of education has transformed the learning environment for many students. When informed by UDL theory, the adaptation of the physical layout of classrooms, the availability of assistive resources, and the digitalization of learning tools have all led to significant improvements in the accessibility of education for more and more groups in society. In particular, the increasing array of assistive technologies, now available for use in the classroom, is changing the delivery of education dramatically.

UDL cannot address, nor does it set out to address, all structural inequalities in society. However, when UDL is incorporated into the design of the educational space and the teaching and learning tools that are used in those spaces, then it can

contribute to enhanced engagement and participation by students of all abilities. While the social work profession is interested to promote educational opportunities, including the education of aspiring members of the profession, it is the human rights mission of social work that makes the issue of inclusion and participation an imperative in professional social work education.

The learning environments that are created by social workers now have a theoretical framework available to guide them, which speaks to the anti-disablist and pro-participation agendas. With the theory of UDL (or universal instructional design [UID] as it is sometimes referred to), educators now have a knowledge base available to guide their work in planning the delivery of social work education, including social work management courses, both in terms of the physical environments that will be used, and also in the design of learning materials and virtual learning platforms. As Higbee (2003, p. 2) points out, “no student should be an afterthought”, a point developed by Lightfoot and Gibson (2005) who suggest that it is congruent with the social work profession’s value base for social work educators to adopt measures that promote and support equality within education for every student. They highlight how UDL can meet the needs of students with varying “learning styles, family situations, cultural backgrounds, and abilities” (ibid, p. 271). It is this diverse student profile that social work education aims to attract and support as much as possible, and UDL offers a route to achieving this goal.

Lightfoot and Gibson (2005) also draw a distinction between educational delivery that allows special permission or forms of accommodations for students with disabilities, compared to educational provision that front-loads or builds in accommodations for all at the planning stage, thereby negating the need for students to identify themselves as in need of such accommodations. They make the point that requiring disabled students to seek out accommodations, such as extensions for submission deadlines, has the effect of othering some students by highlighting and exaggerating their difference(s) from other students. UDL, on the other hand, is focused on levelling the playing pitch, by front-loading adaptations or accommodations and ensuring that courses are designed in a way that all students can progress through the course as equals without the need to highlight their difference to others or their limitations.

Universal Design, Universal Design for Learning and Social Work Management Practice

Solas (2008) puts down a clear call for clarity in the social work discourse regarding its stated allegiance to a social justice agenda. In his view, “social justice requires the fair and equal access to rights and opportunities as well as resources” (ibid, p. 216). The aim of UD chimes in many ways with social work’s critical social justice focus (Noble, 2004) and anti-disablist commitment (Thompson, 2016), offering, as it does, both a perspective and a set of design practices that can be applied in both macro and micro levels in pursuit of a wider inclusive agenda.

It is suggested here that the incorporation of universal design thinking into social work practice resonates strongly not only with the social justice agenda in social work but also with the person-in-environment model in critical social work (Kondrat, 2002) as well as the emancipatory values, which the profession draws on in its promotion of a fair and equal society for all (Hugman, 2012; Thompson, 2002). However, knowledge of universal design theory and principles is not typically prominent in the global social work toolkit of knowledge and there is much work to be done in cementing its place into the social work curriculum. Green and McDermott (2010) urge social workers to stay awake to emerging issues that deserve social work attention, and it is argued here that the ‘design for all’ movement has much to contribute and add to the ecological and person-centred perspectives long regarded as central to social work practice.

Furthermore, universal design provides a critical lens through which the provision of resources can be viewed and assessed. At the heart of UD’s mission is the concept of personal agency and equality of participation in society for all, be that in a person’s home, classroom, workplace or community/society. This speaks to the concept of universal participation in society and provides a clear alternative in social work to stereotyping assumptions, or what Rogers and Allen (2019, p. 13) refer to as “pathologising practice”, which focus on differences between people and overlook the individual strengths and potential within each person. Because UD provides the framework, language, and practicalities of a critical alternative to traditional ablist-centric design, it has much to offer social work’s ongoing evolution as a human rights profession, which aims to challenge discriminatory processes, structural inequalities, or environments that promulgate injustices of any kind. Acknowledging Thompson’s (2017) point that challenging exclusion and discrimination is a complex endeavour for social workers, it is nonetheless surprising that universal design is a term rarely found in the social work lexicon, almost invisible in the social work curriculum and minimal, if present at all, in the person-centred and strengths-based social work discourse. Replicate of Noble’s (2004) call to social workers to resist discriminatory welfare systems, which entrench rather than address injustice and poverty in society, this chapter invites social workers to think about the discriminatory aspects of poorly planned lived environments and to raise concerns when provision of services or digitalized welfare resources fail to embrace the core tenets of the UD perspective. UD, therefore, offers a useful frame of reference for social work managers in terms of the services they develop and manage.

Fovet (2020b) emphasises how UDL achieves greater participation for all students in the classroom and not only those with specific disabilities. For social work educators, including social work management educators, the message to be gained from UD and UDL theory is that all teaching and learning environments, including those in which social workers and social work managers are educated, can benefit greatly by embracing the UDL principles outlined earlier in this chapter. By using UDL theory in the social work management classroom, students then gain insight into the application of these core principles and can bring this knowledge back into their everyday management practices.

Limitations to the Concept of Universal Design for Learning

While a strong case has been made in this chapter for the incorporation of UDL theory into the delivery of social work management education, it is important to also consider the challenges its incorporation may present. These include the additional knowledge and expertise required by faculty and instructors as well as the need to have technological expertise available in terms of the development and provision of digital learning resources (Lightfoot & Gibson, 2005). Johnson and Fox (2003) highlight the commitment that teachers must give to preparation of learning materials including lecture notes so that these can be made accessible in different formats. They also echo Silver et al.'s (1998) observation that teaching staff in third level institutions may not have higher level qualifications in teaching and pedagogy or training in learning technologies and may feel stretched by the demands of delivering teaching inputs that incorporate UDL approaches. There is a measure of catch-up required in the social work profession with regard to the acquisition of knowledge relating to universal design theory, and this includes its relevance in the social work classroom. A strong case has been made in this chapter for social workers to incorporate a UD perspective into their person-centred and person-in-environment approaches, but this is hindered by the lack of awareness within the social work profession of UD theory in general. The education of social work managers offers a useful place to introduce this subject matter, because the leadership role of social work managers within social work services places them in a position to influence greater awareness of UD and UDL across a range of social work services in a diverse range of service settings. The social work management landscape is often associated with a rising managerialism agenda in which managers carry much of the responsibility in services for quality assurance, managing complexity and modernisation of services (Watson, 2008). It is important that social work management education provides social work managers with new and useful knowledge to drive forward their work to empower service users, even in the challenging terrain of social work management practice, and UD theory has much to offer in this regard, fitting neatly as it does with the wider social work agenda of empowerment and social justice.

Conclusions

This chapter agrees with Hymel and Katz (2019) that educational settings can be sites for social inclusion and goes on to argue that the social work management classroom can be a place where practical strategies for achieving social inclusion in social work practice can be shared, considered and critiqued. In particular, this chapter argues for social work management education to become a channel for dissemination of cutting-edge knowledge on the link between universal design and the achievement of a more equal and socially just society for all. It is also argued that

the mode of delivery of social work management education should itself adopt universal design for learning principles and approaches so that students can acquire a participative and inclusive learning experience whilst also seeing universal design in action. The potential application of universal design thinking in social work is far-reaching and as yet it is an under-utilised lens through which social workers can assess the needs of service users whose self-agency and/or participation in society is curtailed by environmental design limitations or lack of access to assistive technology. As leaders in their field, social work managers can help disseminate universal design knowledge within the wider profession, and social work management education can thus make a significant contribution to driving forward the possibilities of universal design-informed social work practice.

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Chapter 10

Fieldwork and Supervision as a Teaching Method and Learning Strategy in Chilean Social Work Management Education: Innovation in the Training of Social Work Student Supervisors



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and María Paz Martínez Rubio

Abstract Evidence indicates that field practice is the optimal setting to teach and learn Social Work. In this space, along with seminar work supervision, where students meet weekly with their professor, field supervisors play a special role. In this way, innovative methods to solve problems are developed by the students and their supervisors. Because of that, supervision becomes an important tool for social work and social work management. This chapter reports the development and implementation of a project financed by the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile whose main aim is to create a Training Model for Social Work Field Supervisors. The training model proposes strengthening the supervisory skills of professionals who work along with the students in their field practice process. With this aim in mind, the chapter first presents the Chilean context of social work management, which is marked by the privatisation of social services. Then, it describes the current state of social work management training in Chile, paying particular attention to the role of field practice supervisors. Subsequently, the supervisor training programme and its conceptual bases are introduced to describe the results of its application. Finally, the challenges and future lines of research in the area will be presented.

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Introduction

The evidence indicates that an internship is the best way to teach and learn social work (Petrila et al., 2015). This means that, while theory courses are important in social work education, the field is where students develop the most essential skills for their professional life. It is where they can test what they have learned, integrate theory and practice, evaluate their interventions, and deliberate on ethical dilemmas (Homonoff, 2008).

The fundamental value of practice in social work students education does not come naturally or casually. Practical education and training require constant reflection accompanied by supervision and feedback, both in the classroom and the field. The many contexts in which practice takes place challenges students with much more complex realities than those presented in the classroom (Caspi & Reid, 2002). Such realities are characterised by social problems in an environment of high social vulnerability and poverty.

In social work practice learning, the element that guarantees a reflective process and feedback is supervision, understood as the reflection process focused on the student, their professional development, and their well-being and promoting improvements in their interventions and learning (O'Donoghue, 2010). Furthermore, supervision is considered the most relevant factor with regard to student satisfaction with their professional education and training (Kanno & Koeske, 2010; Petrila et al., 2015)

Recognising this, the School of Social Work at the Universidad Católica de Chile (herein referred to as ETSUC) developed an e-learning training programme focused on strengthening the supervisory skills of professionals that oversee students during their field practice learning. The project covers a dimension of social work education that, in the Chilean case, is not consistently recognised, compensated, or managed: the role of field supervisor. Likewise, the project provides knowledge regarding the role of student supervisors, as its design was based on a research process that investigated the profile of field supervisors and the gaps in their training and education.

Furthermore, because this course focuses on supervisory skills, it offers the opportunity to strengthen training and education in social work management. It has been established that supervision is an important skill for social work managers to rely on in terms of the quality of interventions and to offer opportunities for personal development (Hughes & Wearing, 2007; Roark Murphy, 2017; Wimpfheimer, 2004). For this reason, this training process can be an opportunity to improve the professional performance of social workers that fulfil the role of supervisor. Furthermore, having supervisors with practical skills allows students to observe and emulate such skills, which strengthens the modelling dimension of practical learning (Brewer, 2016).

Thereby, this chapter aims to present the innovative teaching project “Supervisory Skills Training Programme” developed by the Social Work School of the Universidad Católica de Chile. To this end, it will first describe the state of social work practical

training and education in Chile, particularly at the Universidad Católica de Chile, and then analyse the role of practice learning supervision in social work and the importance of training supervisors. Thirdly, it will present the project and describe the results regarding the profile of a supervisor as well as the proposed training activities. Finally, it will discuss the role of the course in social work management training and education, suggesting future lines of research.

Social Work Field Practice in Chile

Chile, located in the southwest of South America, was found to have approximately 19 million people in 2019, half of whom lived in Santiago, the country's capital. Although the country, instantly recognisable on a map due to its long and thin shape, garnered much attention for the steady improvements of its socio-economic indicators in the 1990s, it is currently characterised by high levels of social inequality (OECD, 2018).

This is due, in part, to the inequalities intrinsic to Chile's current socio-economic model based on the principles of neoliberalism and social policies inspired by the New Public Management approach, which is currently being heavily challenged by a massive social movement (Jiménez-Yañez, 2020). In October 2019, as a result of many days of national protest, a process that will lead to drafting and adoption of a constitution for the country began.¹ Thus, through a constitutional convention, the first in the world to have equal representation of men and women and a guaranteed number of places for participants from the country's indigenous communities, a new social contract for Chile has begun to be conceived in the year 2021.

The reality that is being challenged by the organised citizenry of Chile has directly impacted the practice, education, and training of social workers in practical terms. This is because the military dictatorship installed in 1973 initiated a series of economic, political, and social reforms that have marked the evolution of social work in the country.

Thus, to understand the process in which the profession of social work is learned and taught in Chile, one must recognise how this process has been formed by the country's historical, political, economic, and social trajectory.

¹In October 2020, a **national plebiscite** was held in Chile. The referendum asked whether a new constitution should be drafted, and how it should be drafted. The "Approve" side won by a landslide, with 78% agreeing to a new constitution. Regarding the question of how the new text should be written, 79% opted for a "Constitutional Convention." This meant an end to the constitution imposed by Pinochet in 1980.

How Has Social Work Been Practised in Chile over the Last 50 Years?

With more than 200 years of existence as an independent republic, the socio-political history of Chile has marked the trajectory of social work since its establishment as a profession in 1925, when the first school was founded as a response to the particular social issues developing in Chile (Vivero, 2017).

However, it was the military coup of 1973, led by the army general Augusto Pinochet, and the resulting military dictatorship that has had the most significant transformative impact on the profession, the education and training of social workers, and the context in which social work is practised (Aguayo et al., 2018; Jimenez, 1982).

Through the implementation of neoliberal reforms during the 1980s, the Pinochet regime transformed the conditions under which social work is practised by outsourcing social services, imposing the logic of competitive tendering and focalisation of public policy (Cunill-Grau, 2012). Thus, the application of the New Public Management approach (Falabella, 2015) to the development of social policies meant that social services came to be funded according to criteria based on competition for resources, which encouraged professionals to place efficiency above quality (Cunill-Grau, 2012) and placed social work professionals in the role of “administrators” (Berg et al., 2008; Höjer & Forkby, 2011).

With regard to training and education, the 17-year military dictatorship closed social work schools throughout the nation, limited school vacancies, fired teachers, and persecuted, detained, disappeared, and executed social work students and professionals (Iturrieta, 2018).

Furthermore, the dictatorship also established laws that directly impacted social work. Through different bodies of law, it established that “social worker” would lose its status as a title conferred solely by universities, allowing it to be awarded by other higher education institutions, too (Iturrieta, 2018; Vivero, 2017).

The result of 40 years of these reforms for social work training and education was the proliferation of various learning institutions of different levels. Thus, one can find social work professionals with 2 years, 4 years, or 5 years of training and education, the latter being the only ones with a university degree. These differences in education plans have cost the discipline dearly from the perspective of labour unions and also in terms of its possibilities for development and strengthening of the profession (Aspeé, 2016).

Considering this situation, the present chapter will focus on the university level of social work education because of the historical and political trajectory of how it has been taught in Chile.

Social Work Field Education and Training at the Universidad Católica de Chile

University-level social work education and training is based on nine or ten semester programmes that confer the title of social worker as well as a licentiate degree. In September of 2020, there were 14,261 people in Chile studying in this type of programme at 39 different universities throughout the country (Mineduc, 2021). In Chile, the university certificate allows professional practice in any field, and social work education is not regulated with regard to its content and profiles.

The Social Work School of Universidad Católica de Chile, founded in Santiago in 1929, has a programme of 10 semesters, which includes two practical courses: a one-semester workshop during the third year and a 1-year professional practice experience to which the student exclusively dedicates their time during the last year of the course. Regardless of the level, the practical methodology has three dimensions: the practical workshop, the academic tutorial, and institutional supervision.

The workshop is a mandatory learning and collective support activity that takes place on a weekly basis for discussion and feedback from peers, typically in groups of 8–10 students. In this space, the students present their experiences and achievements and receive feedback from teachers and other students. This modality promotes collaborative learning and reflexive intervention and allows students to find answers to their problems in collaboration with their teachers and peers. Furthermore, it prepares students for working in a team in the workplace and contributes distinctive perspectives on how to approach common problems and situations, which can be understood as a learning outcome.

Regarding social work management education, this educational instance supports the empirical training of management competences regarding executive leadership, and interpersonal skills in particular, professional behaviour, and communication skills (Wimpfheimer et al., 2018), because in this context students are demanded to demonstrate knowledge about the organisation they are involved with, to establish a narrative from a professional perspective, where they are part of a work team, and to share information regarding their performance, task completion and problem-solving skills.

The second dimension is the academic tutorial, which is a personalised space where students and a teacher engage in a conversation that promotes reflection on the practical learning process of each student from an academic perspective. It is an activity that provides the student with the possibility to receive direct and individualised feedback concerning their work. This contributes to the creation of resource and strategic management skills in students, because it makes a deeper connection with the process of designing an intervention and then developing it inasmuch as it monitors the planification and every step needed from a realistic and efficient perspective, promotes strategic planning, and assures that students are reflecting on the resources (human, financial, material, time) needed for the best execution possible (Wimpfheimer et al., 2018).

The third dimension is on-site supervision, understood as an element that provides oversight and feedback that promotes the student's practical development, emphasising, on one hand, the learning process of the student at practice locations and, on the other, the training and work process of the professionals who provide supervision. Such supervision should be planned out and primarily emphasise support for the student's learning process and encouragement of their progress. This is to say that focus is placed on the training process and space, in addition to the educational needs of different participants. Supervision should be carried out at different moments during the academic period and set forth distinctive goals. These goals are proposed in accordance with the student's learning objectives and the objectives of the course in which the practice learning is taking place.

Supervision gives students an opportunity to learn managerial skills, such as an ability to maintain stakeholder relationship, to review and communicate their process, therefore promoting accountability, and to demonstrate their problem-solving skills and professional positioning, and it allows the students to observe, and be a part of, community collaboration (Wimpfheimer et al., 2018).

The on-site practice learning supervisors are strategic allies in the training and education process. For this reason, their periodic work of overseeing the students' work at the organisation is fundamental and is carried out through supervision meetings. These moments of weekly supervision are not only geared towards overseeing tasks but are expected to promote the practical application of five components critical to the development of professional skills that the student should acquire. Therefore, an effective supervision process should promote:

1. *Training and education*: integrate the dimensions of theory and practice and foster various learning opportunities.
2. *Reflection*: meant to strengthen interpersonal skills; that is, help the social worker to know and direct him or herself. Supervision should provide an opportunity for reflection with high ethical standards and help develop independent and critical thinking, in addition to problem-solving skills.
3. *Modelling*: understood as the training of attitudes, habits and tools needed for the intervention in which the student is engaged by applying and teaching tools of the field.
4. *Supervision*: involves monitoring the performance of students in a variety of situations, evaluating initial, previously learned competencies and obstacles to the tasks at the practice location, and providing regular feedback to the student in an open, serious, and respectful manner.
5. *Institutional Integration*: supervision should foster the incorporation of the student into the organisation's culture and help them maintain positive labour relations.

In the case of the Universidad Católica de Chile and most schools in the country, field supervision conducted by a social worker or a professional of other social sciences is provided voluntarily. These professionals do not receive financial compensation for their work. Due to this voluntary nature, there are no requirements that the

supervisor is expected to fulfil beyond the title of social worker and 1 year of professional experience.

Regarding the institutions that can become field practice centres, the practice locations can be public, private, or civil society organisations. Such institutions become practice settings by applying to become one and by adhering to specific formal requirements (a place to work and duties, among other things). Every year a call for submissions is opened and announced via social networks both to confirm a continuing relationship with the agencies that already work with the school and to invite new organisations to work with it. The only requirements are to be an institution that works with social workers who can provide supervision and to complete a form that indicates the work of the organisation and the professional space in which the students' support is visualised. It should be noted that a continuing relationship with an organisation does not guarantee that the same supervisor will provide the oversight. In fact, a significant turnover is often seen among supervisors at the organisations.

Due to these factors, the professional profiles of supervisors are diverse. Thus, first-time supervisors who are unfamiliar with the practice model of the ETSUC may sign up for this educational task beside the professionals who are themselves alumni of the school and therefore familiar with its model; there are supervisors who request interns and others who are designated by their institutional leadership. It should also be mentioned that supervision is not a formalised role at these institutions. Therefore, it is a task added to the already existing workload of the professionals.

Finally, it is important to consider that in Chile, supervision training is not a common practice. In general, social work education and training programs do not recognise subjects that seek to strengthen this formal professional role, which means it is possible that some of those who perform the supervisory role do not necessarily have the relevant skills.

In this situation, it is essential for professionals to fulfil the supervisor role in the best possible manner, not just to guarantee that the student learns but also to make sure that the student contributes to the work of the institution and is not a burden that detracts the professional from other important and urgent work they must perform.

Training and Education Need of Supervisors at Universidad Católica de Chile

The requirements for supervisor education and training can be found in many information sources and are a cross-disciplinary need shared by different social work actors.

The internal diagnoses carried out by the School of Social Work determined an absence of a planned, coordinated, and systematic supervision process that would support, accompany, and strengthen the deployment of knowledge and skills of

students, thus pointing out the need to strengthen the on-site supervision in internships (ETSUC, 2017). Moreover, they have revealed an urgent need to extend work with the supervisors at the institution beyond the duties those carry out in the internship process and to position them as educators and models for students.

Furthermore, a study conducted by the University's Institutional Analysis and Planning Department found that internships face increasingly complex situations and the manner in which they are overseen and organised should therefore be updated so that the students can tackle the arising problems in innovative ways (Escuela de Trabajo Social UC, 2017). The complexity observed in 2017 has only intensified since then due to the social upheaval that began on the 18th of October 2019 and all the consequences that the COVID-19 public health emergency has had for the learning process, particularly regarding practical learning in social work. In fact, as a result of both events, the practical methodology of the Social Work School of the Universidad Católica de Chile has been adapted to the situation and changed from in-person to remote implementation.

From the perspective of the different actors involved in the practical learning process, the most significant part of this process's difficulties is expressly or implicitly related to supervision and the expectations placed on those who fill this role at different practice locations, which will be explored further.

An interesting finding to note from the teaching assessments (early and final) about the student perspective is that the duties of the supervisor are essential to how they evaluate the professional practice course. All students assign a high value to the elements of individual and collective guidance, support, and feedback, highlighting how important these are to their satisfaction with the course, although they do not refer specifically to the supervision. At the same time, the teaching assessments with negative results show an unfavourable perception of the elements related to dialogue, facing difficulties, and receiving feedback for their task, all these being the activities for which the supervisors are responsible.

Just as supervision poses a variety of difficulties for students, the same applies to professors. The academic team of the Social Work School Practical Training must coordinate parallel departments (each led by a different professor) and at the same time they have to establish the coordination and management duties of the supervisors who will oversee the students at different locations, both within and outside Santiago, generally in areas characterised by high social vulnerability. All these factors impose obstacles to the continuity and oversight of the process flow as well as the students and they also create difficulties for effective collaboration between the academic team and the internship supervisors, which directly affect students, as on-site supervision does not necessarily enjoy continuous and permanent support and control.

The difficulties faced by on-site supervisors also affect the professors' performance in the practical courses and workshops: the students who, for different reasons, do not receive adequate supervision demand greater action from the professors who then have to assume a role that they cannot always effectively fulfil, as they do not have a corresponding connection with the field. Therefore, supervisors with

greater training and education could contribute to diminishing the heavy demands on professors and ease the burden of their role as coordinators.

Regarding the perspective of the supervisors, it is difficult to describe the complexity of supervision due to the frequent change in internship locations and the high turnover of professionals at these locations. However, based on the observations of the coordinators of the practical training and the management performed by the professors, it is possible to conclude that the challenges of supervision cited in the relevant literature can also be found at the Universidad Católica de Chile. Thus, a well-conducted supervision process largely depends on the amount and quality of time dedicated to the student, the facilitation provided for the agency, and the progressive autonomy of the interns (Maclean, 2012).

As mentioned earlier, social workers who supervise and form part of the practical learning community at the ETSUC have not necessarily had supervisor training. This is a focus and a practice that are new to the social services professions in Chile. There are no training programmes for learning how to be a supervisor. Although the ETSUC makes an effort to conduct supervisor meetings every semester to help them better fulfil their role, attendance of these meetings never exceeds 30% of the total number of supervisors.

Considering the historical particularities of the profession, the background of the discipline and practical methodology for social work field training, and the heterogeneity of the organisations in which practical training and education is conducted, one can assert that the demands of the role of supervisor exceed those in the description provided by the ETSUC's model. While the model provides information about the participating actors and the stages of the practical training process, it does not give thorough details regarding the objectives, duties, methodologies, and skills needed for supervision, nor does it offer support options for the supervisors, despite the importance assigned to the role of supervisor in the learning process of the student. Therefore, the guidance provided to supervisors in the practical education and training model of the ETSUC does not prepare them to deal with the complexity that characterises supervision in the current state of the professional field, especially considering the expectations placed on supervisors by professors and students and the significant role that the evidence assigns to supervision in the learning and intervention processes of social work (Kanno & Koeske, 2010; Tsui et al., 2017).

All this demonstrates a gap between the demands that the characteristics and complexities of the professional field practice make on the supervision, the skills and abilities of supervisors, and the orientations to exercise their role. Consequently, based on the need to strengthen the role of supervision in the development of practical learning, this project chose to do so through the education and training processes of the School of Social Work, recognising that this is one of the dimensions needed to improve the overall situation. Instruction in the specific body of knowledge regarding supervision and the use of practical tools for the accompaniment of students have emerged as a solution: the proposition being made is that by strengthening the role of supervisors through a training process, it will be possible to improve the response of the practice model to the complexity of the current scenarios of professional practice, thus also improving the learning process of the students.

Social Work On-Site Supervision: Some Concepts and Functions

There are multiple definitions of social work supervision. For the purposes of the training and education project presented in this chapter, supervision is considered a process that fosters critical reflection about the actions, processes, people, and contexts related to social work practice learning (O'Donoghue, 2015). This process has proven to be essential for balancing professional autonomy with responsibility toward the users, ethics, and professional standards, along with the responsibility to the organisation in which practice learning takes place and society in general (Stevenson, 2005).

In general terms, it can be stated that the purpose of supervision is to ensure the quality of the work conducted toward meeting the previously established goals and outcomes (Rose & Haywood, 2007). There is a consensus in the available literature regarding the objectives of social work supervision. It is generally accepted that supervision has four main objectives (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014)

1. To guarantee competent and responsible practice, that is to say that supervision contributes to proper, committed practice.
2. To foster continuous professional development. This recognises professional practice as a means of permanent learning through practice, which offers learning and improvement opportunities for the people involved.
3. To offer personal support to professionals in the field. This goal indicates that supervision should be understood as an activity that nurtures and provides personal support.
4. To involve the professional in the organisation. The fourth objective reveals the role supervision has in mediating between the needs of the student and the professional future with the organisation.

The internship model of the ETSUC is no exception. The work performed in the professional field allows students to develop the essential competencies needed for practicing social work, offering an opportunity for continual improvement in professional performance, reflexive and committed practice, and professional competence. Thus, supervision is also an ethical duty and allows both the student and the organisations to adequately carry out their responsibility to socially vulnerable groups (Maclean, 2012). Supervision helps professionals be more conscious of their prejudices and combat discrimination within a human rights framework (Rose & Haywood, 2007).

Just as educational practice permits social work students to complete their undergraduate work, supervision completes the oversight and observation of the students' performance in context, understanding that their internship at the organisation is the closest experience to what their future professional life will be like. Furthermore, the virtues of supervision go beyond the learning process, generating, among others, the following benefits (Maclean, 2012):

- It guides social work activities toward the best results for the beneficiaries of social programmes.
- It prevents exhaustion among the teams.
- It improves social work practice.
- It promotes a positive organisational culture and climate.
- It provides the opportunity for supervisors to refresh their social work practice through the integration of new perspectives.
- It supports the development of analytical, critical, and reflective thinking.
- It improves decision-making.

Finally, regarding the role of supervisor, the literature identifies four overarching supervisory functions, several of which are particularly significant in the case of students engaged in the practical learning process and are listed in the following Table 10.1.

During the social work practical learning process, the supervisor carries out the above functions, navigating between them according to different variables, such as the qualities of the student, the issues that appear within the framework of

Table 10.1 Social work supervision functions

Administrative or normative function	Formative or educational function
<p>To review the workload in detail according to the policies and procedures of the organization, provide feedback about performance, and help the workers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>To help with the tasks that they find difficult and encourage them to take on new challenges.</p> <p>To help the supervised students/personnel understand their roles, responsibilities, and workload.</p>	<p>To help develop and improve practical knowledge and skills through regular and constructive comments on all aspects of students' performance.</p> <p>To encourage continuous improvement of skills and abilities through coaching and practical advice.</p> <p>To help students identify learning opportunities and obstacles.</p> <p>The supervised students obtain access to additional information according to the individualized professional development plan and ensure they know how to put what they learn into practice.</p>
Support function	Mediation or negotiation function
<p>To provide a safe environment in which the workers can speak openly about the challenges and difficulties they face in their work, seek help identifying the source of their difficulties, and examine ways in which they can overcome those challenges.</p> <p>To help the supervised students reflect on their own prejudices and provide occasions for them to deepen their understanding of their value base.</p> <p>To help students with process their emotions and provide time and space for joint reflection.</p>	<p>To connect the supervised students with other members of the organization and pass information upward in the organization.</p> <p>To advocate for broader organizational changes to improve the culture, policies, and procedures of the agencies, promoting the professional growth of the workers.</p> <p>To ensure that the needs of the personnel are represented to the directors and that the personnel are involved in decision making, providing proper assistance and support through responsive and clear complaint procedures.</p>

Source: Maclean (2012)

professional practice, and the characteristics and conflicts of the organisation in which the practice is carried out, among other things. All these conditions influence both how the supervisor prioritises their functions at any given moment and the way they coordinate those functions. This juggling act requires, without a doubt, a kind of expertise that is difficult to obtain without education and training opportunities.

“Internship Supervision Virtual Community: Coordinating the Evaluation and Feedback Given During Social Work Training” Teaching Innovation Project

The quest to strengthen the role of supervision in the practical development of students at the Universidad Católica de Chile Social Work School has focused on innovating education, training, and evaluation using technology to promote effective supervision. It has been guided by the premise that educating and training supervisors will foster processes of reflection about practice, appreciation of and feedback for the students, and an opportunity to create connections between students, supervisor, and professor, improving the learning process. Furthermore, supervision connects with evaluation because supervision is defined as a reflexive process of critical observation, and evaluation allows the supervisor to “delineate, obtain, process, and provide valid, trustworthy and timely information about the merit and value of what a student is learning intending to make a value judgement that allows for diverse types of decisions” (Ahumada, 2005).

This educational proposal was financed by the 2020 Teaching Innovation grant (*Innovación Docente*, INNOVADOC), an initiative of the Educational Development Center of the Academic Vice-Rector of the Universidad Católica, whose purpose is to “support and facilitate projects, proposals, and solutions that involve a significant innovation for educational practice” (Centro de Desarrollo Docente UC, 2021). The project was started in July 2020 with the intention of conducting it for over a year.

The objective of this project was to innovate the evaluation and feedback of student learning in the practical courses of the Universidad Católica de Chile Social Work School through the formation and modelling of the academic and on-site supervision processes to facilitate the achievement of the learning objectives. To design the training and education project, the following preliminary phases were carried out: Literature review; qualitative exploration of the experience of key actors (students, professors, and supervisors); and participatory creation of a skills profile of a practical learning supervisor, which allowed the development of the education and training programme for supervisory skills.

Drafting Supervisor Profiles

Facing the need to define with greater specificity the necessary objectives, skills, and knowledge as well as the role expected of a supervisor by the ETSUC community, a preliminary stage for the development of the programme consisted in constructing a supervisor profile.

To this end, a review of the literature was conducted, according to the understanding that such review is “an essential part of science and any discipline. Its objective is to identify, analyse, assess, and interpret the body of knowledge about a specific subject” (Guirao Goris, 2015). In line with this understanding, our goal was to identify and describe the most current evidence about supervision in the evaluation of social work internships, effective supervision practices, and supervisor education and training.

A literature review protocol was established to guide the process and it was validated by an expert from the Universidad Católica de Chile Library. The databases consulted were WoS, Scopus, ProQuest, SocINDEX, and Full Text (EBSCO). These are the databases that both the University and Social Work Research Guide classify as the main specialised databases for social work. The selected articles were included for a comprehensive review and further analysis following the identification, screening, and eligibility process. They were divided into the categories “student supervision” and “supervisor support training models.”

Furthermore, a review of internal documents of the Social Work School was conducted with regard to practical education and training. Among these were the profile of admission and graduation of students, the programmes of the initial workshop, the professional workshop and their internship objectives, the practice model of the Universidad Católica Social Work School, and the teacher evaluations for both courses. Following these actions, a phase of validation of the first version of the supervisor’s profile built by the INNOVADOC team was carried out, and the priority training needs of practice supervisors for the construction of the course were identified.

Three techniques were employed to this end. First, a survey was carried out in which 51 people from the ETSUC community participated; among them students engaged in their internship during 2020, on-site supervisors, and Professional Practice and Initial Practice professors. Next was a qualitative investigation involving in-depth interviews with ten people involved in the practical education and training process, which ensured representation of the previously mentioned key actors. Finally, validation and feedback meetings were conducted with experts, members of the Curriculum Committee, and the Professional and Initial Practice faculty.

A supervisor profile was developed based on survey results, which helped identify students’ supervision knowledge, skills, and values. In addition, expected performance levels were established based on the relevance attributed by the participants to each supervision competence. The knowledge, skills and values for supervision

Table 10.2 Knowledge, skills, and values for supervision of social work students

Knowledge	Social intervention: Foundation of social phenomena, problems, and techniques of social intervention. Of the subject matter on which they supervise Setting: Practice process and the expectations and responsibilities of students and practice agency, student profile About evaluation and feedback Regarding stress and professional care
Skills	Observe students and check agreements Assertiveness and effective communication Motivate student self-efficacy Feedback on student performance Promote the fulfilment of the objectives of student intervention and their learning process. Reflexivity
Values and attitudes	Recognition of the ethical-political perspective that guides their work Accessibility and availability Credibility and reliability Recognition of their formative role

are detailed in Table 10.2, where competencies are ranked in relation to the performance level from the perspective of supervisors, students, and teachers.²

In the final phase, the analysis and triangulation of this information allowed the project to rely on a definitive profile of the on-site supervisor, which includes the supervisor's objectives, duties, and requirements in terms of the knowledge, experience, skills, behaviours, and values required for a successful supervision of students engaged in practical learning.

Design of the “Social Work Practical Learning Supervision Skills” Course

The program design and the course content are based on the profile and results obtained through the validation processes, which directly inform the training and education and improve the ETSUC supervision processes.

The learning objectives of the supervisors were established as follows: (i) to understand the meaning of the internship and its role in the education and training of social work students for achieving their learning objectives; (ii) to understand the meaning of supervision and its connection with social work training and education, and (iii) to acquire concrete management and professional care skills.

After the first version of the course was designed, it once again underwent a content validation process carried out by experts from the Curriculum Committee and professors with the aim of incorporating their suggestions and changes.

²More details of the study results could be requested from the authors.

Table 10.3 Modules of supervisor training course at Universidad Católica de Chile

Module	Objective
N°1 Practical training for the ETSUC social workers	To understand the practical learning process in a framework geared toward the training and education of social work students.
N°2 On-site supervision of the social work training and education processes and the supervisor.	To understand the significance of supervision and its role in the practical learning processes to help students reach their learning objectives and prepare future social workers for the profession.
N° 3 Supervision techniques	To choose the management techniques that will be employed by the supervisor and apply effective supervisory techniques.

Source: Own elaboration

When this stage was completed, the final, definitive version of the training and education process to be offered to the supervisors was established. The program includes three modules based on the learning objectives that align with the supervisor profile created and are as follows (Table 10.3).

Considering the supervisor's characteristics mentioned above and the scarce time available—given that supervisory duties are added to the tasks that the organisations must already carry out—this course is flexible and adapts to the time commitments of the supervisors. The maximum duration of the course is one month and it takes place online, so that it is accessible via desktop computer, laptop, and other mobile devices so as to facilitate participation and get adapted to the sanitary restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was realised with the help of the web-based learning management system (LMS) methodology by using the Canvas platform, as this was the platform already used at the Universidad Católica de Chile for course support. It should be mentioned that this resource was new to the Social Work School: while the students were familiar with it, the supervisors were not. Canvas brings together various digital tools that facilitate learning and teaching by making access to core information of the course simple and efficient. Furthermore, it promotes communication between professors, supervisors, and students with innovative options that improve interaction and foster participation, collaborative work, and continuous, fluid communication between teachers and students.

The contents include resources such as simulations that seek to recreate some of the most common situations encountered during the process of supervising social work students, interactive tasks for the use of supervision tools and feedback about it, thematic discussion forums, and interactive peer and teacher-student feedback meetings, in addition to summative assessments.

The use of the Canvas platform has allowed the programme to upload a series of student oversight and supervision tools, presenting a unified file system for different sections of the workshop that links together all the information required for supervision, facilitation of communication and updates on the practical learning process between supervisor, professor, and students.

Finally, the design and implementation of this programme is the starting point for a process that seeks to align different actors with the crucial process of teaching and learning in the field.

Conclusions

The teaching innovation process made it possible to identify a profile of supervisors that allows to recognise the knowledge, skills, and mentality that Universidad Católica de Chile social work supervisors should have to help students meet their learning objectives.

One of the project elements that stands out is the teaching innovation and its use of an e-learning platform. It should be highlighted that, within this framework, the integration of technology has served not only to educate students but also to strengthen the learning community. The evidence has indicated that supervisors, in general, are open to the programme to perform their role better (Karpētis, 2010; Tebes et al., 2011), which allows us to foresee positive results for the Chilean case. While this project has already demonstrated some positive results, the innovation processes for social work training and education should be seen as continuous developments that incorporate new technology in a progressive manner with a primary focus on students' learning, but without neglecting the quality of social services in which they are involved.

Regarding the supervisor profile, this project has introduced the need to collect specific information about the key actors involved in social work field education and training: students, supervisors, and professors. This being the case, the collection of information should be continuous—given that social services and profession practice take place in dynamic, ever-changing settings—and should be closely linked to the practice and learning model of the university. Nonetheless, both requirements are not in themselves sufficient and should be supplemented with spaces and opportunities for training and support so that supervisors and academics can adequately perform their role. Thus, this training process is a preliminary experiment in providing support to supervisors and the courses in which they are integrated and an initial response—of a still general character—to the multiple demands and challenges of the social work field education and training that this chapter discusses.

With regard to social work management education, this project offers different possibilities. On the one hand, if one recognises that supervision is a necessary dimension of social work management, this project contributes to the field through the student modelling and the improvement of supervisor performance, which is achieved through strengthening and integrating supervisor skills for professional practice.

In concrete terms, it is expected that the supervision processes that students experience be effective and that they constitute a learning opportunity through mentoring and modelling. Furthermore, the introduction of the techniques and instruments that the course employs will constitute part of the knowledge and applications

of which the future social workers will avail themselves in a real-world context. In other words, this supervision skills training course also constitutes a macro social work learning opportunity for the students.

Advancing effective supervision through supervisor training contributes to one of the main challenges faced in supervising practices in the field of social work management: the difficulty of analysing and integrating macro-management elements into specific contexts of field practice (Castillo et al., 2021). In the supervision spaces, the analysis and conversations regarding the macro-elements, such as management, leadership and public relations, are not carried out fluidly. That is why the training of supervisors could profit from the respective methodologies so that this gap is overcome.

At the same time, the training of social work students in the dimensions that constitute social work management, such as leadership, interpersonal dynamics, program management and finances (Applewhite et al., 2018), especially demands spaces for conversation and feedback that are only guaranteed in the relationship with the supervisor, because they are not easily “observable”.

This training project requires that new components be reviewed to advance effective education modelling in the social work field. Because this project is based on the Universidad Católica de Chile’s graduation profiles, the gaps in supervisor training should be periodically updated for this and other higher education institutions. Therefore, this project should be strengthened by evaluating its results for the students, supervisors, and professors, investigating further the course’s effect on student satisfaction with their practical learning process, the supervisors’ satisfaction with their supervision, and the demands made on professors.

The main limitations of this project are, on the one hand, the context in which the fieldwork is conducted, and on the other, the specificity that designing programs for ETSUC requires.

The circumstance that this project was designed prior to the events of the social upheaval and the arrival of COVID-19 in Chile had negative consequences for the adaption of the original methodology and entailed the remote conduct of the fieldwork. Paradoxically, this also became an opportunity, as these events compelled the project to innovate on the use of technology for interventions, research, and supervision of the practical education and training experiences of the ETSUC. Thus, it further facilitated the use of applications such as Zoom and Canvas by people already familiar with them.

On the other hand, although the construction and analysis of the project relies on references and analyses from the entire world, as shown in the literature review, the product of this project corresponds to the reality and possibilities of the ETSUC in its context. To compensate for this limitation, the project phases and the methodology used have been presented to increase its transparency and replicability.

With the findings and results of this project in mind, future research should look at the different actors involved in the practice learning process. In particular and according to what has been established in this chapter, it would be relevant to examine the figure of the practice learning professor. What characterises their profile? What objectives does this professor have? What is required to adequately perform

their role? Concerning the findings of this project, one may find that clarification of the duties, profiles, objectives, tasks, abilities, and knowledge related to the supervisor-professor relationship can improve the teaching-learning processes, communication, and understanding among the parties involved in social work practice.

Another research opportunity is related to the practice locations. Although the supervisor plays a fundamental role in the learning process of social work students, it is impossible to remove this actor from her or his context: the institutions in which the students carry out their internships. This stands out as a limitation because finding answers to some of the questions raised during this process exceeds this project's scope. For example, questions like "How does the organisation inform, prepare and support supervisors?", "Does the practice location chosen by the student influence his or her perception of success and learning in this process?", and "What are the institutional processes for appointing supervisors?", among other things, are prompted by the project findings.

The experience confirms the validity of technology for the training of social work actors and, therefore, the possibilities for social work programmes to develop strategies in this line. Following the evidence of the last 10 years, this project recognised the role of supervision in the practical social work training and the challenge that institutions face regarding the appreciation and reinforcement of this role.

The results of this project are a call to social work higher education institutions to train, support, and care for, supervisors, especially in environments that are in the focus of modernising reforms of social services (Fazzi & Rosignoli, 2016). Internship supervisors have a key role to play in social work training and need to be given the resources to perform appropriately. This becomes especially relevant when the role of social workers in the macro field, regarding the functions they perform, is challenged by the tasks of the position associated with the management of the organisation, people, and communities. There is also a need for macro social work education programmes to accompany supervisors in the process of integrating the macro dimension as a key component in supervision.

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Chapter 11

Teaching Testable Explanations and Putting Them into Practice



Carolyn Gentle-Genitty

Abstract The skillset of an effective social work program manager rests in their critical thinking, consistent application of ethics and theory, and training experiences. Most management courses are found in specialized curriculums of schools of social work where topics of leadership, non-profit management, and private practice management are covered NOT teaching and learning. This is a gap as most who graduate social work education go on to occupy some managerial roles. An enhanced curriculum where cognitive processes for decision making are practiced using testable explanations is an obvious solution. One model, the SALT – Strengths, Area of Focus, Limitations, and Theories to redress, is rightly suited for teaching social work management education because of its ability to build capacity in cognitive process decision making using testable explanations. The SALT offers curriculum managers specifically, a way to oversee achievement of program competencies and meet compliance with limited impact to academic freedom. Qualitative and quantitative data from an urban university graduate learner group are shared. Comparative results show that the SALT fosters critical thinking and information literacy, enforces application of ethics and theory, and openly infuses personal practice wisdom to inform final decisions. These outcomes are good for social work managers in their future success.

Introduction

As a manager, in social work education or elsewhere, one must bring competencies inclusive of ethical and professional behaviour and cognitive decision making to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate practice, while advancing the rights of all groups (Council on Social Work Education, 2015). The demonstration of these competencies manifests in practice (use of *critical thinking*, *consistent application*

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of ethics and theory, and personal training experiences) but more so in curriculum through teaching and learning methods. Therefore, in social work program management, focus must emphasize methods for teaching and how to leverage those methods to meet our institution's educational compliance needs (for accreditors, evaluators, and more).

Managers should promote the use of teaching methods which sharpen skills in leading and managing. Our curriculums emphasize learning not teaching. Therefore, graduates leave knowing how to consume knowledge not to impart or create knowledge. For program managers to be better at their roles this must change. Teaching offers diverse ways to get to the same end—skill and knowledge acquisition. Often, we teach the way we were taught. In some cases we teach based on the recommended syllabus structure (Gentle-Genitty et al., 2014). Yet, by themselves, none of these options support learner knowledge acquisition or application. The aim is to offer a simple and clear model for learners to grasp **content, skill, and increase knowledge**. After 15 years of testing the SALT model—Strengths, Areas of Focus, and Limitations of theory while also exploring shortcomings of Theories under investigation (TUI)-- we know learners who have a large cognitive role in their education, grasp content at deeper cognitive levels than compared to their rote (those asked to memorize) learning peers (Gentle-Genitty et al., 2018). This means when teachers involved learners in making decisions, with required parameters like ethics using testable explanations, they were better able to learn, apply, and teach the content. This chapter summarizes the model developed by the primary author. At the heart of the model is a transparent and systemic teaching framework. Qualitative and quantitative data from learner groups are shared. The results show learners exposed to the SALT teaching model graduated with enhanced skill sets. Recommendations and conclusions are shared to apply this method in management education and social work education broadly.

Defining Human Behaviour Theories-Testable explanations

For the practitioner and educator, theories offer simplicity to complexity. Human behaviour theories can be individualized and categorized into metatheories. The definition of a theory varies. Combined sources define a human behaviour theory as a socially constructed explanation of a situation derived through a set of reasoned and tested hypotheses resulting in principles to explain or predict behaviour (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Gentle-Genitty, 2017; Miller & Skinner, 2013; Schriver, 2004; Turner, 1996). Herein, we refer to theories as testable explanations. Though good in conceptualization and organization, testable explanations are flawed and not applicable to all situations. Educators have consistently used explanations to teach learners to conceptualize behaviours and organize patterns but have not used these explanations to equip learners with tools for decision makings (Gentle-Genitty & Chen, 2013; Karolich & Ford, 2013; Lewis & Bolzan, 2007). To bring about an enhanced curriculum for the outcomes sought, program managers must emphasize the role of using teaching models which combine conceptualization and

organization but also evaluation and assessment before application. This allows educators to do the least harm and teach ethical decision making. With an emphasis on competency-based education, there is an urgent need for effective models to respond to learners' challenges in transferring theory to practice or the use of testable explanations to inform future decision making.

Most human behaviour theories or testable explanations influence our understanding of our roles within a larger society. They help us conceptualize our behaviours—relative to our environments (Robbins et al., 2006). Therefore the nebulous compilation of what constitutes required teaching content in human behaviour courses poses a challenge. If we teach only one testable explanation, learners graduate with the assumption that every nail requires the same hammer. There is no diversity in their decision making. When done effectively, teaching testable explanations asks the learner to first listen to a situation, organize the problem, assess the context, and together use knowledge of multiple testable explanations to ethically strategize interventions or craft a case plan (Gentle-Genitty, 2017).

Models for Teaching

Granted there are still few models available the goal is to manage learner expectations, background, and ways of conceptualizing, with appropriate teaching methodology. Balancing the various components of this goal requires selection of core skills and a delicate interplay between relevant learning techniques and realistic application (Forrester-Jones & Hatzidimitriadou, 2006). Long-time authors Wells (1989) and Eisner (1990) write that educators are accustomed to using means-end models—linear and sequential methods to ensure learners master knowledge for assessment. In social work there is an absence of teaching models, especially for theory (Boisen & Syers, 2004; Cheung & Delavega, 2014) and where they are present, they are case- or problem-based (Lam, 2004).

Description of the SALT Model

SALT is an acronym for **S**trengths, **A**rea of focus, **L**imitations and **T**heories to redress. The model is transparent to learners of what they must do in the course, for assessment, and in future practice for decision making. The model is also clear to the teacher and known to the program manager making assessment and outcomes easier to manage and report. The SALT model has five (5) steps in applying and evaluating theories:

- (1) Research major strengths of the theory.
- (2) Identify the focus area of the theory from the literature.
- (3) Research major limitations of the theory.
- (4) Identify, through review of literature, other theories which address the limitations in step 3.
- (5) **Aggregate information** to identify possible treatment interventions.

After completing all 5 steps learners should have mastered how to complete a thorough analysis and can construct a comprehensive treatment approach with applicable interventions for client success. Appropriate application of theory is not driven by personal choice alone, as each theory has its own assumptions about the individual, the helping process, and what may constitute change. Using theory to begin ‘where the client is’ requires the identification of the strengths and aspects for use, as well as the identification of the flaw or shortcoming of the theory. The goal is to adequately understand the situation, the context of the environment, and stimuli for change. Reviewing the literature and use of informed practice wisdom can help to find ways to redress for the shortcomings of the theory under investigation. The literature may suggest another theory or several to respond to each shortcoming. See suggested curriculum below. It is important to note that with more experience in making decisions based on testable explanations, practice wisdom is amplified supporting consultation with colleagues.

Background About Teaching and Learner Requirements

In the US, the curriculum is often 16 weeks in length. The course on testable explanations asks learners to have taken at least one course in human behaviour before enrolling. The focus of the course is on demonstration, application, and evaluation. Historically, many educators only offered a list of theories they chose, for learners to memorize. This led to a consistent debate in the profession about translation of theory to practice. Learners consistently scored low. Even when these learners moved into roles as social work managers or educators, they too struggled in translating theory to practice. Thus, this model has attempted to respond to this challenge. The activities offered are suggestions. The crux of the model is to ensure learners know how they will learn and explore (SALT), what they will learn (SALT), what the instructor will assess (ability to apply SALT), and how they will demonstrate these competencies in future practice. Consistently, for all components, the answer is SALT. Learners will always learn or explore the strength of the theory, the area of focus, its limitation, and other theories to redress. This model allows transparency and decision making to help managers translate, assess and share cross-section comparative and competency data.

Example of SALT Model Application in the Classroom. Based on a 16-Week Session

First 4-week session

- (a) Teaching 5 or 6 general theories (i.e., systems, ecological theory) and 3 or 4 specific theories (standpoint, feminist, decision making theories).
- (b) Ask learners to research at least one of their own theories (Different from list in (a))

- (c) Allow learners to use time to reflect and articulate what makes theories or testable explanations different
- (d) Provide a group exercise for learners to debate or discuss each explanation or theory's **(1) strengths (2) focus, (3) limitations, and (4) Other theories to redress shortcoming (This exercise can be given a score or grade)**

Second 4-week session

- (a) Provide a case scenario for learners to review. Encourage learners to create the case with you aloud defining age, gender, background, work, family etc.
- (b) Teach the class the SALT method. As a class, led by the instructor, carry out a SALT analysis of the case scenario on a white board. Identify the strengths, area of focus, limitations, and theories to redress. Encourage learners to participate.
- (c) Ask the learners to identify all the explanations/theories they feel can be used to help organize and respond to what is going on in the scenario (again, do it out loud – on the white board or using flip charts or other supports)
- (d) Teach learners how to organize this process so that they can use it in their everyday practice by simply remembering the SALT model. Offer the option for an assignment where they apply it to their own lives. Have an open report out.

Third 4-week session

- (a) In these sessions the goal is for learners to practice what they have learned and build confidence in their ability to do it in their own professional practice.
- (b) Ask learners to find a case scenario of their own, using different fields of study: mental health, child welfare, criminal justice, education, etc. and as a group conduct a SALT analysis.
- (c) Provide clear directions for the group to work together and share with them what you as the instructor or manager plan to use to evaluate them.

Fourth 4 week-session

- (a) Prepare to evaluate whether learners have understood what a testable explanation or theory is and how to use it in practice.
- (b) Offer one final assessment. One can use group presentations along with a paper which outlines step-by-step what they would do in working through the case scenario. If the learners are already working, ask them to apply to a situation at work or in their field of practice. Assess level of fluency and strength in meeting the competency of the SALT components.

Method

A mixed method was used combining course evaluation with qualitative text analysis. Data was gathered in a Social Work Program at a Midwestern University and IRB was sought and received. The course evaluation compared a 20-person SALT

course— with six other non-SALT courses—offered in the same semester and on the same campus. All learners who participated were Master’s level enrolled at the time of the study. This was their first graduate level theory course upon entering the Master’s programme pursuing social work regardless of their specialization. An online module of the SALT tenets was the intervention. The SALT module was built into the online theory course and required for those enrolled. Those not enrolled were not given the module to learn nor complete. The research hypothesis was “*When comparing a SALT course to a non-SALT course, do learners report learning more skills for theory application?*”

Data Analysis

Data was received and prepared for analysis using IBM SPSS statistics version 20 and Excel charts. Total number of learner data comparisons was $N = 209$. A basic description analysis was performed. Using the SALT course teaching evaluation instrument as the data collection tool, nine questions were chosen from the university standard course objective list to evaluate for cross-course evaluation and learning scores. The SALT course was compared to three similar non-SALT course sections. Learners were also able to give qualitative feedback.

Results

Qualitatively learners shared comments on what facilitated their achievement of the course objectives, which included (Chart 11.1).

Quantitatively the results showed that when comparing Non-SALT course scores to SALT course scores, on the same campus, same programme, offered during the same time on how learners rated the course objectives, learners rated the course with the SALT model as being more effective. In fact on a scale of 1–5, the SALT course was rated 4.81 compared to the campus courses being rated a 4.22 (See Table 11.1).

Chart 11.1 Learner comments

A	“SALT method and 5 theory assignment helped address how to apply theory to practice, therefore making it appear more relevant.”
B	“...Five theory paper and SALT model” helped facilitate my achievement of the course objectives.
C	“This was, out of two years in the program, by far, the best class I have ever taken. It gave me more applicable knowledge than my other courses combined.”
D	“Excellent classroom examples, great group projects, numerous readings provided outside of assigned readings for references.”
E	“the process of helping us to apply it {theory} directly to current practice.”

Table 11.1 SALT course comparison on objectives

Course objectives	SA		A		U		D		SD		Course		Campus			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
	1. Analyze and apply ecological systems, behavioral, empowerment, symbolic interactionism, organization, and community perspectives to practice with individuals, families, organizations, and communities.	18	90%	1	5%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	20	4.80	0.70	189	4.30
2. Synthesize theories and perspectives to form a coherent theoretical foundation for practice specific to the learners concentration.	18	90%	2	10%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	20	4.90	0.31	189	4.28	0.73
3. Apply theories in the planning and implementing of social work interventions in the learners concentration.	17	85%	3	15%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	20	4.85	0.37	189	4.20	0.80
4. Analyze the ethical and values base of ecological, systems, behavioral, empowerment, symbolic interactionism, organization, and community perspective and critically evaluate the congruence of these perspectives with the ethical and value base of the social work profession.	17	85%	2	10%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	20	4.80	0.52	189	4.16	0.82
5. Analyze ecological, systems, behavioral, empowerment, symbolic interactionism, organization, and community perspectives to understand causes and consequences of oppression, discrimination, and inequality between individuals and within families, groups, organizations, communities, social institutions, and global society.	16	80%	3	15%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	20	4.75	0.55	189	4.21	0.75
6. Analyze the mechanism of oppression and critically apply empirical knowledge and theoretical framework to examine the implication of oppression of people of color, women, lesbian women and gay men, and other populations at risk, as well as those groups distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, region, and physical or mental ability.	15	75%	4	20%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	20	4.70	0.57	189	4.20	0.63
7. Evaluate the implication of diversity and oppression on human well-being, social, and economic justice.	16	80%	3	15%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	20	4.75	0.55	189	4.23	0.79
8. Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the epistemological knowledge base of theories for application to social work practice.	18	90%	2	10%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	20	4.90	0.31	127	4.21	0.75

In fact when comparing course content feedback on such items as “I had to think critically” (5.00), “I actively sought out and discovered relevant knowledge” (4.91), “I analyzed credibility of information” (4.68), “I applied professional knowledge to real life social issues” (4.91) and “I learned a great deal” (4.91), in general the SALT course outperformed the Non-SALT campus courses (See Table 11.2). In fact the highest score, on average for the campus on these items was a 4.58 and the SALT was a 5.00 on critical thinking.

From this comparative evaluation the SALT model has the ability to offer sound learning outcomes and help learners build critical thinking (cognitive) skills, application to practice, evaluate credibility of information (information literacy) and actively seek out and discover relevant knowledge and theory in practice. This aspect of critical thinking and reflection is essential in meeting competencies for social work education (Lay & McGuire, 2010).

Discussions

As the handbook focuses on social work management education, let’s draw a few conclusions to the teaching and learning of future “social work managers”. First managers must be able to see the 1000-foot view of their programme and the systems they manage. The SALT model clearly shows that irrespective of who teaches and the continual reliance on adjunct faculty, learners can still achieve learning and competency outcomes. Secondly, social work managers are required to collect, assess, and report data. Having a model like SALT enables data collection and analysis which can effectively report on programme success. Though the model was used for one course focused on testable explanations/theory, the model’s framework can be applied to any course and enables comparison. The framework rests largely on taking current knowledge (experiences), helping to grapple with new knowledge (new way and information literacy and research), and assimilate for everyday use (synergy). Therefore, when developing teaching in social work management courses, content must include how to help learners identify what knowledge must be acquired, how they acquire that knowledge, and ways for them, from the start of practice and iterate on that learning in and outside the course focused on cognition, activity, and outcomes.

It is clear, learners value non-linear means-ends models. They want to apply their knowledge while grappling with the new content from the instructor in their learning. There are benefits to this model as the findings have shown. Yet we must be cautious in our execution. Learners still have trepidation around their own knowledge and struggle to move into application immediately. Using safe environments to practice and play before attaching grades and points will help to address this. For instance use a data collection group assessment, a practice debate, and other such in-class activities. We are confident however that when given an option of choosing how to evaluate theory, learners will choose the SALT model, as show in this evaluation where 100% of learners consistently chose the SALT model.

Table 11.2 SALT course comparison on course

Course content	SA		A		U		D		SD		Course			Campus		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. I worked hard in this course.	16	82%	4	18%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.82	0.39	873	4.51	0.68
2. I value the required textbooks and readings.	16	73%	6	27%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.73	0.46	874	4.03	0.91
3. I complete course readings and assignments on time.	9	41%	12	55%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	4.32	0.72	874	4.14	0.87
4. I had to think critically in this course.	22	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	5.00	0.00	873	4.58	0.65
5. I learned to address ethical issues that pertain to course content.	13	59%	7	32%	2	9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.50	0.67	872	4.24	0.78
6. I assume personal responsibility for my own learning.	20	91%	2	9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.91	0.29	872	4.61	0.53
7. I regularly collaborated with my classmates in learning activities.	18	82%	3	14%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.77	0.53	871	4.36	0.62
8. I actively sought out and discovered relevant knowledge.	20	91%	2	9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.91	0.29	872	4.31	0.77
9. I analyze the credibility of information.	15	68%	7	32%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.68	0.48	870	4.25	0.74
10. I applied professional knowledge to real social issues.	20	91%	2	9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.91	0.29	871	4.49	0.67
11. I learned a great deal in this course.	21	95%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.91	0.43	872	4.30	0.97

Limitations still exist in this assessment. We only compared within one institution and in one course type. We compared only three sections. Therefore, more studies and evaluation are welcomed. The model application could also benefit from a multiple university and program participation to establish common knowledge transference.

Conclusion

The model does not espouse to be the best, nor a solve-all. It simply provides a model for theory teaching. The framework allows for use in many other types of courses, especially social work management.

Recommendations

No matter which model, this presentation suggests that a model is needed to help learners master competency. The SALT is one. The earlier a model is defined, the better it is for instructors to plan lessons, organize content, establish rubrics and other materials to help learners know what they will learn, where, and how to assimilate that content into their daily lives.

If the model were to be used in other universities and programs, the following will be the requirements:

1. Identify courses which are competency-based.
2. Define the competencies that can be organized in a similar critical thinking and information literacy framework.
3. Bring instructors together to agree on use and implementation.
4. Develop course objectives to be evaluated across the course sections or course outcomes to be achieved.
5. Leverage those outcomes to establish agreed upon rubrics and some course assignments.
6. Agree on which course sections will use the model and which will not.
7. Conduct a pilot assessment first to see differences, respond to challenges, and how to collect and report on data.
8. Use the data to drive change systematically not just in one or two courses.
9. Use a textbook that teaches the model to ensure consistency (See author's book in References).
10. Monitor learner learning over the year by conducting multiple cohort evaluations.

Summary of Main Findings

From the findings it is clear the model helps learners better grasp content for application, offers instructors a defined method for teaching, and when compared to their peers, learners exposed to the SALT model outperform their non-SALT peers in critical thinking and information literacy. For those in social work management, the skill set needed can often be opaque and hard to teach like empathy and critical thinking. However, the model also suggests that the more learners are able to bring in their prior knowledge, infuse a new way to interface to grapple with new information, and use the entire course to assimilate the new content into their practice, the more likely they are to be successful in mastering competencies like critical thinking and empathy. An added benefit is the learner and the instructor benefits in the teaching-learning equation. The focus is not just on the dissemination of content (teaching) but also on the receiving and using of that information for application (learning). Social Work managers can benefit from such outcomes.

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Chapter 12

Teaching Social Work Management Through Service Learning



Shorena Sadzaglishvili

Abstract Service learning is a pedagogical tool designed to provide students with additional opportunities to develop practice skills in addition to traditional field placements. Service learning (SL) is a part of experiential learning which is a more holistic approach that is based on Dewey's concepts of reflective thought and Lewinian tradition of action research.

As social work curriculum turned from content and structure based into a competency-based approach, now the focus is on students' competences as learning outcomes comprised of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes in unique practice situations (Council on Social Work Education, Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for Baccalaureate and Master's Social Work Programs. <http://www.socialserviceworkforce.org/system/files/resource/files/Accreditation%20Standards.pdf>, 2015). Thus, it is very appropriate to use service learning as a teaching tool to develop students' social work competencies. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how SL can be applied throughout the social work administration and management direction, with a special accent on Covid-19 pandemics. In particular, it aims to illustrate some SL projects used as a teaching method in the course of Social Program Development and Evaluation at the Master Social Work Program at Ilia State University, Georgia. Conclusions explain the rationale for SL applications, along with ways in which to measure the effects of SL on student learning.

Introduction: Understanding Practice in Social Work Management and Administration

Administration and management are two closely related concepts. Administration combines long term planning with the establishment of organizational policies, coordination of finances, and service provision, whereas management is concerned

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with the execution of policies set up by the administration and staff supervision (Kettner, 2002).

Social work management and administration involve crucial tasks for social workers at every level, whether they are dealing with micro, mezzo, or macro social work (Coulshed et al., 2006). In other words, even a social work practitioner must carry out some managerial activities, such as, e.g., engaging with and relating to people, helping others to achieve their goals, supervising their efforts, maintaining morale, consulting a wide range of sources prior to making decisions, problem solving, and managing the process of change. Moreover, the role of case manager implies undertaking assessments and coordinating packages of care within tight budgets that require such managerial skills as bargaining, mediating, negotiating, liaising, and advocacy. Care managers and frontline social workers spend many hours travelling, attending meetings, executing administrative tasks, etc. Social workers are required to meet specific national standards, codes, guidelines, and procedures while providing their services, as almost all of these are regulated by National Service Frameworks, and this concerns not only public but also voluntary and private sectors. In addition, systemic thinking could be considered a transferable skill that underlies managerial and administrative activities in human service organizations, too. Finally, changes in human service organizations do not always have to come from outside and a frontline social worker should be in a position of power to influence agency practice (Coulshed et al., 2006).

Thus, social workers are in a good position to assume administrative and managerial positions in human service organizations. In the best scenario, all managers in social work organizations should have a background in social work practice that enables them to foster effective social programmes, understand, and meet the needs of beneficiaries. Especially supervisory roles are best performed by those who are themselves competent in the professional activity they are supervising (Coulshed et al., 2006).

Below, we will discuss the Service Learning (SL) approach to teaching theory and practice of social work management and administration for Social Work Master-level students. We will focus on the new programmes/social work projects for beneficiaries that our students devised and provided in the time of pandemics. These activities also showcase the students' critical thinking skills in adaptation to new contexts and realities that enabled them to develop and provide high-quality services to the beneficiaries in the crisis situation.

This chapter describes five SL applications in the Social Programme Development and Evaluation course that is taught at the Master of Social Work programme of Ilia State University, Georgia. The course aims to help students to understand the needs of excluded and underserved groups of population and respond to these in a collaborative manner. With its help, students acquire knowledge and skills (competencies) in needs assessment, planning and design of social projects/programmes for the respective groups and communities in order to promote empowerment, social justice and equity by providing differential assessment of the needs and resources of vulnerable individuals, families, groups, and communities. Furthermore, the course provides students with an opportunity to develop task group and leadership skills as

well as research skills for systematic practice monitoring and evaluation. SL is well fitted for Social Work Manager education as it examines some of the skills and values (programme development, evaluation, leadership, etc.) that contribute to the students' becoming good managers and enable them to acquire a holistic (ecological) understanding of the needs of clients, agencies, and society and to navigate multiple professional roles and functions. SL organizes students' experience in such a way that they gain competencies through service to the community that responds to its authentic needs. Moreover, it is a bilateral process of engagement, which is beneficial both for students and for the community as well as its sustainable development.

Conclusions draw on the author's past teaching experiences and outline the rationale for each SL application and for the strategies of measuring the effects of SL on student learning.

Service Learning as a Teaching Method

The term Service Learning (SL) emerged in the United States in the late 1960s, at a time when national service initiatives, such as the Peace Corps, Job Corps, VISTA, and university-community partnerships, were drawing thousands of college students and other young adults into community service activities (Phillips, 2011).

There are differences and similarities between Service Learning, volunteerism, and internships/field education. Service Learning differs from the latter two insofar as it underlines that service activities should imply civic engagement, reflection, and reciprocity (Jacoby, 1996; Howard, 2003; Welch, 2009).

Through civic engagement, students make a service experience that is designed to address real community problems and they further develop their civic engagement skills. Students' service experience is grounded in curricular learning objectives, which are facilitated through intentional, deep, and structured learning activities. Also, reciprocal relationships between all participants are established that enable students and their instructors to address community issues by active involvement of community members as educational partners (Phillips, 2011).

Thus, SL stands for a two-way approach in contrast to the traditional one-way approach to service, where one person or group has resources that they share with service users who lack them. Thus, SL encourages students to do things with others rather than for them by engaging in intentional learning (both curricular and civic) that puts emphasis on the reciprocal relationship between students, their instructors, and community members (Phillips, 2011).

In contrast to internships/field education, SL focuses on the development of civic engagement skills through reciprocity, which is generally absent in the former, where students play a traditional one-way service provider role in relation to their service recipients (Phillips, 2011).

Furco (1996) worked out the distinction between SL, volunteerism, and internships/field education by presenting them on the continuum between

Recipient-oriented activity		Provider-oriented activity
Service		Learning
Volunteerism	Service Learning	Internship/Field Education

Fig. 12.1 Service learning: A balanced approach to experiential education. (Adapted from Furco, 1996)

recipient-oriented activity, where the focus is primarily on service, and the provider-oriented programmes whose focus is on student learning (Fig. 12.1).

Service Learning (SL) is a pedagogical tool designed to facilitate an experiential (real-life) and reflective problem-based student learning at university level (Goldberg et al., 2006). Service Learning is part of holistic experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). Kolb's experiential learning draws on Lewinian tradition of action research (1946) and Dewey's (1938) concepts of reflective thought and action and emphasizes how experiences, including cognition, environmental factors, and emotions, influence the learning process.

As a form of experiential learning, students are provided with service experiences that are similar to the content taught in the classroom (Lisman, 1998). In this regard, SL is academically based community service that requires from students to get engaged in community service as part of their academic coursework.

Through SL, students have an opportunity to work in close collaboration with an organization and provide service to its service users/beneficiaries. This approach fosters effective citizenship and active participation of students (Barber, 1994; Stevens, 2001, 2002; Schwartzman, 2002; Goldberg et al., 2006), which is crucial for social work programmes. It also enables students to become agents of their own learning and to develop learning-to-learn skills as described by Professor of Education David Perkins, a founding member of [Harvard Project Zero](#) (Sadzaglishvili et al., 2008). In SL, students' reflective thinking is fostered with the help of Kolb's (1984) intuitive model of learning. To this purpose, structured reflective journaling and reflection papers are used to integrate readings and concepts to encourage students to share their observations and reflections.

As a result, the students go beyond memorizing and understanding towards applying, analysing, evaluating, and, finally, creating. In other words, they not only understand what they have learned but can also apply the acquired theoretical knowledge in real-life contexts by creating a new product. Thus, SL facilitates the students' skills in problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making, which are essential components of evidence-based practice (Goldberg et al., 2006).

Beside the integration of reflective processes or experiences, one major objective of SL is to establish ties between the class and community partners. These ties are shaped by both students and community partners, who act as students' supervisors and give them an opportunity to engage in new and challenging service settings, all the while focusing on their course content and objectives (Bringle et al., 2004).

To conclude, SL is an effective teaching and learning approach in terms of promoting learning through civic engagement, reciprocity, and reflection, which leads to meeting the larger goals of democratic participation, improved community well-being, civic responsibility, and social justice (Calderon, 2007; Colby et al., 2007; Jacoby, 2009). Some authors also view SL as capable of shaping students' moral values for justice community development (Butin, 2006, 2010; Conley & Hamlin, 2009; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). In addition, SL is considered the best method in teaching social work disciplines, because it enhances experiential learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2017; Miettinen, 2000).

Service Learning as a Teaching Tool to Develop Students' Social Work Competencies

The framework for accreditation of Social Work education programmes introduced by the Council on Social Work Education emphasizes their responsibility to educate for nine specific professional competencies (Council on Social Work Education, 2015). It states that the overall professional social work competence is multi-dimensional and consists of nine interrelated competencies that involve knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive as well as affective processes. These competencies are:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behaviour

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Competency-based education is an outcome-oriented approach to curriculum design, which ensures that students are able to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice. To prepare students for professional practice, the curriculum includes not only theoretical courses but also field education. Thus, classroom and field education are two interrelated components of equal importance within the social work curriculum.

Field education programme itself provides both generalist and specialized practice opportunities for students to demonstrate their social work competencies with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities as well as within an area of specialized practice (Council on Social Work Education, 2015).

Thus, field education is the main teaching method for social work competency development in accredited Social Work programmes. However, some authors indicate that SL can also be used as an additional method for competency development (Phillips, 2011). In fact, in SL projects students focus on the values of community involvement as it applies to course content, while in field education, students provide direct service to a specific set of clients instead of a community action as their primary focus. Students engage in SL projects as community members, and they are given an opportunity to understand social problems in a citizenship and civic role (Majewski, 2007). SL in Social Work places students in a good position to discuss social problems in the framework of the systems theory and a person-in-environment approach and to understand how problems and policies affect members of their communities.

Thus, owing to the SL projects, students get an insight into how the environment, including government, citizenship, and social change, is related to an individual person. The strengths perspective can also be adapted to the practice within SL, as students are able to practice unique skills at micro, mezzo, and macro levels of social work. As suggested in research literature, the strengths approach can be used in working with community partners (Furuto, 2007). Service Learning can also empower students to work on social problems within their communities and to inspire their confidence in the process of change (Furuto, 2007). This is all the more important, as empowerment is the main social work concept.

Master of Social Work Programme at Ilia State University

The Master of Social Work programme at Ilia State University was founded in 2006–07 and it is the first Master programme in Georgia. There are 21 faculty members who are involved in it. Eight of them are full professors, two are associate professors, four are assistant professors, and seven are invited lecturers, who hold Ph.D. and MSW degrees. In addition, four international experts are likewise involved in the programme.

The programme was established to meet the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups of population in Georgia. The mission, goals, and objectives of the Master of Social Work programme at Ilia State University consist in preparing advanced professional practitioners for promoting social justice with special sensitivity to multicultural issues and for addressing the needs of homeless people, children in residential care, children in conflict with the law, victims of domestic violence, impoverished children and families, disabled persons, people with a substance use disorder as well as others for whom social services in both urban and

rural environments should be enhanced through a strengths-based community-oriented family practice model.

The Curriculum is rooted in our mission, goals, and objectives. We prepare graduates to work successfully with a variety of client/beneficiary systems. The MSW programme draws on a strength-based frameworks to promote the wellbeing of families and communities. Our curriculum incorporates content on the profession's history, purposes, and philosophy. It emphasizes critical and creative thinking that will enable our graduates to initiate, adapt, and evaluate interventions for disadvantaged people while remaining alert to relevant global issues (Ashley et al., 2017).

The MSW Programme prepares students for advanced direct practice with individuals, families, and communities and for addressing multiple social systems that affect them. Students acquire clinical, organizational, policy, and community skills necessary for promoting social and economic justice. Programme goals are to educate students for an agency-based, culturally sensitive practice founded on strengths and resilience and guided by attention to diversity and ecological thinking.

The MSW Programme has both theory and practice components that include field education and “in-built practice” in social work courses.

The primary goal of the practice component is to offer students high-quality practical experience through intensive field placements as well as coursework that is based on Service Learning. In general, field education is designed to challenge the students by providing them with various opportunities of social work practice and engaging them in supervised direct service at macro, mezzo, and micro levels, while a Service Learning project allows students to participate in community activities as citizens of that community and not as direct service providers (as is the case in field experiences).

The main idea of social work practice is to provide students with an opportunity to apply theories and knowledge they learned in both the foundation and concentration Social Work courses. Overall, the social work practice is arranged in such a way that it requires students to reflect on their learning and to nurture their confidence in the skills they are developing through practical experience and SL projects.

In our programme, student SL projects are integrated into coursework from the beginning of the first semester of the Foundation Year and remain its part through the Advanced Year, culminating in the final research project course as Master theses. Projects are designed to provide opportunities for students to apply doing the materials taught (learning) during a course and to demonstrate their development of problem-solving skills in the creation of new knowledge. In the advanced phase of practice skills development, which includes both field education and SL projects in most Social Work courses, students continue to build upon their micro and macro knowledge and skills gained during the Foundation Year, while advanced coursework helps them continue to apply new skills in micro, macro, and mezzo settings. These advanced practice skills include, among other things, increased self-analysis and reflection, autonomy, constructive utilization of supervision, management of more complex assignments, and legal and ethical issues. The aim of the Advanced Year internship is to provide students with further social work practice/hands-on

skills and thus to help them develop more advanced interventions and strategies enabling them to work more effectively with all groups of population.

Teaching During Covid-19 Pandemics

Soon after the Government of Georgia declared the state of emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemics in March 2020, Ilia State University moved to distant learning. The university administration prepared guidelines for distant learning via ZOOM™ platform, which was purchased by the university in time. Obviously, there were many pitfalls at the beginning in terms of impossibility to offer high-quality field education to the students. However, this critical situation opened up new ways of thinking with regard to social work practice innovations. These innovations were as follows:

1. Guest lecturing became a more common practice, and we were able to invite many service providers as well service users to online classes.
2. Students' SL projects were tailored at informing decision makers and employers of social workers about improving social work practice by researching their needs and improving communication with beneficiaries during the crisis.
3. Instructors of Social Work courses adapted social work methods to expand the potential for virtual services and communication with individuals, families, and communities; students developed new core competencies in understanding virtual methods of social service delivery and in conducting telepractice sessions for beneficiaries and also increased their awareness of standards of virtual services that safeguard high-quality social service delivery with regard to clients' engagement and safety issues.
4. Online Social Work courses were transferred to the University's electronic learning platform Moodle™.¹ Social Work online courses enabled more interactive teaching and learning processes and allowed students to be more actively involved in forums and discussions on critical issues. Also, all teaching materials and assignments were available and structurally located in the easily accessible space and all recorded ZOOM lecture videos were posted weekly in this platform. It made the learning process more manageable for students.
5. Students' e-portfolios were well adapted to distant learning and enabled them to upload all their practice work in one space.
6. International experts were also involved in teaching. Students were introduced to international experiences and knowledge, and information exchange was possible.
7. Virtual field trips were available for students to acquaint them with existing services, service providers, and beneficiaries, so that online Service Learning was possible.

¹<https://elearning.iliauni.edu.ge/>

8. It was much easier to develop online teaching materials including assignments, and these were well-equipped to meet the students' needs and easily available. All these materials are also of use to the next generations of MSW students at Ilia State University.

Short Description of Social Programme Development and Evaluation Course

The Social Programme Development and Evaluation course is a two-semester Social Work course in the Advanced Year. Its primary aims are to help students.

1. Develop the knowledge and skills essential for acquiring a holistic (ecological) understanding of the needs of clients, agencies, and society;
2. Navigate multiple professional roles and functions;
3. Intervene at the individual, organization, and community levels of practice as dictated by their assessments and the available resources;
4. Understand the needs of excluded and underserved groups of population and respond in a collaborative manner to promote empowerment and social justice (equity);
5. Provide a differential assessment of the needs and resources of vulnerable individuals, families, groups, and communities;
6. Provide advanced case advocacy that protects client interests and opposes social and economic inequities;
7. Develop knowledge in needs assessment, planning, and programme design;
8. Develop task group skills and leadership;
9. Develop research skills for systematic practice monitoring and evaluation.

The students are expected to fulfil the following assignments: (1) a topic analysis paper, (2) design, procedures, and work plan worksheets for a needs assessment, and (3) a final report. The students are expected to work in task groups and develop group community/organizational projects. They can choose one of the following topics:

1. homelessness, social housing, and poverty;
2. children Rights, harm Reduction, and reproductive Health;
3. violence in the family: justice and social perspective.

In addition, the Master of Social Work programme of Ilia State University has partnerships with several organizations, which signed a memorandum of understanding to foster social work profession in the country and to support students' teaching and learning processes. Moreover, these organizations also contributed to the creation of Social Work courses by suggesting topics and issues that are relevant to the beneficiaries they serve.

These state and non-governmental agencies are:

1. Tbilisi Municipality, Municipal Department of Healthcare and Social Services: Shelter for homeless in Lilo settlement/social housing in Varketili district,
2. Tanadgoma – Centre for Information and Counselling on Reproductive Health,
3. Tbilisi Shelters of Anti-Violence Network in Georgia,
4. Georgian Association of Social Workers, and
5. Day centres and 24-h crisis centres for street-connected youth in Tbilisi.

Regarding these contexts, students are expected to develop their topic analysis paper where they define the scope of the topic (i.e. issue or need) with the help of relevant literature, outlining, in particular:

- Scope and nature of the problem/condition,
- A case example (micro level) applicable to the cause exploration (macro level),
- The purpose and relevance of intervention, and
- The initial focus question(s).

In their needs assessment worksheets, student describe the design and procedures for the needs assessment including details on

- The population sample and rationale,
- The needs assessment method(s), instrument(s), and rationale,
- Participant invitation/explanation and confidentiality assurances,
- The data collection procedures, and
- The method for tracking efforts (evaluation strategy).

In their final report, students present results, initial findings, the potential programme implications, and reflections on community needs assessment experience including

- A description of each planned activity the students were able to complete,
- A description of the barrier to each planned activity that the students were not able to complete,
- The approach and rationale the students used to do an initial analysis of data,
- A listing of the students' initial findings and observations regarding these findings, and
- A brief discussion of the potential programme development implications.

In accordance with their individual interests, during the semester each student is assigned to a specific task group consisting of five to seven other students in the class. In the class period, time is allotted for the task groups to develop the group needs assessment project and to provide the participating members with support, problem solving, and skill development opportunities to facilitate mastery of the course material and the project completion. At the end of the course, brief task group presentations on their respective needs assessment projects are scheduled. At the end of the semester, all students have to submit a written reflection on the task group process.

In its basic format, this course consists of instructor and guest lectures from the above-mentioned community organizations/agencies, group and individual

discussions, presentations, exercises, and activities. Teaching outlines are provided for each session. The students have access to recommended electronic books to complete group projects and to critically examine the professional literature.

At the second semester of this course, students are involved in accomplishing SL projects they drafted during the previous semester. At this stage, the students are actually accomplishing their SL projects, which address needs of specific target groups/groups of population. During this semester, students are expected to increase their insight into, and develop an in-depth understanding of, agency and/or client systems and macro social work skills, including leadership, social activism, fundraising, and administrative skills.

Application of Service Learning Projects During the Covid-19 Pandemics

Below, we will discuss five SL projects accomplished during the Covid-19 pandemics. All projects were accomplished by MSW students of Ilia State University in 2020 and 2021. Detailed information and selected project examples are placed on the website of a social work resource centre: the Research Centre for Advancing Science in Social Services and Interventions of Ilia State University, Faculty of Arts and Science.²

Project 1: Psycho-educational YouTube video channel for children

Students prepared a psycho-educational YouTube video channel,³ which aimed to engage with street-connected children kept in the 24-h centres. The videos had three different foci: (1) discussion of animation and teaching empathy as well as pro-social communication skills; (2) arts and crafts; (3) physical exercises and sport (Partskhaladze, et al., 2020).

The videos were shown at all existing 24-h crisis centres in Tbilisi, Georgia's capital city, where most of the street kids reside. The children provided their self-reflection to the students in the YouTube comment section of the videos. The feedback was very positive. Not only did it show the children's interest and motivation but also evidenced that the children's engagement with these videos promoted their informal education, psychological rehabilitation and life skills.

Project 2: Needs assessment of social workers during the pandemics and Information Hub development

In order to inform decision makers and employers of social workers about ways of improving social work practice during the crisis, the students were involved in a needs assessment organized by GASW (Georgian Association of Social Workers).

²<https://socialintervention.iliauni.edu.ge/>

³<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1pSPTQeQ8qZ-cNU3BEVPgQ>

By studying the challenges of social work practitioners, they developed a set of recommendations for the state and non-state agencies working with homeless people, street connected children and youth, children in the residential care, etc. Based on the needs assessment of service providers, the students have set up an information hub that served as a forum for the Covid-19 related information.⁴ A group of more than 150 professionals was formed to gather and share relevant research findings, professional handbooks, information kits and training and webinar links developed in Georgia and abroad (Partskhaladze et al., 2020).

Project 3: Online concert for the Tbilisi Municipality Shelter for homeless in Lilo settlement

Based on the needs assessment of the beneficiaries of Lilo shelter, the students developed a project that aimed at developing video concerts for them. The video was about 2-h long. The students asked different artists (singers, poets, musicians, etc.) from different regions of Georgia to record videos of their performance and to address their wishes to the target group.⁵

The students also made an introductory speech to likewise welcome the addressees. This concert was very timely for the people who were kept in the shelter and felt very isolated. The artists' engagement was very intensive and time-consuming. This project also served to increase the famous artists' awareness of homeless people. Prior to the project preparation, the students formed a Student Social Workers' Club at Ilia State University.

Project 4: Increasing awareness of gender roles

The students studied literature on gender-based violence, feminist theories, and the country's laws and bylaws on this issue as well as the recent annual reports from the ombudsman office of Georgia. Based on the desk research study, they produced self-awareness-raising videos. One video was about gender roles and stereotypes.⁶ Another one dealt with gender-based discrimination at work place.⁷ The students disseminated these videos to the pupils and their parents in one of the public schools in Tbilisi. Children were asked to reflect on these videos by writing a short commentary on how they perceived them and what they thought about gender-based stereotypes and discrimination. The students then created poster cards based on these commentaries and distributed them among families living in the shelters. Both videos and poster cards sought to promote awareness about gender-based violence (see Fig.12.2).

Project 5: Donate a book to the Municipality Shelter for homeless in Lilo settlement, Tbilisi

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/795441174276358>

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=JandatsvaTbilisiCity&set=a.3017179435027170>

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5qfzZ8phC4>

⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/979097208905587/videos/552050189124465>

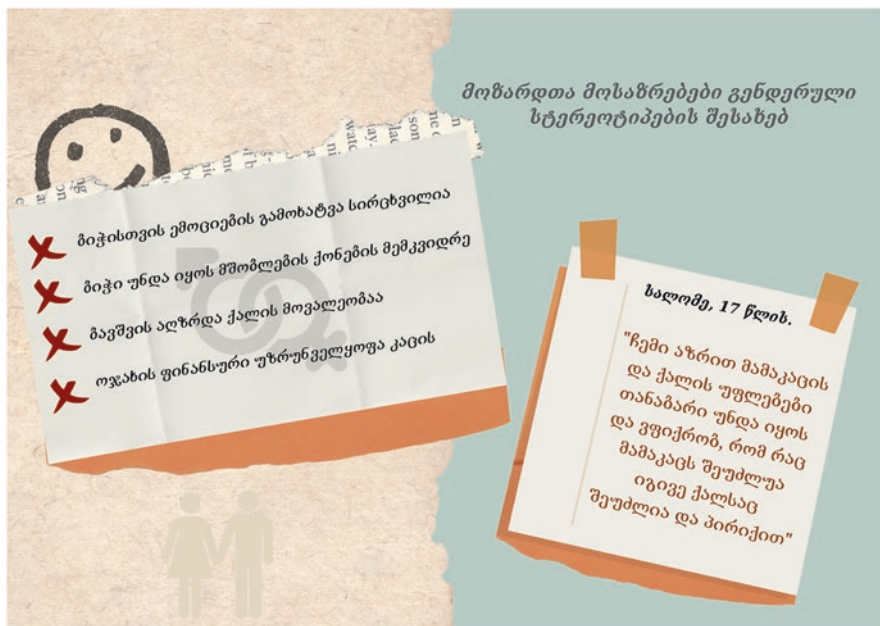


Fig. 12.2 Adolescents views on gender stereotypes: “Salome, 17 years old: In my opinion women and men should have equal rights”

The project encompassed several different stages, and its purpose was to increase awareness about homelessness among children, connect children with the shelter, and create a library there.⁸

During the first stage of the project, students arranged an information meeting with the pupils of one of the public schools in Tbilisi. The teachers and pupils received information about shelters and social housing as well as about further issues related to homelessness and poverty. After this meeting, the pupils expressed their willingness to participate in the social action “donate a book to the shelter”. This campaign promoted the pupils’ empathy and charity towards homeless people. They were asked to record welcoming videos for beneficiaries and to send them best-wishes messages, such as, for instance: “Do not worry, we can build future together”, “I am sending you my warmth”, “Read the books, you will feel better”, “Your life is good, do not worry, we are with you”. These videos and posters were presented at the final event that was organized in the shelter.

During the second stage, the students started the informational campaign “Donate a book to the shelter” in a social network – namely, on Facebook. They created several posters and distributed them among their social network members (see

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/Research-Center-For-Advancing-Science-In-Social-Services-And-Interventions-979097208905587/photos/pcb.1974389512709680/1974388542709777/>



Fig. 12.3 Advertisement: Give donation (Book) to the shelter

Fig. 12.3). As a result of this campaign, more than 500 books for adults and children were collected.

During the final stage, the students asked the general director of the [National Parliamentary Library of Georgia](#) to organize a literature night at the shelter. The director gave a talk about literature and the role of books in people's life. The students treated the beneficiaries to sweets and drinks.

Reflective Writing as a Teaching Tool to Promote Students' Learning

As mentioned above, practice assignments/projects provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their learning, to experiment, and to develop confidence in the skills they are acquiring through the experience, therefore students also have to engage in reflective writing while accomplishing these practical projects. They must present their e-portfolios in the class via Google sites™. E-portfolios should include a so called Self-reflection Journal where their work in task groups and the outcomes of SL projects they accomplished are described. In fact, by making them think in depth about what affected their life, what they could have done differently to change the outcome, etc., reflective writing helps students to get insights that promote their

further learning and professional development. Thus, students are involved in Kolb's reflective practice.

The reflective writing exercise on task group formation involves answering five main questions. These questions are as follows:

- I. Group Formation: Describe how the task group attempted to further define the purpose for themselves.
 - Did a clearer picture of purpose, function, or goals emerge? If so, what were they? If not, why?
 - What specific tasks to be accomplished were identified and defined? How did that come about?
 - To what extent did a social-emotional component emerge either in conjunction with or in lieu of tasks to be accomplished? Describe this component and how it came about.
- II. Leadership: Describe how the leadership function emerged in the group.
 - How did the discussion on who would take on that role take place? If there was no discussion, explain what happened.
 - Did an informal leader emerge? If so, how?
 - To what extent was the leadership role "process"- or "task"-oriented?
- III. Communication: Describe the communication patterns that developed in the group.
 - Did dyads or triads and isolates develop? What caused these subgroup developments?
 - Did anyone attempt to intervene by re-structuring or re-directing the flow of communication? How was this done and how did the group members react?
 - How did issues of status and power play out? Can you rank order the members by power achieved and analyse how those who achieved a higher status managed to do so?
- IV. Cohesion: Describe the extent to which cohesion was established.
 - What variables influenced this process?
 - What types of needs did different members have? Were these met?
 - Did members feel free to disagree about tasks, or task assignments, or what the group was doing with its time? If not, why? If so, how did this take place?
- V. Norms, Culture and Control: Describe the norms, culture, and control mechanisms that evolved in the group.
 - What behavioural norms emerged?
 - What type of control mechanisms developed around these norms?
 - What values were expressed and how?

Reflective writing exercise on the outcomes of a SL project includes the following questions:

- What was it about?
- Why did I act like I did?
- How could I have acted differently?
- What can I learn from it?
- How does this insight make me feel?
- How can this relate to theory and become general knowledge?
- Can this general knowledge be applied to other cases?

Mixed Methodology to Assess the Students' Learning Outcomes

Research Questions

In order to assess the students' learning outcomes, mixed methodology was used. The main research questions were as follows:

1. Do the students report increased professional social work skills/competences after completing the two-semester course "Social Programme Development and Evaluation"?
2. How well do the students meet the objectives of the course?
3. What are the main factors affecting the students' learning in SL class?

Qualitative Data Collection

In order to answer these research questions, we analysed the qualitative data obtained from the students' journal/diary notes and focus group interviews and the data obtained from the in-depth interviews with the community partners.

Student Journal/Diary Notes as Part of the Course Assignment

The students submitted their self-reflection journals as a midterm (2 midterm assignments in the first and the second semester) and a final assignment (2 final assignments at the end of the first and second semester) as part of their e-portfolio. The students' reflections were studied to determine their feelings regarding group work processes, such as group formation, leadership, communication, cohesion, norms, culture, and control, as well as the outcomes of the SL project, learning experience, and need for future inquiry, theory application, and knowledge generalization. To provide inter-rater reliability, two coders (class instructor and tutor) coded all journals' content independently. The agreement levels between the coders reached 90%.

Focus Groups

At the end of the course, after 30 weeks, the students were asked to participate in a focus group to discuss their experiences in the class regarding the SL project, its strengths and weaknesses/limitations, the interesting and uninteresting topics, the rationale for its duration, the main problems that affected their active participation (the content and structure of the course, the teacher's competence, etc.). They also had to provide recommendations for future improvement of SL projects.

In-Depth Interviews with Community Partners

The data collected from the community partners adds to the data received from the students and provides supplementary information concerning the research questions, in particular the students' engagement in the projects and the competency they displayed in the course of those projects.

Quantitative Study

Pre-and post-test data were collected using The Self-Efficacy Scale for Social Workers (SESSW) (Williams et al., 2002) which 32 students filled out.

The SESSW is a quantitative instrument developed by Dr. Nancy Williams and it is based on the CSWE standards. This instrument demonstrates good face and content validity and contains 47 questions that assess one's perception of his/her social work skills. The scale was designed for MSW students. Students are asked to indicate if they perform specific social work skills and, if so, how confident they are in their performance on a scale from 1 (no confidence) to 100 (complete confidence). It is important to note that "higher ratings indicate a higher degree of perceived confidence" (Williams et al., 2002, p. 63).

We identified 31 skills for our research as appropriate for the Social Programme Development and Evaluation course (Table 12.1).

The pre-test and post-test data as well as the focus group data were collected from the students on a voluntary basis. The students who participated were provided with a consent form (which supplied information about confidentiality as well as risk and benefits of the participation) and were informed about the collected data's purpose within the evaluation.

In addition, we analysed the course evaluation forms developed by the university administration, which are filled out anonymously by students at the end of each course as a regular procedure. This self-administered questionnaire comprises the following questions: (1) Course instructor provided feedback on students' assignments and classwork (yes, no); (2) Knowledge obtained during the course is applicable in the student's future professional activities (yes, no); (3) Course assignments facilitated an application of knowledge and so-called "Project based Learning" was used (yes, no); (4) Instructors assessed students' assignments objectively (yes, no),

Table 12.1 Self-efficacy scale for social workers

#	Skills/Competencies	YES	NO	Confidence (0–100)
1	Use reflective skills			
2	Summarize group tasks			
3	Plan group action			
4	Establish rapport with groups			
5	Apply a strengths perspective			
6	Facilitate group discussion			
7	Facilitate group problem solving			
8	Develop group objectives			
9	Use networking skills			
10	Assume a leadership role			
11	View self as a change agent			
12	Follow through with tasks			
13	Ability to use negotiation skills during conflict			
14	Delegate responsibilities			
15	Ability to achieve goals			
16	Ability to adapt to unexpected challenges			
17	Comfortable working with diverse groups			
18	Ability to facilitate goal setting			
19	Ability to mediate differences			
20	Ability to facilitate group consensus			
21	Self awareness of strengths and weaknesses			
22	Professional use of self with client population			
23	Advocate for strategies to improve service delivery within an organization			
24	Ability to implement a strengths based perspective with a community or organization			
25	Formulate community organizing strategies			
26	Identify community and/or organizational resources			
27	Initiate partnerships			
28	Reflect critically on practice experiences			
29	Develop theory based assessments			
30	Integrate professional values and ethics into practice			
31	Effectively use supervision to advanced practice			

(5) During the course, students developed critical thinking skills (yes, no); (6) Time devoted to the practice-based teaching was sufficient (yes, no); (7) Course activities were supported by course materials (yes, no); (8) Instructor was available whenever I needed them (yes, no); (9) During distant learning, students have a possibility to ask questions (yes, no); (10) Instructor explained/discussed materials clearly and in detail (yes, no); (11) Instructor introduced distant learning rules and procedures (yes, no); (12) Instructor introduced course objectives and evaluation system (yes, no); (13) Text messages, teaching materials, recorded videos were available (yes,

some times, no); (14) Student's active participation in the class (0–5 scale); (15) Overall evaluation of the course (0–5 scale).

Finally, data were collected through in-depth interviews at the end of the course from the community partners who participated in the SL projects. The questions related to their reflections and the impact of the project on their beneficiaries as well as possible future topics of SL projects in collaboration with our university.

In total, 32 students (31 females and 1 male, medium age is 27.7) enrolled in the two-semester mandatory course. The course comprised 64 academic hours and 236 students' self-study hours including time spent communicating with agencies, reading, and doing home assignments. The course instructors used 2 h per week to discuss course-related content in form of lectures, guest lectures, virtual field trips, small group discussions, and reflections on the projects. In addition, a tutor was assigned to the class to discuss the SL projects and to provide assistance in communication and interactions with agencies. All communication was carried out via ZOOM platform.

The students formed 5 task groups comprising 5–7 students each. The project topics were chosen by the students themselves. All projects were related to the needs of the homeless and other marginalized groups who were affected by the Covid-19.

The quantitative data analysis (frequency tables, correlational analysis, and paired sample test) was accomplished by using SPSS 22 (Allen et al., 2014).

The qualitative data (focus groups at the end of the course) were tape-recorded, transcribed, and analysed by the course instructor with regard to their content. We relied on a data-reduction process that helped identify emergent topics and code them to obtain a set of core themes (Patton, 2002).

Data reliability was ensured by various types of triangulation: (1) methodological triangulation was achieved by combining qualitative and quantitative study methods; (2) source triangulation was achieved by getting feedback from the managers of agencies (community partners) and beneficiaries; (3) investigator triangulation was ensured only partially because the coding and analysis was performed by one author, but these were also reviewed by another instructor from Ilia State University.

Data Analysis

Multiple data sets were analysed for this evaluation study. The first data set that was analysed was the qualitative data.

Qualitative analysis of students' reflection logs revealed several main themes (Table 12.2).

It showed that the students had become more confident in group work and that their self-perception changed, as they described themselves as "change agents".

In order to answer research questions, we also analysed the students' focus group interviews, which had been conducted at the end of the project, and the data from the in-depth interviews with the community partners.

Table 12.2 The main topics from the Midterm and the final self-reflection logs

Criteria	Midterm	Final
Group Formation	“It was hard to understand my role”; “It was hard to set goals for the group”; “Some group members did not participate enough”.	“Finally I was so happy with my group”; “We became like one family”.
Leadership	“We did not have one leader”; “Everyone tried to become a leader”; “One become informal leader who always tried to joke and emotionally support the group members”.	“At the end, we all became leaders as we had our responsibilities to meet the goal. “
Communication	“One of my group members had more power, as she always made final decisions”; “Sometimes I did not know why we have decided to do this project, it was not clear for me at all”.	“At the end, we were good friends, it was great experience“.
Cohesion	“I noticed if I did not agree with my classmate, she would get calm and did not talk”; “I tried not to say yes”; “I feel my classmates were jealous of me, of what I was offering as they disagreed immediately all the time without any rational explanation”.	“At the end, we tried to listen everyone and get decision together by analysing all details”; “We had our own roles”; “was always tried that everyone in the group joins us”.
Norms, Culture and Control:	If someone was absent, I was very angry”.	“We had a rule to have special rules for group members who did not meet the deadline”.
Strengths	“I had no idea, how to engage with the community”.	“Now I feel confident and able to accomplish many plans”.
Limitations	“I did not have time to be fully involved”; “Lack of time and difficulty scheduling was the biggest limitation”.	“I still need to study a lot”.
Become a change agent	“I thought it was impossible to make this people happy”.	“I become a real change agent”; “I was proud of myself”.
Motivation	“I feel a little frustrated as I do not have any ideas”.	“I want to do social projects all the time”; “It changed my personality”.
Future plans	n/a	“Yes, it will be continued”.

The students mentioned that “SL projects were a very positive experience as they opened “their eyes”, “I found myself in the profession”; “SL developed my leadership skills”, “now I know what it means to make difference at a community level”. Students developed their skills in community and group work and leadership: “This was an incredible experience, I felt as a part of the group”, “I feel myself as a community leader”, “I was able to develop programme that was useful for disadvantaged people”.

Students mentioned some motivational and emotional factors that facilitated their work and participation in the SL project: “I started working with the group in

March. The group received me very positively and without any objection, I was involved to my great satisfaction in all activities, and I think that it gave me energy. First of all, in terms of emotions, I do not remember so many positive emotions experienced at once"; "Though we worked remotely, and I had fewer expectations, the outcomes exceeded my expectations". Another student emphasized a change in their self-perception: "I felt that I was a very valued person in this group, like a family member, and everyone cared about one another, everybody shared warmth and love".

Some students highlighted that the participation in SL projects improved their professional social work skills and allowed them to integrate theoretical knowledge into practice:

"I got more knowledge and information on working with homeless people"; "I got more motivation to learn more about the challenges of working with homeless people"; "By helping others, I feel that we all help each other to build our future".

Finally, the majority of students mentioned that the SL project was very productive and that they learned and applied social work theory in practice. They also informally planned many future activities to maintain contacts with the organizations and the community partners.

In addition, in-depth interviews with the community partners showed their satisfaction with the students' projects. The Head of a community organization said the following:

I should mention the students' joint effort and unanimity, their marvellous attitude towards the elderly and children... Their sparkling eyes and smiles that they shared with individual habitants of the shelter and social housing. Many thanks to every student from Ilia State University.

Remote concert was a great idea. The students did a great job! Thank you for this idea, this great motivation! On behalf of each community member, I want to thank the students and wish them success in their professional and personal life! I believe that they can do a lot of good work in the future!

The quantitative data analysis showed that the students had improved their skills to a statistically significant degree (Paired Sample test, $t = 70.6$ (29), $p = 0$. Pre-test $M = 34.7$, $SD = 11.4$; Post-test $M = 91.2$, $SD = 7.4$).

The students' first- and second-time assessments were positively correlated (Pearson Correlation = .98, $p = 0$), which means that students who had higher scores in the beginning improved their outcomes more than those with lower scores.

The final course evaluation results showed that students assessed the course very positively with regard to all parameters (see Fig. 12.4).

The students assessed their active participation with an average score of 4.8, and their overall evaluation of the course is 4.7.

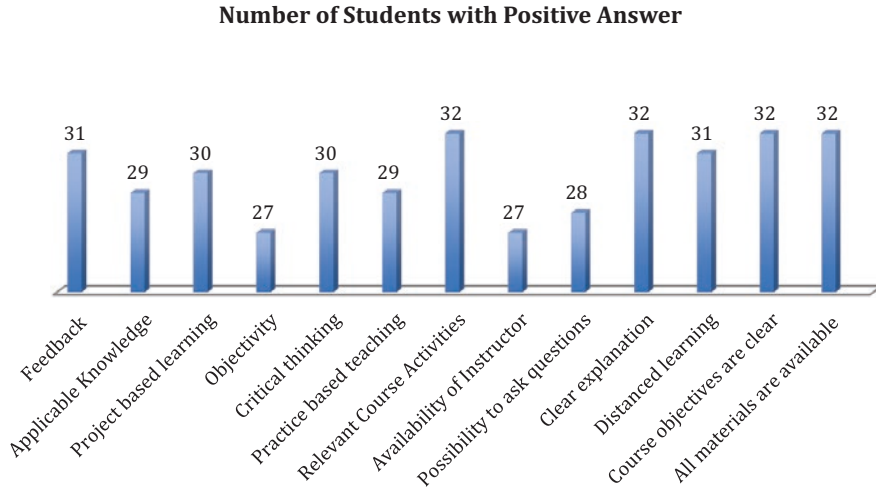


Fig. 12.4 Course evaluation by the students enrolled in the course

Summary and Conclusion

The Service Learning project helped create a unique classroom experience for the students as they all reported it to be truly meaningful and productive. The analysis of the students' data from different sources in addition to the community partners' data showed that the SL project had indeed promoted the students' social work competencies in social programme development and evaluation. The course helped students to improve their skills of service delivery for disadvantaged people during the Covid-19 pandemics.

The SL projects empowered not only community members but also students themselves. The latter felt more competent, as they had started working with complex social problems in real-life contexts. In other words, the students became change agents who planned and accomplished social projects in the Covid-19 pandemics in collaboration with community organizations and community partners and performed social work functions in a real-life context.

We can conclude that SL is an effective method for teaching courses in Social Work Management. Social workers as future managers acquire valuable social work macro-competencies. These include the conceptualization, implementation, and completion of a community client needs assessment for the purpose of identifying unmet needs and developing responsive programmes, facilitating team building, and evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of task groups as well as other organizational groups and committees. As a result, students can move from case to cause, as they advocate on behalf of individual clients, manage their care, and locate appropriate services.

SL is particularly important in the context of Social Work's current focus on competency-based education as it enhances students' competencies (CSWE, 2015).

Moreover, the outcomes of the SL projects showed that the students had honed their transferable skills, such as critical thinking and group work, since they as “a task group” were able to assess and develop programmes in the pandemic crisis situation.

We think that SL should be implemented in social work courses at large (and in social work manager education in particular) as it promotes students’ active learning that is essential for social work programmes. In addition to practice internships, SL furthers facilitates students’ motivation and their development as professionals. In addition, SL prepares students for practice and promotes their administrative and managerial skills.

Thus, SL can be a useful tool for teaching courses in the field of Social Work Administration and Management. Our example showed that it is the best strategy for making students understand what social programme/social project development means in real-life situations.

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Chapter 13

Learning Hybrid by Doing Hybrid: Teaching Critical Digital Skills in a Safe Learning Space



Joachim K. Rennstich

Abstract Professional social work contexts are increasingly characterized by hybrid administrative work environments and social space settings blending physical and virtual arenas of interaction. Modern social work management education therefore requires students to gain new critical digital competencies and opportunities for students to acquire these critical skills as part of their academic training in a systematic fashion. This chapter first discusses the new work environments social workers encounter as a result of the transformation of typical social spaces and administrative challenges based on the increased digitalization, informationalization, and hybridization of social work contexts. Next, the paper highlights the respective new professional digital competencies required of social workers as part of their professional toolkit allowing them to (re)gain agency in these transformed social and administrative environments. The chapter then shares experiences from a research methodology module (BA and MA level) offered both in traditional campus/face-to-face and online formats, offering insights and best practices how students can acquire and discover critical digital literacies in a safe learning space. These include the design of learning environments as experiential experience spaces and respective assessment formats that further enhance the learning of students.

Introduction

The transformation of our social worlds caused by digital technologies is by now a well-documented and -analysed phenomenon (Castells, 2010b; Franklin, 2015; Lupton, 2015). Far from being a mainly technological phenomenon, digitalization has fundamentally reshaped all social processes, constituting a new material and cultural reality (Hassan, 2020). Digitalization is closely connected to informatization: the “social process of an aware, systematic handling of information [...] that

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aims to make information usable regardless of its concrete subject” (Boes, 2005, p. 215, own translation). Both processes have become such well-established realities in our social lives that we often do no longer recognize them as technology-related and -induced transformations anymore. From a social work management perspective, this is highly problematic. The technologically induced connection of physical and virtual social spaces requires of social workers an extended set of competencies to (re)gain professional agency in their assistance, managerial, and also advocacy roles (cf. Reamer, 2019). At the same time, these competencies are rarely addressed in professional training and education.

Current educational settings often lack opportunities for students to acquire these crucial competences in a systematic fashion as part of their academic training. This chapter aims to demonstrate how this can be addressed by redesigning the structure of an educational course. First, the chapter discusses the challenges social workers face today as a result of the transformation of traditional social spaces. These are characterized by an increasing hybridization of social spaces, that is, a connection of physical and virtual places and spaces. Next, the chapter discusses the set of competencies social workers need in all their professional capacities that allows them to develop professional agency in such environments. These competencies represent not so much a substitution of the existing ones but, rather, their expansion that includes new forms of literacies. Here, the focus is on digital and data literacy. The chapter then shares some of the key insights from a research methodology module (BA and MA level) offered both in traditional campus/face-to-face and online formats at the YMCA University of Applied Sciences Kassel (Germany) with the aim of addressing the shortfalls in social work training as it pertains digital and data literacy and their application to professional challenges. It will highlight best practices and close with a short summary.

Critical Digital Skills for Social Work Management

Information and communication are the most fundamental dimensions of human activity and organization. Thus, a revolutionary change in the material conditions of their performance affects all realms of human activity (Castells, 2004, p. 9). Informatization ushers in a capitalist system in which productivity, manufacturing of commodities and services, forms of labour, as well as work styles have become intertwined with digital information technologies (Arvidsson & Colleoni, 2012; Lyon, 1986). The growing availability and importance of digital data in societal exchanges and the way they structure social discourses and decision-making make it crucial for social work management education to prepare students not only to engage confidently in these discourses but also to help their clients develop their own agency (cf. Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Lankshear & Knobel, 2008). The term informatization refers to a technological paradigm based on the augmentation of the human capacity of information processing and communication that has been made possible by the ‘digital revolutions’ in various spheres, including biological

engineering, data storage and analysis, or the connection of physical and non-physical objects and symbols. The following three major features set it apart from the previous information and communication technologies (ICTs; Castells, 2004, p. 9):

- its self-expanding processing and communicating capacity in terms of volume, complexity, and speed;
- its ability to recombine on the basis of digitization and recurrent communication;
- its distributing flexibility through interactive, digitized networking.

These changes have an impact not only on communication but also on other common aspects of social interactions and ultimately on individual meaning-making and culture at large. They also transform the social space in which human interactions take place.

Hybridization of Social Spaces

Established in the 1970s, the concept of lifeworld orientation has evolved as one of the dominant practice theory models in the German social work and social care community (Grunwald & Thiersch, 2009). Related theoretical approaches and socio-spatial models, especially the concept of social spaces, have not only gained prominence in theoretical debates but also in the practice of social work (Budde et al., 2006). In contrast to psychological approaches, which focus on human experiences and behaviour, or sociological perspectives, which investigate forms and consequences of human interaction, social-spatial models that are applied to social work take a more holistic perspective on the individual and their social embeddedness (Hinte & Noack, 2017, p. 14). Thus understood, social space is the result of social and organizational action embedded in interaction and power structures in the form of institutionalized regulatory norms and symbolic systems (Budde & Früchtel, 2006, p.27). However, it manifests itself not only in its physical form. For it to be constructed—to take *gestalt*—, social heritage, group membership and other important social factors are equally important (Habermas, 1981/1988, pp. 182–228). The centre of this space is the individual and their persona. The construction of each concrete space differs from that of other individuals even if they all inhabit the same physical space at the same moment (Bollnow, 2010).

The constructedness of social space obviously makes it necessary for today's social workers to take into account digitally-enabled, virtual extensions of space and place in their general analysis, as they are—to various degrees—directly or indirectly part of nearly all social relational spaces (Cortada, 2012; Fürst & Hinte, 2020). This, in turn, makes it necessary for social work practitioners and their educators alike to acquire the competencies required for the analysis and understanding of agency within combined virtual and physical—or hybrid—social spaces. A hybrid space can be defined as one that “comprises both physical and virtual space,

and in action is framed simultaneously [sic!] by the physical space, the virtual space and the relationship between the two” (Harrison & Dourish, 1996, p. 72). Harrison and Dourish noted a key feature of such hybrid spaces early on:

When we observe the emergence of a sense of place in media space, a distinction arises between “spatial” features that the technology might provide—visual access, proximity, movement—and the place-oriented aspects of interaction which might arise there—formal and informal discussion, intimacy, a sense of ownership, and so forth. (Harrison & Dourish, 1996, p. 72)

In other words, they emphasize the importance of the aspect of social constructedness as well as the need to take into account the physical and technological framing of this space for a proper understanding of the construction processes. Digital media and technologies, especially mobile ones, have transformed social life and everyday social interactions in a profound and irrevocable way (Berezan et al., 2018; Castells, 2010b; Schnell & Dunger, 2019). Mobile communication devices act as a “tether to the network through increasingly complex and automatic protocols” (Hassan, 2020, p. 77), thus embedding our physical self and actions within the immediate space of places into a larger, digitally mediated virtual space (de Souza e Silva, 2006; Droege, 1997), a space of flows (Castells, 2010a, pp. 407–446). This transformation is further enhanced by the increasing hybridization of socio-economic structures and networks (OECD, 2019; Wang, 2019). The ubiquity of sensors and the growing importance of the Internet of Things and other related developments only further accelerate this development (Abowd & Mynatt, 2000; Ferscha, 2007; Goumagias et al., 2021).

The Need for New Competencies for Social Workers

These are certainly not new insights. Garret has highlighted the transformational impact of digital information processing technology on social work and its professional code of conduct in the early 2000s, naming this period “social work’s ‘electronic turn’” (Garrett, 2005). Parton summarized the impact of the change of forms of knowledge on social work professional conduct and standards in 2006, describing the implications for the relationship between theory and practice in social work and the nature of ‘social’ work itself (Parton, 2008, p. 254). An early critical analysis of these developments was provided by Smith (2004), who argued that governmental data-based oversight of social work(ers) was the result of loss in trust in their professional abilities and the rise of informatization allowed a public substitution of confidence in the professional skills of social workers with trust in informational systems. This has important effects on the nature of knowledge required for professional social work and the respective conduct:

So, whereas previously social work was primarily an oral and written set of practices which relied on the construction of narratives, increasingly this seems to be less the case. [...] In the process varied systems for assessment, monitoring and planning in social work both for a particular ‘case’ or for generating a range of management information are becoming

dependent upon the computer for their operation. This is not to say that the use of narratives is disappearing but that they are increasingly framed by the logic of the database. (Parton, 2009, p. 718)

As a result, social work management now requires additional skills beyond those of traditional social work professional standards (Reamer, 2017). The changes outlined above impact the required skill set and competencies of social workers not only in terms of professional administrative conduct but also in terms of their ability to regain agency as professionals in their domain of work (López Peláez et al., 2018). The need to address these skills as part of educational training of social workers likewise applies to the younger generations including so-called “digital natives” (Bennett & Maton, 2010). Social workers need a solid preparation in the main domains of literacy skills that would enable them to perform well professionally and obtain and convey knowledge in both traditional, analogue environments and the digital ones (Reamer, 2019). Furthermore, the growing importance of information and its manifestation in digital data requires them to gain competences in data literacy way beyond those currently taught in most social work educational programs.

Traditionally, literacy skills are differentiated into three basic domains: (1) prose literacy; (2) document literacy; and (3) quantitative literacy (OECD & Statistics Canada, 2000, p. x). All these domains have undergone a significant transformation regarding the way information is coded and contextualized (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Potter & McDougall, 2017). As Cukier and Mayer-Schoenberger (Cukier & Mayer-Schoenberger, 2013, p. 29) have pointed out, the datafication of society is characterized by the ability to render into (digital) data many aspects of the world that have never been quantified before. This also has important consequences for education in terms of literacies taught and competences attained (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). A digital media-infused environment is far more complex with regard to the sources and content of information and the corresponding societal narratives (Müller et al., 2009). Furthermore, participatory culture shifts the focus of literacy from individual expression to community involvement (Jenkins et al., 2015, p. 6). By now, digital literacy—understood here as a set of competencies needed for meaning-making in the digital realm—is a foundational capability essential for participation within society (Littlejohn et al., 2013), as the notion of traditional information is broadened to encompass meaning-making in and around the multiple modes associated with digital forms of information. The increasing tendency of societal decisions to be influenced, if not determined, by data-driven processes directly impacts the power of individuals to act and interact socially. This requires a competent handling of and communication with data in both analogue and digital formats (Otto & Ziegler, 2010).

A critical aspect, which is often overlooked in educational programmes in social work focusing on methodology and information- and data-related competencies, is the codification of norms and values into data:

[W]hen data appear to be so self-evident and big data seem to hold such promise of truth, it has never been more essential to remind ourselves what data are not seen, and what cannot be measured. (Baym, 2013, p. Conclusion, Paragraph 2)

This formation of normative standards expressed encaptured in quantitative measures has been rightly criticized (Muller, 2018), yet the above outlined developments will only increase the need for a thorough understanding of the underlying formative processes. This makes it all the more urgent for social workers to gain the necessary skills to engage critically and competently in the creation and use of such data. As Pink and Lanzeni (2018) point out:

For a world where the most mundane elements of our lives are inevitably datafied and where predictive data analytics are increasingly used in regimes of governance, we need a research ethics that engages with the emergent mundane contexts where data are made and analyzed, that accounts for the future temporalities of big data analytics and whereby ethics is part of rather than applied to research and analysis. (Pink & Lanzeni, 2018, p. 1)

A thorough training in these skills will enable students to participate in the design and re-design of these processes rather than simply accepting them as a black box or—worse—trying to ignore their impact on both their own professional agency and that of their clients.

Digital and Data Literacy

Digital literacy thus constitutes a crucial competence for social workers, as digital technologies already mark important elements of professional social work practices and will only continue to do so in the future (Berzin et al., 2015; López Peláez et al., 2018). The concept of digital literacy has no commonly accepted simple definition, as “any attempt to constitute an umbrella definition or overarching frame of digital literacy will necessarily involve reconciling the claims of myriad concepts of digital literacy, a veritable legion of digital literacies” (Lankshear & Knoble, 2008, p. 4). Not only does digital literacy refer to the skills necessary for the use of digital communication: the concept also encompasses the diverse ways of meaning-making that involve “digital encodification”, and the “enculturations that lead to becoming proficient in them” (Lankshear & Knoble, 2008, pp. 5–7). It is therefore useful to think of digital literacy more as digital literacies, particularly if one keeps in mind that digital literacies require and build on the skillset from non-digital literacies (Støle, 2018).

Data literacy, conversely, constitutes “the ability to collect, manage, evaluate, and apply data in a critical manner” (Ridsdale et al., 2015, p. 8). In addition to statistical methodological and research skills, data literacy also requires a good knowledge of the regulatory and ethical norms concerning the creation, storage, and analysis of data (Heidrich et al., 2018, p. 14). Data literacy is prominently characterized by its interdisciplinary nature, as the skills necessary for the acquisition of thorough data literacy competencies are not simply rooted in mathematics or

statistics. It is hardly possible to obtain deep professional skills in all areas relating to a thorough data literacy. However, it is important to develop—and update—basic knowledge of and proficiency in at least *some* of the involved areas, as, for example, highlighted in the data science textbook by Skiena (2017).

The digitalization of social processes also transforms the required skill set for a competent document literacy, which is a crucial competence for social workers. The increasing quantification of social meaning-making and social relations require a much deeper understanding of data as well as additional competencies and quantitative skills, especially such as the development of data, their contextualization, analysis, interpretation, and presentation as information and derived knowledge from data (Hintz et al., 2018). Digital and data literacy also enables social workers to (re) gain agency in an administrative environment that is characterized by a shift from personal knowledge to institutionalized information gathering and data storage and analysis. This has important implications for the establishment of trust in an increasingly hybrid and data-driven social environment (Taddeo, 2010).

Far from remaining a dystopic concept laid out in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, dataveillance—that is, the “systematic use of personal data systems in the investigation or monitoring of the actions or communications of one or more persons” (Clarke, 1988, p. 499)—has become a widely accepted reality in many ways for common social and professional practices owing to the growing importance of digital technologies and processes. As a result of developments in information technologies combined with a growing demand for social control among government agencies and corporations alike, dataveillance practices have diversified and proliferated. Since the 1980s, dataveillance technologies have spread, the costs of conducting dataveillance have declined, and the application of dataveillance techniques is increasingly popular, while the demand for data to which they can be applied has spiralled upwards and many new data gathering activities have emerged (Clarke & Greenleaf, 2017, p. 3). Buzzwords like “machine learning” and “big data” are the labels currently used for these kinds of analytical tools. These developments have consequences way beyond mere technical changes in the analysis of data:

However, one could argue that there have been qualitative as well as quantitative shifts in dataveillance practices in the last decade, or, more precisely, that an intensification of quantitative differences allows for the articulation of qualitative difference. Dataveillance in the present moment is not simply descriptive (monitoring) but also predictive (conjecture) and prescriptive (enactment). (Raley, 2013, p. 124)

This development can also be witnessed in social work practices and processes: from the personal use of digital information technologies (Mishna et al., 2021), to administrative processes (Huuskonen & Vakkari, 2013; Reamer, 2019) and the use of predictive risk modelling and other related applications of algorithm-based computational support systems (Vaithianathan et al., 2013; Waterhouse & McGhee, 2015). Social workers need to be equipped with extensive digital competencies, including data- and digital literacies, to address the challenges these transformations actively and competently (Perron et al., 2010), especially in consideration of

future possibilities of (semi-)automated forms of observation and decision-making based on metadata creation (Parton, 2009; Rudin et al., 2019).

Important countertrends that have emerged in response to these developments are the rise of demands for more public scrutiny of algorithm-based tools, including access to the actual algorithms themselves, as well as the demand for more data to be made publicly available and easily accessible (Baack, 2015; Spiekermann et al., 2021). This call for, and process of, making data publicly available establishes new forms of public spheres that include non-physical and/or hybrid spaces and places; a new hybrid commons (Benkler, 2006; Rennstich, 2021). From a social work management perspective, these transformations necessitate changes in the regular curriculum of social work methods to equip students with the necessary skill set and competences required to perform confidently and professionally in a digitalized, hybrid social environment and its three main professional domains: intervention, administration, and advocacy. The following section first discusses an approach to the integration of learning spaces for digital competences into existing course modules based on blended learning principles and the use of specifically designed assessment formats. Next, the key findings from several reruns of the redesigned course are presented and discussed.

Teaching Digital Skills—A Case Example

Digitalization and datafication have not made traditional competencies of social workers obsolete. On the contrary, the digital skills outlined above are often based on the specific competences social workers gain during their educational training and as part of their professional experiences. Digital competences should thus be viewed as additional tools and methodological extensions to the social work toolbox rather than as isolated skills that replace traditional competences geared towards the needs of an ‘analogue social world’. This section describes the redesign of an existing research methodology module comprising three integrated courses (Introduction to Research Methodologies for Social Workers [INTRO], Qualitative Social Science Research Methods [QUAL], and Quantitative Social Science Research Methods [QUANT]) that was undertaken with the explicit goal to allow students to gain critical digital competencies along the research methodological skills required by the German social work curriculum (see Schäfer & Bartosch, 2016).

Course Design

The choice to redesign an existing social work research methodology module was made purposefully to ensure that students do not view those digital competencies as separate from other, strongly related methodologies but rather as a natural part of the traditional methodological skills conveyed in the three courses. The INTRO

course acts as the hub of the module tying the other courses, QUAL and QUANT, to the larger questions related to research methodologies, such as research design, ethical questions, legal aspects, analytical approaches and aspects surrounding choice-making in data-creation, -storage, and -presentation. The QUAL and QUANT courses are designed as laboratory courses that give students the chance to further explore the methodologies and issues introduced as part of the INTRO course theoretically and especially also practically (cf. Fink, 2013). The module is designed to take place within one single semester, with all three courses running in parallel over the course of 4 months.¹

The entire module is following a backward course design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). This ensures that the main goals of the course—expressed as the main competencies that students should be able to gain—are not only made explicit to the students but are also visible at all times as the main guiding posts of each course element. In addition, the courses follow scaffolding (Hogan & Pressley, 1997; Jones, 2019) and self-regulated learning (Russell et al., 2020) approaches, which tie them together. All three courses are based on blended-learning concepts (e.g., Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Thus, by design, students are part of a hybrid learning environment in which they are not only exposed to the features of typical hybrid social spaces as a professional work environment but also experience these as a safe learning space. Also, this course design decision ensures that students are exposed to digital tools in multiple roles: as learners, as researchers, and as users themselves. Even though the module is part of the regular, face-to-face, campus-based course offerings, students are able to engage in both synchronous and asynchronous learning settings. This is essential not only in terms of the hybrid learning set-up and learning goals, but also in terms of the highly diverse levels of (digital) literacy that typically characterize the student body.

Learning Environments as Experiential Experience Spaces

The design of the various learning environments is a critical component of the module. The design takes into account both spatial (cf. Sankey et al., 2012) and temporal dimensions (cf. Corte et al., 2003). Some of the learning spaces are (mainly) physical, others (mostly) digital or virtual, and others still deliberately hybrid in nature. Some course elements include traditional (synchronous) course meetings to allow students who are largely used to this kind of tuition to engage in learning by using their habitual learning strategies. In addition, other elements are purposefully asynchronous in nature to allow students with different previously acquired skill sets to

¹This decision was based on the restrictions posed by the B.A. program that requires methods modules to be completed within a single semester. The M.A. module is not divided into different courses but structured as a single course with lab elements. This constraint makes the module rather work-intensive for students. From a didactical perspective, it would be preferable to stretch the module over more than one semester. This would also allow for a better integration of the courses into other modules/courses.

be able to likewise engage with the learning materials and to achieve the same learning goals and competencies. These asynchronous elements are partially digitally mediated and partially facilitated by another important learning environment element: small study groups.

All learners build study teams of three to four students at the start of the module.² Even though they all have to submit an individual assignment in the end, the groups are designed so as to allow students to provide each other with peer support as part of their learning process. On the one hand, this increases the level of support students receive throughout the semesters and over all three courses, which is a decisive element for a successful learning outcome. On the other hand, this also allows students to gain crucial group-working skills in hybrid social environments (cf. Keppell et al., 2012).

The inclusion of all these spatial and temporal dimensions—separately as well as combined—in the course design is an important element thereof that helps to ensure that students acquire not only the required specialist research methodology ‘language’ but also digital literacy:

People learn (academic or non-academic) specialist languages and their concomitant ways of thinking best when they can tie the words and structures of those languages to experiences they have had—experiences with which they can build simulations to prepare themselves for action in the domains in which the specialist language is used. (Gee, 2006, p. 3)

The combination of synchronous learning experiences and asynchronous ones is paired with the learning experience in small learning teams as safe learning spaces in which students are able to experiment with methods and technologies on their own while also gaining insights into the perspective of their research partners. For example, students interview each other, acting as researchers (interviewers) but also subjects (interviewees) or, else, alternate as the observers and the observed. They can support each other in the use of new technologies, such as specialized software (synchronous) but are also able to address gaps in their existing literacies with the help of video inputs with step-by-step solutions to tasks and exercises that allow for individual learning speeds, which are at the same time paced by the weekly course meetings.

Each session allows students to apply—and, if necessary, to acquire—the required skills at different learning speeds individually, as small learning teams, and/or as part of the larger course learning group. In each session, students can interact within their learning teams, the larger course group, and also with the instructor, both individually and as learning group. Students are also able to either complete (most) of a learning task and achieve the respective learning outcome

²From a didactical perspective, two options are possible: groups can either self-identify or be created on the basis of a previously established (e.g., through a survey) skill-level identification, which ensures a supportive group structure. All groups work together throughout all module elements and courses. Groups work together as co-workers and teams. They do not, however, submit group-work as part of their assessment. This ensures that students do not distribute work among their group but work equally and individually on all tasks and submit their individual assignments as well as reflect on them in an independent and individual manner.

within each session or, else, proceed asynchronously over the course of the week until the next session. As many of the learning tasks and artifacts are required for the completion of the subsequent ones, students are highly incentivized to keep the general learning pace with their peers; at the same time, no student is forced to complete a task within a very short time frame of a single class or lab session. This permits students in a learning group that is diverse in terms of previous skill levels, learning styles, and other individual learning or time constraints to keep pace with their peers, which is essential for many of the learning tasks, while still allowing for individualized and self-regulated learning paces within each weekly step.

Students are also tasked individually to reflect on each single learning assignment and step (e.g., the creation of a transcript from their interviews), which allows them to focus more on the learning process than on the production of an artifact (e.g., a completed interview or statistical analysis based on a common problem set) that caters to the supposed expectation of the teacher. This requires special attention to the assessment tool(s) used in the module.

Assessment

The form of assessment is a crucial aspect in the design of a module as it should allow students to experiment in safe learning spaces with different technologies, experience different forms of hybrid learning environments, and thus to acquire relevant specialist languages as well as general digital literacies. On the one hand, the form of assessment must fit into the overall academic set-up and accommodate the learning experiences of students. On the other hand, it needs to offer students space—and academic reward—for reflective thinking and allow for trial and error as part of the learning process. One assessment format that meets all of these requirements is e-portfolios (cf. Heinrich & Bozhko, 2012).

E-portfolios are generally described as “digitized collections of work, responses to work, and reflections that are used to demonstrate key skills and accomplishments for a variety of contexts and time periods” (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005, p. 1). On a technical level, they are digitally mediated; under a pedagogical perspective, they are learner-centred and deliberate collections of work that aim to showcase sophisticated achievement (Cummings & Maddux, 2010). They are also well-established tools of learning and assessment. As Mark Pegrum points out in his foreword to a volume on e-portfolios in higher-education,

[p]ortfolios, as collections of artefacts on which learners can reflect, on which they can be assessed, and on which they can base future job applications, are not a new construct. Nor, by the mid-2010s, are e-portfolios, the digital versions of portfolios which have also existed for some time. But, in a context of superdiversity, where a premium is placed on the acquisition of twenty-first century skills during personal learning journeys, and where learning can take manifold forms and be demonstrated in manifold ways, e-portfolios are taking on a new salience. (Chaudhuri & Cabau, 2017, p. vi)

The assessment based on portfolios (whether in digital or analogue form) strongly differs from other assessments formats, such as final exams or research papers. Portfolios transfer responsibility for learning to the student, who then establishes individual learning goals. The use of this format promotes a learner-centred environment that connects learning and assessment based on samples of student work and reflections collected over an entire semester (or even a year or an entire program). Instructors need to provide clear guidelines for selection of representative materials as not all work completed in a course should be featured in the portfolio. Especially important is the fact that portfolios require student-reflection, peer feedback, and instructor feedback and guidance. For the portfolio to function as an effective assessment tool that is comparable with other formats, referencing standards, benchmarks, or examples of excellence should be made available as clear and appropriate criteria that allow students and teachers to evaluate student learning (Carmean & Christie, 2006, p. 38).

The e-Portfolio Structure in the Case Example

Students create one e-portfolio each for the entire module.³ The entire cohort is presented with a common structure—a topical outline—as a basis for their portfolio content creation. In the first section, students are asked to briefly introduce themselves and to answer three questions about their prior exposure to and familiarity with research methods by using a very intuitive video tool, which is a part of the Learning Management System (LMS).⁴ This interview style has proven to work well, since otherwise, students initially often feel at a loss as to how to present themselves in a format most of them have no or very little familiarity with. The task to be carried out in this browser-based and easy-to-use system, which limits each video to 2 min, allows students to deploy additional digital media skills.⁵

The final section is similarly structured and bookends the opening section by asking students to review and reflect on their initial presentations. The initial

³This is important, as the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), often referred to as the Bologna system, requires a module-wide, not a course-based assessment. The use of e-portfolios thus enables the instructor to use self-regulated didactic methodologies, while at the same time also meeting the administrative and legal requirements that fit into the wider module structure of educational programmes both on the B.A. and M.A. level.

⁴The LMS used here is the open-source Moodle™ system with which students have familiarity as it is used programme-wide at the school.

⁵Students are, however, free to use as many videos as they like or any other video production tools they are familiar with or prefer. The point is not to acquaint students with a specific tool but, rather, offer them a “built-in”, low-threshold instrument that would enable them to focus not only on technical aspects of digital media literacy but also on the content-related and communicational ones. Experience has shown that relatively low levels of technical expertise and media competencies often make students predominantly focus on the purely technical aspects rather than the entire combined process of content planning, implementation, and presentation.

reflection is referred to as a “letter to your future self in three months’ time” in which students describe in their own words their expectations, worries, ambitions, etc. related to the course material, issues covered, and goals of the course.⁶ This first set of artifacts familiarizes students with some of the core elements that constitute the digital literacy they are expected to obtain by the end of course in a low-threshold and safe learning space.⁷ It provides students with an opportunity to engage in a multimodal documentation of their own learning journey and reflection based thereupon.

The remainder to the e-portfolio is structured along the learning steps in all three courses. Students are asked to present their artifacts and describe them with the help of three guiding questions that relate to the artifact itself, its development, and the outcome of the developmental process. This allows students to discuss different strategies of developing the artifact with media content or describe the process in writing only. As all students are asked to address the same set of basic portfolio elements and related artifacts, the e-portfolios remain comparable as an assessment tool, while still allowing students to engage in different learning styles and providing a documentation of their learning progress, as the entries are usually created each week as part of the course assignments.

Some of the artifacts that should be presented as part of the e-portfolio are pre-determined: for example, students are asked to present their preparatory material (based on a provided template) for their face-to-face interviews. Other artifacts can be added as students see fit, depending on the kind of data analysis they have undertaken. Students are asked to provide a basic written description for each section in addition to the creation of digital artifacts and, in the quantitative sections, also data analyses based on both the problem sets provided and the data they have created. This ensures that students are aware of the connection between all the main forms of literacies discussed above and do not view, for instance, data analysis as a form/specialist language that is separate and distinct from the data creation. It also ensures that students view their digital literacies as separate from other forms of literacy. In addition, students are specifically asked to reflect on each individual section entry in connection with its descriptive and analytical elements.

The e-portfolio format requires different forms of feedback, since feedback, along with its contextual administration, constitutes a crucial aspect of successful learning (Sadler, 2010). The module design thus includes a variety of feedback opportunities beyond the traditional assessment formats, such as research papers or other end-of-course-based student-teacher interactions. Students can gain valuable feedback not only from the instructor during course meetings or asynchronously via

⁶Research methodology is a subject many students dislike as it entails skills and expert languages—e.g., quantitative mathematics (Onwuegbuzie & Wilson, 2003)—that many of them feel unprepared for or think unnecessary for their future professional practice of social work (Gredig & Bartelsen-Raemy, 2018).

⁷Students are given the choice to make their e-portfolio entries accessible to other students, to the instructor only, or to themselves alone as a draft.

the LMS communication tools but also from their peers in various settings (study teams, entire cohort, online). Students are thus able to receive a relatively timely and often instant feedback when they need it most, for instance, facing an impasse in their learning step. This allows students to learn at an individual pace even in relatively large courses.

Finally, students familiarize themselves with the evaluation rubric of the e-portfolio during the first meeting and evaluation criteria are regularly discussed throughout the semester.

Research Methodology for Course Analysis

The analysis presented here is based on the data obtained from student reflections from all the modules where the above method was implemented, one BA methods module taught face-to-face with a blended learning design (in 2021, the module was taught synchronously online due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions), a BA course in methods offered online (with a 3-day face-to-face session), and a MA module offered online (with a 5-day face-to-face session). For their portfolios, the students were asked to provide initial video statements to a set of questions regarding their course expectations, their previous experience with the content matter, and specific worries they might have regarding the course materials or content (e.g., statistics, use of analytical software, such as Excel, etc.; those issues were only raised in the introductory part of the course and not in connection with specific tasks in the e-portfolio in order to avoid any possible bias; the question was asked very generally). These video statements functioned as multimedia “letters to my future self” and students were told to return to those initial reflections and statements only at the very end of the semester.

As with all assignments, students had a choice to share those videos or any other artifacts with the course instructor during the semester or to keep them private, which about two-thirds of them also did. The issues mentioned in those hidden videos did not differ significantly from the published ones. The students who chose to keep the videos private initially seemed more unsure about the use of this new media skill at that stage in the course. Students were then asked to review those initial videos at the very end as a final element of the e-portfolio. They had to summarize their experiences during the semester, respond to their initial expectations and reflections on past experiences, and provide an overall reflection of their perceived learnings and competencies gained. The results of the analysis of their reflections were summed up as the key learnings and take-aways in this course. The data were highly consistent across all course formats (online/hybrid/face-to-face) and levels (BA/MA).

Key Learnings and Take-Aways

The redesigned module has been offered repeatedly over the course of 3 years, both as a blended-learning face-to-face, campus-based course and an online course with a 3-day face-to-face meeting session. For the last module rerun, which took place during the Covid-19 pandemic in online form only, all teaching materials including those for the regular face-to-face version were adapted accordingly. Interactions that normally would have taken place in a physical setting were conducted synchronously online, using a specifically designed online platform simulating the physical space students are familiar with. This section provides a brief discussion of the key findings gained over the past 3 years, including a short summary of the insights from the module experience under the pandemic conditions.

The design of the module presented here has shown to be quite effective in terms of reaching the stated goals and course aims, i.e. allowing students to obtain specialist literacies—quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and data literacy—and to expand their digital literacies. The use of e-portfolios as an assessment tool has greatly facilitated the learning process. It also allows a much more detailed evaluation of the learning progress and outcomes of both the individual students and the entire cohort. These are important aspects for social work management, as the current educational content is unable to provide the students with an adequate set of skills and methods for their entire future career in a time of social and technological transformation. Social work education must therefore also equip students with skills that enable them to adapt to new digital/remote learning environments and collaborate in small learning teams. This module specifically addresses these competencies.

With digital and data literacy being among the main course objectives, it is of utmost importance to provide students with an opportunity of gaining hybrid self-experiences for students in a safe learning environment. Allowing students to experience potentials and challenges of hybrid work environments at first hand as part of the learning process and as part of a professional work setting—here as researchers—during the course of the module has proven important for their critical self-reflection and encouraged them to explore technologies and digitally mediated forms of social interaction more fully than in other course settings. Encouraging students to continuously engage in critical self-reflection and rewarding it as an academic achievement regardless of the initial outcome of an attempted intervention has also proven to be of paramount importance for a successful learning experience and even more so for the transfer of theoretical knowledge to an applicable competence.

The choice of e-portfolios as an assessment tool was likewise very important for a successful learning experience of students. The use of this format has enabled students to develop critical self-reflection skills without fearing negative consequences for their final course grade. Students were able to demonstrate competencies in a problem-based, stepwise-arranged set-up that precluded a typical approach to learning as mostly disconnected from real-life professional challenges and also

encouraged them to address those challenges with the help of newly gained competencies. Rather, the e-portfolio format allowed students to get academically rewarded for their learning path rather than just the final product to demonstrate the processing which they obtained new competencies, the ability to put these competencies to use, and to play to their existing strengths. Furthermore, it also promoted a safe learning environment of discovery as opposed to mere information exposure, which helped students to discover, to experiment with, and to hone their digital competencies.

The adaptation of the module for online teaching format was somewhat problematic. The design requires a high degree of interaction both among learners and between them and the instructor. These interactions can be facilitated in asynchronous settings, for example by LMS communication tools, such as forums. Students in online programs, while usually demonstrating a higher degree of familiarity with the LMS, often lack the required basic digital literacies, which the course is supposed to help them acquire more extensively. Especially the small study teams, an essential element of the course design, are difficult to establish and maintain in online courses, at least in settings that often make it impossible for students to fit the required team settings in a common time schedule. Similarly, the unavoidable lag in the instructor's responses to questions can also lead to frustrating learning experiences of students who are unable to get the necessary assistance in solving a specific problem either from their peers or the teacher.

During 2020–2021, the Covid-19-induced changes to the regular teaching set-up led to a “natural experiment” that allowed to explore other online-mediated versions of the courses as otherwise possible. The key take-aways from teaching the module under these conditions can be summarized as follows:

- Hybridization experiences can be designed as part of the module even in its online versions, if circumstances allow it.⁸
- These experiences must be explicitly accounted for in the course design to make their facilitation possible. Students need to be able to meet synchronously, in person or in digitally mediated forms, as learning teams. Ideally, learning teams and, if possible, the entire class should meet in regular fashion synchronously and in specially designed, digitally mediated environments.
- Online adaptations of this model thus require a set-up that allows for synchronous meeting analogous to regular course meeting times and therefore interactive learning experiences within the small learning teams and/or in interactions between the students and the instructor.
- To ensure the higher level of flexibility that is often a main feature of online programs, small learning team meetings must be scheduled at different times. However, this requires a greater time commitment of the instructor who should ideally be available during those meetings to provide important forms of assis-

⁸The QUANT and QUAL courses met virtually in a specially designed learning environment, using an online platform Wonder™ specifically geared to the mediated recreation of physical meetings.

tance to the students, thus facilitating a more fluent learning experience for students.

- The interaction with the entire cohort does not necessarily have to be very time-consuming and can be facilitated through regular LMS-based communication tools.
- Instructors should make full use of digital learning and teaching tools provided by the LMS. Instructors should avoid introducing too many new tools for the facilitation of digitally mediated learning or communication; their introduction is only justified if they are specialist tools specifically required for the aimed-for digital literacies or specialist languages.
- Instructors should make use of video-based interaction wherever possible, both in synchronous and asynchronous fashion, as this facilitates a more personalized learning experience and cuts down on the time required for feedback provision (see for example the EDUCAUSE review series, especially Borup, 2021).
- Instructors should prepare for an increased need for technical support, especially at the beginning of the module, as students struggle with two challenges: obtaining a new specialist language and digital literacies, at once. This is crucial, as students have to manage their time resources and rationally tend to prioritize academic rewards over the gain of general competencies. With deliberate inclusion/integration of such rewards into the e-portfolio in combination with plans for the provision of additional technical assistance, both goals can be achieved at once.
- Instructors should also provide video-based instructions for at least some of the steps in a given exercise. This allows students to continue their learning process at their own speed and to catch up independently on material or skills other members of their learning teams might have already acquired. This also minimizes the danger of falling too far behind during the semester even when circumstances arise that otherwise often lead to students dropping out of active engagement in their small learning teams and/or the course(s).

Conclusions

In the light of the digital transformation of society at large but also of the key economic and cultural administrative transformations, social work management is facing a tremendous set of challenges. Many social workers are often highly critical of datafication and digitalization of their profession and try to resist growing public control as an expression of distrust of professionalism. At the same time, social workers themselves have long since—at least in part—adapted to these changes, using digital technologies in interventions and for administrative as well as communication purposes and often circumventing technological structures they face in their work environments (Mishna et al., 2017). This reluctance to embrace more fully the realities of a hybrid social space transformation and its corresponding requirements regarding intervention, administrative, and advocacy agency, which

characterizes the general social worker habitus, has led to a lack of focus on the need to expand the required skill sets in a more systematic fashion as part of the educational training of social workers, which aims to prepare them for a life-time of professional service in an increasingly hybrid work environment in terms of both social work interventions and administration.

This chapter has discussed the main technologically induced transformations that lead to the hybridization of social spaces and the concomitant new competencies social workers need to be equipped with to address the challenges they face in these new professional environments, with a special focus on data and digital literacy. The research methodologies module presented here serves as an example of how these literacies can be taught and acquired in existing academic programmes and how students can explore these skills in a safe learning environment. For these literacies to emerge as a professional competence, it is essential that students make the connection between the various new skills—and the corresponding literacy or, rather, literacies—and their behaviour and actions in a hybrid professional environment. This connection needs to be embedded into the design of future educational offerings. Reflective elements thus need to constitute a core aspect of the course. The use of e-portfolios is ideally suited for the accomplishment of these goals inasmuch as it provides students with critical thinking and exploratory learning opportunities while also accounting for the need of academic rewards that fit into the larger program-wide structure of their education.

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Chapter 14

Values Building in Social Work Education in the Visegrad Countries: Implications for Education of Social Work Managers



Kateřina Glumbíková and Jelena Petrucijová

Abstract Even though values are one of the key aspects of social work education, they still remain under-researched. The aim of this chapter is therefore to analyse and understand the possibilities of value-building education in the field of social work. The paper draws on the results of a qualitative study based on qualitative research based on interviews with 86 students and 16 teachers from 10 universities in the Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Poland, and Hungary; in the following “V4”). The data analysis helped identify four positions of a possible educational setting in relation to the values building in social work students, theoretical teaching without (necessary) dynamism, non-existence of a system and disconnectedness of values, and the ideal of an integrated approach to values building in social work education. The text sets out specific implications for the area of values building in social work education that are relevant for education of social work managers.

Introduction

The necessity of social work in the society where social risks are increasing and the responsibility for them is individualized is undisputed. Even though the social work in the V4 countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary) is highly

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professionalized today, its social status is low, and its legitimacy and quality are often questioned.

In the current practice of social work, the concept of professionalism is understood as either the ability to follow the recommended procedures that should ensure the effectiveness of activities in solving specific cases (cf. Schön, 1987 on instrumentalism in social work practice) or as a value-oriented profession whose focus is on the client's welfare and general welfare (cf. Banks & Gallagher, 2009). We believe that the management of a particular profession should take into account the specifics of the profession. Therefore, the ambiguity of the concept of professionalism of social work is reflected in the concept of professionalism of social work management whose purpose is to set target values and to initiate effective normative procedures of the institution, control and evaluation activities, etc. (cf. Lawler & Bilson, 2010). Already Pratchett (2019, p. 123) pointed out that the normativity of institutionalized behaviour contains a fundamental moral problem, because by offering their employees an (ethical) framework that guides their conduct, institutional leaders "exempt them from moral and ethical responsibility for their behaviour at the same time". People who do not question the rules of their institutions but blindly follow them face the danger of the so-called 'banal evil'.¹

We are of the opinion that the precondition for professionalism is an identification with the values of the profession, as values support (a) creation of social workers' identity, (b) setting up a "professional approach to social work" (Glumbíková et al., 2020), and (c) coping with the (emotionally) demanding nature of the practice and emerging dilemmas. For these reasons, values building in social work becomes an urgent challenge (cf. Banks & Gallagher, 2009; Ruch et al., 2018).

Today's social work is flooded by various directives, manuals, and codes (be it at the micro-level of practice of a particular organization, the meso-level of professional associations of the state, or the macro-level in the sense of international associations of social workers) that social work graduates are expected to follow. These materials are to some extent instructive in terms of phenomena, situations, and risks to be explored, yet less so in terms of values and methods to interpret them (Glumbíková et al., 2018). Thus, it is the social workers themselves who form ideas about what social work is, what requirements they should meet, and what the values of social work are (Healy, 2005; Payne, 2006). It seems that despite the existence of all these "instructions", the skill to independently create ideas about the social work values and apply these ideas in practice is paramount for social work graduates, especially due to the growing complexity of clients' life situations and social work practice, where moral work often becomes invisible and where routine practices predominate in moral aspects of social work due to the impacts of technical rationality (Dominelli, 2010; O'Sullivan, 2011).

Even though values are one of the key aspects of social work education, they remain under-researched (see Koerin, 2013; Wilson & Kelly, 2010). Our interest in

¹ 'Banal evil' describes the evil created as a consequence of mindless fulfilment of orders and duties (Arendt, 1994).

values building concerns not only education about values but also the instilling of social work values in students. Mere education about values would be an example of the already outdated assumption about a linear relationship among theory, applied theory, and practice. We, on the contrary, understand values building in social work education as an example of an integrated approach where the theory both informs practice and develops from it (see e.g., Schön, 1987 or later Thompson & Craft, 2001; Glumbíková et al., 2020). The emphasis of the research presented in this chapter is therefore on values building in social work education that encompasses not only students' acquisition of knowledge about values but also their understanding of values (through self-experience) and, furthermore, the promotion of students' growth in social work through internalization of values and their ability to apply values in practice (when solving dilemmatic situations).

The aim of this chapter is therefore to analyse and understand the options in the field of values building in social work education. The aim of the article draws on qualitative research based on interviews with 86 students and 16 teachers from 10 universities in the Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Poland, and Hungary).

The chapter first introduces professional values and their building in social work education including social work management education and then focuses on legislative context of social work profession and education in social work and social care services in the V4. After introducing the research methodology we proceed to discuss the research results and their implications for education of social work managers. Finally, we shall draw conclusions on both the transfer from theory to practice and reflexivity as a key concept of the education of social work managers.

Professional Values and Their Building in Social Work Education

Social work is a profession rooted in values. Values thus become the “central pillar of social work essence” (see Savaya & Gardner, 2012). Banks (2012) notes that values constitute the basis of a practitioner's behaviour and their self-organization; they make it easier for the practitioner to orientate themselves in their job tasks, roles, and identities and serve as a kind of control mechanism for the correct performance of social work.

As the paper title suggests, the authors emphasize the processual dimension of the values building activity and its complexity. We reject the fundamental/essentialist positions in which axiological references of the activity and values are external to the field of the activity as a set of norms and values deemed honourable. This notwithstanding, it is easier to practically implement the fundamental positions in the project of education and they are easily adaptable to ready-made patterns and procedures. For our part, we gravitate to the constructivist perspective of shaping values in the process of education for practice that requires the acceptance of a

position with values agreed on in an interaction with the Other. These values are active and relational, as they emerge through a relational involvement with oneself and the Other. We understand them as a representation arising from a relationship with ourselves and others rather than a goal (Marynowicz-Hetka, 2020).

The attractiveness of the constructivist conception primarily in the fact that it invites to engage in practically relevant, creative problem-solving (relating, in this case, to social work) in an agreement and interaction with the Other (Dewey, 1968 [1947]).

The educational process of preparing students for social work is understood analogously; the idea of shaping the axiological foundations of professional activity pervades all its components. Values are situated in the field of activity, not outside of it. This is the key premise of the concept of introduction into the world of values during education to take up an activity in the field of practice presented here. The most important goal of education is to raise awareness of the sense and importance of the adopted orientation of activity. The key aspect of it is to make the learners aware of their choices of preference. For this reason, we pay attention not only to how we understand values agreed on in interaction with the Other. Our entire analysis is based on the understanding of social work education as a space for an exchange and sharing of meanings rather than a mere transfer of knowledge and values. It is a space of experiences (Dewey, 1968 [1947]; Barbier, 2020) that is constantly subjected to reconstruction and reorganization. These processes are conducive to building an integrated view on activities in the field of practice (social/societal work).

Therefore, education should be focused not only on shaping skills, competences, and the transfer of knowledge but also on an individual development and on the person. (Marynowicz-Hetka, 2020).

Legislative Context of SW Profession and Education in Social Work and Social Care Services in the V4

In Czechia (CZ), Poland (PL), and Slovakia (SK), the social worker profession is considered a “regulated profession” and is provided for by the national law that requires a tertiary level education degree, which ranges from higher vocational school degrees to Ph.D. degrees. Conversely, the social worker profession is not a “regulated one” in Hungary (HU). There are several types of jobs where a Social Work BA is one of the possible degrees defined by the law (e.g. in the mainstream social advice centres or child welfare centres). However, in other types of social services (e.g., homelessness services), the role of “social helper” can be performed by a person with any degree – or even no degree at all. Our research is focused on the university education of future social workers including social work managers (as education of future social work managers is a partial specialization).

The practice of social workers in the V4 countries is governed by the National Codes of Ethics (adopted in 1997 in Slovakia, in 1998 in Poland, in 2006 in Czechia,

and, last, in 2000 in Hungary, where it was also revised in 2016), which refer to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the European Social Charter, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, other national legislation, and the IFSW Code of Ethics. The national Codes usually draw on their previous versions from before 2018 (except for Hungary), when the Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles was accepted.

The state of values building in social work education is closely connected with the very concept of education in the V4 countries. The V4 countries work with an explicitly defined competence model of education referring to the Framework for Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

At universities, the education of future social workers is implemented in study programmes subjected to accreditation by the relevant institutions: national Ministries of Education, national Accreditation Agencies and/or other relevant entities, such as Ministries of Social Affairs (CZ and HU) or National Associations of Educators in Social Work. At the declaratory level presented by the Accreditation files of social work study programmes, knowledge and skills in the area of values are an integral part of the graduates' profile and learning outcomes.

Methodology

The study aimed to analyse the practices of values building in social work education in the V4 countries from the perspective of social work students and teachers. To meet the research objective and also gain a deeper insight into a specific social reality, we used comparative research method. As a part of the comparative research design, we used Bereday's (1967) research procedure, which includes the following stages: (1) selection of a problem or phenomenon to be analysed comparatively; (2) collecting and sorting out data concerning a particular problem in selected countries; (3) data interpretation with the help of knowledge and competences in the disciplines that are connected to the understanding of the examined phenomenon in its contemporary context; (4) juxtaposition (listing information, pointing at similarities and differences) of the interpreted data to be used as a means to discover the possible sources of comparisons; (5) drawing conclusions, e.g. by formulating hypotheses resulting from the comparative analysis of the interpreted data if the researcher tends to generalize conclusions. Qualitative research has a strong tradition within comparative research due to its holistic and interpretive nature (Erath et al., 2001; Kantowicz, 2006).

To collect the data, we used semi-structured interviews focused on the following aspects: the most important values, values-building education (subjects, trainings, and methods), strong points, areas of development, opportunities, threats in values building in social work education, and recommendations.

A total of 86 students and 16 teachers from the 10 V4 universities participated in the research.

To select the students, we used intentional criterion sampling: (a) studying in a bachelor's degree programme in social work (or the equivalent of social work in a given country); (b) completion of at least the first year of the bachelor's degree programme/enrolment in at least the second year of the bachelor's programme; (c) actively studying at the university; (d) selection of students from at least two universities in each of the V4 countries; and (e) voluntary participation in research. A total of 86 students (Hungary: 29, Poland: 20, Slovakia: 15, Czechia: 22) from 10 different universities (Hungary: 2, Poland: 3, Slovakia: 2, Czechia: 3) participated in the research, of whom 68 studied on a Bachelor's and 18 on a Master's programme (the latter being mostly first-year students who reflected on their completed Bachelor's degree). All but five participants studied in full time. Four research teams interviewed students so that those could complete the interview in their native language.

To select the educators, we also used intentional criterion sampling: (a) at least 5 years of educational experience in Social Work; (b) teaching in courses focused on values building in social work education; and (c) knowledge of the structure of courses focused on values building in social work education in a study programme. The total number of informants is 16 (CZ: 5 females, aged 45–60; HU: 1 female and 2 males, aged 35–55; SK: 1 male and 1 female aged 63; PL: 5 females and 1 male, aged 40–50+). The total number of the universities is 10 (CZ: 3 universities that offer Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Social Work, 2 of them also offering Ph.D.; HU: 1 university offers BA degree in Deaconry (Christian Social Work), Social Work and Social Pedagogy and the other offers BA, MA, and Ph.D. degrees in Social Work; SK: 2 universities offer all degrees of a tertiary education level; PL: 3 universities offer BA and MA in Social Work and Social Pedagogy). During the period of Covid-19 restrictions, the method of virtual interviewing was a very frequently chosen option: CZ, HU, and PL – 2 online interviews each.

The data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis method, which subjects data to open coding and then groups them to specific topics (i.e., content-meaning units in the data) in accordance with their similarity or difference. We chose the method by Braun and Clarke (2006), because it is based on a constructivist principle of working with data that regards them to be interpretively co-created in the interaction between the researcher and the informants.

The above approach was further combined with an element of Clarke's situation analysis, – namely, the position map. Position maps allow us to look at the diversity of semantic positions held or not held by the actors in each situation on the semantic axes identified in the examined situation (Clarke et al., 2018). The combination of both analytical approaches allowed us to follow the constructivist tradition in our research methodology.

The research study was conducted in accordance with the Ethical Principles of Human Research adopted by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2016). Each participant was informed about the research goals and the use of data. The participation in the research was voluntary. Special attention was paid to securing the informants' anonymity and confidentiality.

Reflecting on the research limits, we took into consideration four main issues. Firstly, the research is based on the participants' statements, meaning that these statements might have been formulated according to possible social desirability (understood as a degree of readiness to behave as the communication partner thinks the researcher expects), and the data were acquired during the self-reflection of the participants, thus representing the data from their consciousness (e.g., Holloway & Jefferson, 2013). Secondly, the researchers were also aware of the existence of their own pre-understanding of the researched phenomenon, which was gained through experience in the field of social workers' education and the study of the issue in professional literature. In order to avoid the impact of this pre-understanding on the generation of data, the findings were subject to regular reflection (cf. Gabriel et al., 2017). Thirdly, the research was carried out with the help of a non-probability sample of participants that makes it impossible to generalize the data obtained (this being a limit of any qualitative research). Lastly, the circumstance that the interviews were conducted by different researchers could affect the nature of the data, for those emerged in the interaction between a researcher and a research participant.

The data were also validated by the triangulation of researchers analysing the data, where the data were analysed independently by each researcher and the final result was subject to their consensus. The validity of analysis was confirmed in the sense of gaining good understanding of the investigated phenomenon from different perspectives.

Results

As part of the data analysis and interpretation, we identified four positions of a possible educational setting in the field of values building in social work education, which were created on the axis of (in)formality of educational settings and that of linearity versus integration of educational settings. These four positions are: (1) non-existence of system and disconnectedness of values, (2) theoretical teaching without (necessary) dynamism, (3) spontaneous values building for social work students and (4) the ideal of an integrated approach to values building in social work education. The data obtained through the research were then categorized according to possible individual settings of the education system (Fig. 14.1).

Non-existence of the System and Disconnection of Methods

The informants mentioned four specific types of subject courses where they met with a focus on building values in social work, including: (a) subjects focused on theories and methods of social work or directly on the ethics of social work; (b) practical subjects and subjects focused on the reflection of practice (e.g. case studies

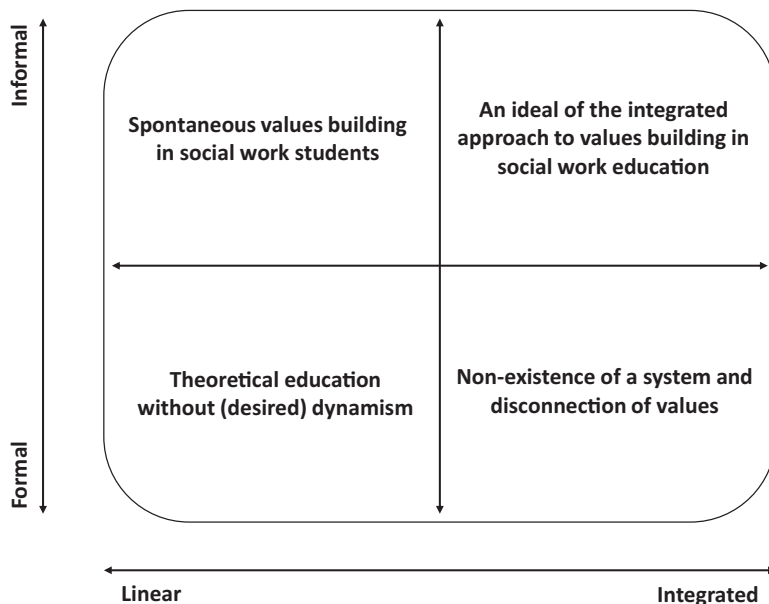


Fig. 14.1 Positions of possible educational settings in the field of values building in social work education

seminars), where practical subjects connected with reflection were referred to as the “sovereign territory of values”; (c) subjects dealing with specific target groups, such as people with disabilities, substance users, or the elderly; and (d) subjects focused on specific forms of social work associated with self-experience (e.g., crisis intervention or socio-psychological training). The subject courses (b) to (d) typically focused not only on the development of reflexivity in students but also on the development of an empathetic and sensitive approach to another person and the value of getting to know and trying to understand the point of view of the Other.

The teaching of values thus permeated the entire study of social work. The informants had a certain **ambivalent attitude** to the values education. On the one hand, they appreciated the integration of values orientation in subjects and the possibility to reflexively apply values in self-experience or practical training experience (while developing a certain sensitivity to human dignity and human rights). On the other hand, however, they stated that **the topic of values is not built in coherently and continuously in the educational process** (e.g., the CZ teacher-informant stated that “the study programme has not been built on the principle of an explicit focus on the values of social work ...”; CZ-T3)² in the sense of the specific concept of value-related teaching in which there is not only a consensus among teachers, but it is also regularly reflected and “updated” in order to get a systematic concept of teaching

²The structure of the informant’s code, e.g., CZ-S4: CZ – the code of the informant’s country; S4 – student informant 4 or T2 – teacher 2.

values. In the interviews, some educators spoke far more about the importance they attributed to value-based teaching (“Our colleagues claim that... values seem to appear in almost all courses,” CZ-T5) than about the achieved learning outcomes consistent with the established educational profile.

The teaching of values may also be jeopardized by the teachers’ disillusion (e.g., the principle of social change and emancipation was commented on as “a phrase rather than a value,” CZ-T1) or fundamentalism in values (PL-T1, PL-T6).

The students also often agreed that values were present in the subjects rather implicitly, i.e. without a reflection of the fact that value-related topics emerged in other subjects (“we also came across it [the values] **without naming it**”; CZ-S1) so that the students had to make a certain connection of the presented subject matter with values **separately** in their minds (“It seems to me that it’s present in all subjects – I don’t know if it’s emphasised in every subject that it’s about values – but I sense it there”; CZ-S4). The students’ statements also showed an ambivalence in relation to the need of memorizing values, which was considered ineffective, because the values have to be not only understood but also internalized, and the teachers’ failure to facilitate that process resulted in the students’ failure to apply values practically in specific situations. “There’s a difference between the students’ knowledge from their university study materials and solving of dilemmas.” (CZ-S2); “It was treated as something to memorize instead of something to internalize.” (PL-S6). The students’ statements were confirmed by a teacher informant: “The final state exams verify knowledge” (CZ-T1).

According to the findings, some V4 educators adopt a constructivist approach, i.e., viewing values as relational entities created in the process of communication with oneself and with the Other (cf. Barbier, 2020; Marynowicz-Hetka, 2020); but, as the research results show, the constructivist approach has not been consistently implemented in all subjects of the study programme. According to PL-T2, “the most difficult aspect is the integration of the cognitive and behavioural components with the emotion alone” (cf. Keinemans, 2015). Some informants (e. g. CZ-T2) were self-critically aware of the fact that without relational understanding of values it is difficult to reconcile different sets of values that are present in social workers’ everyday work: (a) the values of the society or community in which social workers operate; (b) values that define the profession; (c) the personal values of the social worker, and (d) the client’s values – with their own universe of attitudes, beliefs, and convictions (Morales & Sheafor, 1980). It should be noted that the methods leading to inductive and relational values building were most frequently described by the Polish and Hungarian academics, even though the degree of their consistent application in the teaching there cannot be assessed (within the framework of this research). In any case, the fact of the non-problematizing of the competence-based model (on one hand) and of declaring methods based on the constructivist approach (on the other hand) evidence an internal, perhaps unconscious, discrepancy which affects the professional activity of educators within the field of values building in professional education.

Theoretical Teaching Without the Necessary Dynamism

The method is a way of interconnection between the graduate's profile (the goal) and the learning outcomes (achieved results), therefore all educators paid attention to the issue of methods as these serve to interconnect the graduates' profile with their learning outcomes.. The teachers commented on a wide range of methods, especially those that helped to improve the active involvement of students into the educational process at individual and group levels. The importance of field practice was emphasised by all teacher informants.

The students distinguished between (a) the form of experience (case studies, model situations, discussions, etc.) that can either be their personal first-hand experience – “I mean teaching through experience, where we were able to try specific techniques in real life situations, for example, guiding a blind person... and gaining experience in terms of experience with others, the situation, but also experiencing myself...” (CZ-S9) – or at least the teacher's shared experience and (b) the form of “memorizing” (lectures, reading, essay writing). At the same time, the experiences were seen as something “more than theory” (SK-S4).

Both groups of informants (teachers and students) reckoned that theoretical teaching leads to the emergence of “mere” knowledge without its understanding and internalization. The students gain a mere overview of values, which they learn by heart, but they cannot use them in practice in specific situations of social work. Thus, values become reduced to mere abstract concepts that have no specific connection with experience. An actual values building does not then take place; there is only an instrumental memorization of values in order to pass the exam or gain the credits necessary to complete the study. Reduction of values building to knowledge transfer may entail heteronomous morality and future defensive practice (Feber & Petrucijová, 2015).

Such way of handling values in teaching may indicate an underestimation of the values dimension as an essential part of professional identity at both the professional and the community level (cf. Banks & Gallagher, 2009). It may lead to intrinsic tensions linked with the understanding of professionalism, i.e. the tensions between the concept of social work as a value-oriented profession and that based on technically conceived rationality (O'Sullivan, 2011; Glumbíková et al., 2020), which guide different educational approaches to competence building. The value-based approach asserts its legitimacy, inter alia, in conflict with the competence-based approaches, which have been heavily criticized for their tendency to focus on “the acquisition of simple mechanical skills that can reduce professional practice to a routine following of agency policies and procedures” (Dominelli, 1996; Wilson & Kelly, 2010) and for their inadequacies in preparing students for addressing the complexities of contemporary practice environments (Orme et al., 2009).

Spontaneous Values Building in Social Work Students

Spontaneous values building takes place when there is no specific system or concept for values building in social work education but only separate “islands” of integrated approach in education, either in individual subjects or with individual teachers. For instance, a teacher informant (PL-T4) emphasized that regardless of the subject, he/she tries to pursue axiological education that is “an approach based on authenticity and openness to the Other”. Through these “islands”, values are conveyed to students, so that these get a partial insight into the individual values or the meaning of values in social work in general. Due to this experience, students develop the value orientation of social work through the intentional or completely spontaneous accumulation of additional knowledge on an existing basis. The second case of spontaneous values building concerns students whose personal value system corresponds to the value system of social work from the very beginning, so for them, the internalization of social work values during their studies is a natural thing.

The V4 educators gave examples of students’ voluntary activities, e.g. a voluntary student association that strived to “eliminate prejudices in society” (CZ-T2, PL-T4). They especially stressed the students’ activities during the Covid-19 pandemic that demonstrated a high level of awareness of the students and their identification with the values of social work. However, the question remains to what extent the students’ awareness and promotion of social work values in practice is the result of the educational process or a part of their own value orientation, which made them choose social work studies and the profession of social worker.

In this context, however, it must be stated that the acceptance of values may also be jeopardized by **students’ lack of interest in values** or even by their stereotypes, prejudices, and disillusion. “Most of my courses touched on values, but unfortunately, I don’t recall them getting any special attention” (HU-S1). The teachers raised the question of students’ personal and professional values, as sometimes stereotypes students interiorized in their familial socialization were seen as a danger to building social work values (PL-T4, SK-T2). The teachers pointed out the possible conflict of “abstract” ethical values and their implementation in the current political and social climate (V4) and the values building education, that is often complicated by intolerance, discrimination, “contemporary manifestations of intolerant behaviour towards marginalised and discriminated groups and social support for these attitudes” (PL-T3), “stereotypical beliefs about women and men ... ethnic groups, people of different sexual orientation, the elderly and the disabled” (PL-T3, similarly PL-T2). They talked about the relationship, and often a gap, between the values of practitioners and the values building in education: e.g. “a wide gap” in “what is taught by the lecturers at the university and what is observed by the students in practice” (HU-T1). According to some student informants, certain students might only choose the field of social work to receive a university degree, while not really identifying with the profession and regarding social work as a mere source of livelihood, which they do not really care about. Such students are not interested in values but only in learning the necessary information by heart. Several informants believed

that the values of the study applicants were changing; just as the society at large, they resigned themselves to promoting solidarity. This would make it difficult to teach them the value of solidarity and its application in professional practice. The students associated similar difficulties with the value of empathy, which is being weakened under the influence of social networks. “In my opinion, students should be chosen differently than according to test results. You should be able to recognize who is appropriate for the field...” (CZ-S4).

In this regard, the students stated that it would be beneficial to them if the values education in social work was explicitly addressing **a clash of the perspectives of the society’s values and the values of social work..** “For example, teaching as a part of the debate about dilemmas, the differences in the values of society and social work, but also about some limits in those values, such as the fact that a professional social worker must also have some limits when adhering to those values... I mean, the respect has its limits too...” (CZ-S12). Another recommendation was to **teach values through a clash of the value perspectives** of different individuals and interest groups: “I would like to be educated in values through the clash of different values... for example, in discussions with colleagues with different values on a particular topic ... Values are not facts... they need to be discussed... it’s also about the fact that I have my values, my classmates have theirs... and I expect some values to be stated by them and they expect the same from me, so it’s interesting to sometimes see and learn from the clashes... The values need to be developed in students through a conflict of opinions...” (CZ-S5).

Another students’ recommendation was a reorganization of the values education, which in contemporary practice **focuses on values as an ideal**. As a result, students commonly confuse this ideal with the real practice at work and then get disappointed. “Everything is connected with the good and with the fact that everything must lead to the good...for me it was surprising that throughout the studies it was suggested that the social workers are the ones who are good, have good values ... and then we start working in the practice and learn that they’re like other people” (CZ-S2). Overall, both groups of the informants view the transition from theoretical to practical education as extremely difficult. The reason for that is that students try, under all circumstances, to achieve an ideal that cannot, in fact, be achieved; they consider the ideal to be the norm. Resulting threat, and not only to education in social work, is a disconnect between theory and practice, because “we are not always in a position to preserve values – there’re some organizational settings that prevent us from strictly preserving our values” (CZ-S6). Therefore, according to the students’ suggestions, it would be appropriate to mention during the values education that social workers, too, are only human, and that includes making mistakes. “I would stress more that people are not only two-dimensional and can make mistakes, so that there’s some room for doing things that don’t always lead to the absolute good” (CZ-S7).

The Ideal of an Integrated Approach

Both groups of the informants considered the **integrated teaching of values** to be an ideal. According to them, it consists in teaching through practical experience or model situations followed by a discussion and reflection where students are given an opportunity to apply values and pursue self-reflection. From the students' point of view, the theoretical familiarization with the values (what they are and what they are about) is not enough; students need a practical demonstration of the application of these values when coping with unfavourable situations. "I consider it important to connect theory with practice – I perceive it as a good thing that we have a practical training... that we're not just reading the code of ethics and pondering about it" (CZ-S3). The students made a plea for a teaching of values in social work that would engage them not only intellectually but also emotionally. In the teachers' view, this poses a certain challenge: "We're trying and even succeeding... As students go through their studies, they internalize their profession, but we can't manage to influence all of them in this direction" (CZ-T5, similarly CZ-T3). At the same time, they self-critically observed that practice-based learning would help to tell the difference between an idealized version of the profession as offered by academics and the real work performed by the actual members of the profession.

As a **mediator of knowledge and experience, a tone-setter in teaching, and a value model, the teacher** was perceived as an important element in education about values. "The teachers are role models for us as well. I like most listening to the experience of the teacher; especially when it is very interesting, and the story is captivating. More than theory" (SK-S4). The teacher's attitude that was characterized by understanding rather than labelling was especially appreciated (the students thus pointed out the importance of consistency between the conveyed educational content and the teacher's conduct).

At the same time, the teachers' practical experience was held in particularly high esteem when, from the students' perspective, there was a connection between "**know that**" and "**know how**": "Certainly, we like to study model situations where we don't know what to do and our teachers try to model them for us as they have experienced it, so we become ready for the behaviour of those clients" (CZ-S17). The students also stated that they would have appreciated the possibility of personal consultations with the teachers on values in the form of supervision that would allow for an extensive discussion with the supervisor about the situations, even problematic ones, they had experienced in practice and about the ethical dilemmas they had faced when acquiring practical skills.

In the above-mentioned context, the student informants considered it ideal to create a special course entirely devoted to discussing practical cases in terms of values. This subject course should be entrenched in the **axiology of values** (the study of the nature of values, their place in the structure of social reality, interrelations and hierarchy, their function in the process of human activity), and in its framework specific practical experiences would be discussed from the perspective of theoretical concepts with a teacher who is practically experienced in the field of

social work. However, the informants reflected that such teaching puts high demands both on the teachers (regarding their communication skills – especially in terms of augmentation skills, integrity, but also the knowledge basis) and on the course organization because ideally, it would require teaching in smaller groups, which could become quite demanding in terms of both time and personnel in courses with more than fifty full-time students.. In the students' view, such form of teaching would also provide learners with an invaluable opportunity to experiment with the application of values and to develop their own value integrity as social workers, thus helping them avoid possible mistakes in their [future] real work with clients. The emphasis was therefore placed on building self-knowledge: "There should be a much higher emphasis on awareness raising to help students find their own sensitive spots and work with these. For example, why do some students feel they cannot work with certain target groups? Their self-knowledge often is very poor, so it would be good to work on it more and develop it within their studies" (HU-S3).

The students perceived as a benefit of such teaching the opportunity to learn to communicate about values and build argumentation skills, which could eventually help them defend the practice of social workers based on values of social work. "The course where we will learn to talk and argue about various opinions. As of now, we don't know how to stand up for these values" (CZ-S14).

The research informants also considered it appropriate to further **develop didactic methods** in building values, so that their learning would not depend on creativity of individual teachers alone.. All the teacher informants reflected on a wide range of methods, including those of students' primary activation in the educational process and development of critical thinking, (self-)reflection and problem-solving skills. They offered 'good practice' examples of how values (and their meaning) can be instilled through experiential learning, case-based stories (fictional cases, dilemma cases, etc.), role playing, project learning, and problem-based learning (which requires students to actively make decisions, while their opinions may be corrected by their teachers). We found particularly interesting that the students, when talking about the development of didactic methods, positively evaluated methods that allowed them to gain experience with values in environments other than the compulsory practical training within the studies (see above). In this regard, the students mentioned not only the administrative support in arranging volunteer activities by the university but also the possibility of going abroad for a practical training exchange through which they could gain a different perspective on values by acquiring experiences in different environments and countries. Some students also considered their participation in debate nights, discussions, socio-camps, and protests to be additional forms of their practical education.

In conclusion, we must add that in their statements, the informants repeatedly reflected on the **Covid-19** pandemic and its impact on the promotion of integrated value teaching. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, educational processes were took place online and practical training was limited by restrictions of the V4 governments or, else, banned altogether. The informants perceived it as a threat to teaching values, due to the lack of direct contact with lecturers and fellow students for one thing and the lack of interactivity in educational settings for another,, which the

students considered the most vital to values education. The personality development trainings do not work just as well online: “The current pandemic situation. How can we acquire values when everything related to the studies and practice is restricted? And who knows how long it will take. That’s a big threat right now” (SK-S6).

Discussion

Based on the analytical procedures of situational analysis, four positions of possible educational settings were distilled from the obtained data. They were as follows: spontaneous values building for social work students, theoretical teaching without (necessary) dynamism, non-existence of a system and disconnectedness of values, and the ideal of an integrated approach to values building in social work education.

In all the above-outlined positions of possible settings of education, two topics were always present, that have specific implications for values building in social work education including the education of social work managers. These topics were the fundamentality of the connection between theory and practice and the use of reflexivity as a key concept in values building in social work education. Now, we will discuss both in more detail.

The Fundamental Connection Between Theory and Practice

Despite the fact that theory and practice are fundamentally interconnected, the “know that” versus “know how” division still applies in student education, being expressed in dichotomies such as universities versus practice, academics versus practitioners, etc. These oppositional pairs create a misconception among social work students that there is a duality between critical thinking (skill developed during university education) and practice wisdom, which is exclusively a matter of practical experience and can be defined as a competence to apply practical knowledge and update the social work values through a process of engagement with clients (see Dybicz, 2004).

Glumbíková et al. (2020) point out that practice wisdom emerges through reflection on the practice of social work, which certainly requires an ability to think critically. Likewise, the issue of practice wisdom cannot be excluded from the educational process of social workers; on the contrary, the integration of both critical thinking and practice wisdom creates a potential for the development of quality social work graduates who are well-equipped both theoretically and practically.

In Thompson and Craft’s paper (2001), the put forth and try to verify the hypothesis that due to the above duality between theory and practice, social work students consider the development of personal values and abilities for working with individual clients to be more important than the development of social values, i.e.

activities focused beyond the students and on the society and achieving of social change (e.g., development of social policies).

One further issue, which is also related to the above-discussed one, is the question of how professionalism in social work is defined (see above). In the opinion of Janebová (2021), professionalization is an ambivalent instrument. On the one hand, it can lead to collaboration with the anti-social system in the promotion of professional interests; on the other, it can be a useful platform for the promotion of the clients' rights. Social work as an emancipatory endeavour may be dismantled due to the current political climate, or it may become an even more powerful champion of social justice (Hyslop, 2016).

According to the research findings, the descriptions of personal professional skills favour abilities related to individual values over those aimed at the promotion of social values. Thus, there is a superiority of individual values over supra-individual (group or social values), which affects the concept of professionalism in social work. The students' logic in thinking about the need to develop their own values is then clear – the student who will meet the definition of a professional has more job opportunities, so the development of personal values is quite important.

The need for integrated education where “know that” and “know how” (as “doing the right things” and “doing things right”) and the intellectual as well as emotional components of education (“memorize” vs “internalize,” “memorizing” vs “experience”) are not disconnected is also demonstrable by the fact that current theory in social work is often established in such a way that theory is defined as a certain “authority”, or a social identifier (the specifics of the profession), or in opposition to everyday practice as “non-practice”. If theory is perceived as authority, it is also imposed on social workers externally as something legitimate and unchangeable, something that can provide social workers with guidance and is superior to their own experience or knowledge (Fook & Gardner, 2007).

Moreover, an integrated approach that links “know that” a “know how” in education may result in supporting both the social workers' autonomy not to blindly follow the rules without any reflection and their reflexive perception of errors in social work as an opportunity to learn and develop (cf. Chu & Tsui, 2008; Nye, 2012). At the institutional level, the risk of ‘banal evil’ can be surmounted only if the institution's heteronomous ethics is constantly confronted with autonomous ethics of its members (Feber & Petrucijová, 2015). Therefore, the educational process of social workers should not be based only on mere explanation or, else, mere practical experience through compulsory practice but, rather, on the interconnection of these through experiential learning, and problem-based learning (see also Rajan-Rankin, 2014). The danger of the educational technique of simply modelling the ethical component of practice should also be taken into consideration (cf. Hugman, 2005, p. 542).

Implications for Education of Social Work Managers: Reflexivity as a Key Concept

We fear that in the pluralistic and fragmentary society, the idea of universal ethical principles and codes may lead to coercion (Barbier, 2020; Bauman, 1995; Foucault, 2001). In an uncertain and unpredictable society, the ethics cannot be legislated, they must be based on “spontaneous moral impulses and ... individual responsibility for the Other”, “...being-for-Others“ (Bauman, 1994, p. 44). “Ethics must be concerned with ways of achieving communication between moral selves (people) and not as a device for dictating how any self (person) should think or act” (Hugman, 2003, p. 1028). In the above-mentioned context, the system of education based on presupposition of universal ethical principles and codes and on heteronomous understanding of morality should be revised, otherwise the successful building of the student’s personality (as a “cornerstone” of relational, “active” values building) will be endangered. Study programmes should therefore be revised and critically evaluated from the perspective of integrated approach of theory-practice and relational, “active” values building. Universities should critically reflect on the competence-based model of education, negotiate ‘*the goals of ethics education*’ in social work within the general educational objective to create a reflexive social worker, promote a systemic concept of values-building education, and consistently implement the integrated approach in values building across all (and not only those explicitly focused on ethics) subjects of SW study programmes. Basing on interconnection and correspondence between content and methods of study, emphasis should be placed on developing the students’ reflexivity.

For the students to act morally as future social workers, they must understand situations well (i.e. have enough information about them), continuously confront their established values (professional, institutional, and personal) with specific changing situations, and be motivated to act morally (cf. Damm, 2010). As future social workers and social work managers, students should be aware of their own systems of values and emotions when coping with specific situations in practice. Due to this process of reflexive confrontation with different situations, the professional moral identity of the social worker develops, enabling social workers to see the ethical aspects of each situation, to develop themselves as good social workers, to direct their actions in the right direction, and to justify/legitimize who they are and why they act in certain ways (Banks, 2012).

Awareness and openness of social work students should be encouraged to make them think reflexively and form their own knowledge of their intentions and situational legitimacy of relativity, i.e. not to perceive things as only black and white. This will enable students to question the idea of only one legitimate lifestyle and to use this approach when judging the clients’ life situations; in other words, students should be encouraged to understand not only their own experience and behaviour but also the experience and behaviour of their clients in their unique life situation. Students’ reflexivity can be promoted not only by integrating learning diaries in the education of theoretical subjects but also by using innovative techniques, such as

involving people who have experienced specific and difficult life situations in the educational process, e.g., in the form of an advisory board of users that not only advise respective lecturers on their training but can also actively participate in teaching and provide students with new perspectives on various problems (Glumbíková et al., 2020).

The above-mentioned strategies of promoting reflexivity will help students to become not only passive receivers of knowledge but also its co-creators (cf. Samson, 2015). Therefore we insist on experiential learning, inductive learning (cf. Hugman, 2005) and problem-solving learning (cf. Rajan-Rankin, 2014) as didactic approaches and methods that are essential for/in the educational process of social workers and social work managers.

A comparative insight of our research helps to better realize the strengths and weaknesses of the current state of values education and indicate solutions to its problems. Even though this kind of research also has many limitations, such as, for example, sample size, non-generalizing interpretation, social desirability (see above), etc., the aim of the chapter to analyse and understand the possibilities of education in the field of values building in social work education has been achieved. At the same time, further exploration of values-related education in social work as well as in other helping professions is strongly desirable, as this area is still little researched.

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Chapter 15

Analysis of Mission Statements of Social Service Organisations as Practical Anthropology – An Example from Teaching in Social Work Management at a German University of Applied Science



Dörte Görl-Rottstädt, Markus Andrä, and Maik Arnold 

Abstract Social work management education can make use of management practices such as mission statements as a teaching tool. In an introductory anthropology course as part of the interdisciplinary study programme of Social Pedagogics and Management at a German University of Applied Sciences, students were introduced to theoretical approaches in anthropology and culture studies contextualised to social work sciences and management. Additionally, mission statements of social work organisations were utilised to successively develop practical attitudes in applying the newly acquired knowledge to different professional situations, to discuss critically on ethical questions, and to reflect on how their actions and attitudes as prospective social workers are influenced by different images of humankind. The authors develop a didactic approach to combine anthropological insights with practical management practices and demonstrate how theory and professional practice can be connected in a reflective and co-constructive process of teaching and learning. As a result, mission statements can be understood as an objectivisation of a collective culture, the so-called organisational culture. The chapter concludes with implications for the development of social work management education.

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Introduction

Mission statements have been of interest to management sciences already since a long time. They have proven to be a suitable instrument for the development, presentation, and communication of the vision, philosophy, and purpose of an organisation and the respective organisational culture. According to Pearce and David (1987), mission statements are essential for strategic planning and organisational processes as they help to clarify the purpose and goals of an organisation, the scope of its operations, and the kind of product or service it provides. Pearce and David (1987, p. 109) also stated that their “components are among the least empirically examined issues in strategic management.” And this has not changed much since the 1990s. But how can mission statements also become an essential part of teaching and learning on social work management programmes? What requirements must be met to apply this instrument in specific teaching settings in the field of practical anthropology, which is an integrative part of teaching on such programmes?

In this chapter, mission statements are understood as learning objects that help to develop, implement, and reflect on teaching in social work management studies. The chapter will first introduce the theoretical foundations and different uses of mission statements and then proceed with a discussion of their application in teaching. It will provide practical examples that primarily derive from the authors’ reflections on their previous teaching experiences in the module ‘Foundations of Pedagogical Anthropology’ and are assessed through the prism of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL; also cf. Felten, 2013). The chapter concludes with a discussion of findings, lessons learned, and suggestions regarding future re-runs of the module. In this vein, it also suggests further improvements regarding the content and didactics and, ultimately, serves to strengthen the interdisciplinary approach in the implementation of the module on a social work and management study programme.

Theoretical Foundations

To better understand mission statements in the context of practical anthropology, a very broad theoretical perspective is necessary. Therefore, we shall start by introducing several different ways of how mission statements can be conceptualised under an anthropological perspective.

Mission Statements as declaration of a ‘Calling’

Identifying with a mission statement and consequently complying with it can be considered a driving force for an individual’s professional action. Basically, the mission statement could be interpreted as declaration of a “calling”, which means that the practitioner regards their job and the work associated with it as a central purpose in their live. This assumption points directly to the religious tradition of

Lutheran Protestantism. The Lutheran tradition posits the centrality of the ‘calling’ (‘Beruf’ or ‘Berufung’), which finds an expression in the individual’s position in the world. The term was coined by Martin Luther himself (see Weber, 2016 [1904–05], p. 69 f.). Even from today’s, mostly secularised, perspective on the word, a ‘calling’ is widely understood to be more than just one’s professional occupation, but a purpose that requires persistence as well as resistance to obstacles. Contemporary research shows that following a calling is impactful for careers. Hall and Chandler (2005, p. 165) put forth a ‘calling model of psychological success’ to describe this relation. Parker et al. (2004) also describe the so-called ‘ideological communities’, which emerge when people who collaborate share core values.

Mission Statements as “Morals” of Institutions

The mission statement debate¹ can be epistemologically linked to New Kantianism and the distinction it makes between ideas and interests. This liberal view of relations finds its most convincing expression in the work of Max Weber (2016). According to it, people pursue their interests and allow themselves to be guided or influenced by superordinate “moral” principles that take the form of simplified basic assumptions. Guiding principles are not to be confused with guiding ideas, a term that played a prominent role in the institutional theory of philosophical anthropology in the Weimar epoch (cf. above all Gehlen [1993], but also Plessner [1975] and Scheler [1994]) and, later, in the post-war period in West Germany (in its conservative variant). Guiding ideas characterise institutions that, through legal norms, habits of action, patterns of interpretation and power structures, lend social action stability, which, according to Gehlen (1993), humans as ‘deficient beings’ need. In

¹In the present context, the Autorengruppe FB 4 sfs (n.d., p. 8) refers to the controversial debate on new models of production work that arose in 2005. It mainly concerned the metal industry, in particular assembly in the automotive industry, and revolved around the question whether a re-taylorisation of production work was a necessity or danger, which eventually led to the following brief summary: The “starting hypothesis is that the guiding principles of work organisation in production can only be conceived and understood if they are seen as [embedded] in an overarching economic action and an overall social and cultural context, which is gaining relative importance precisely in view of the ‘dissolution of boundaries’ and ‘subjectification’ of work and which partly has a global effect in each case” (ibid., transl. by the authors). One novel insight it offers is that “[f]rom a social-scientific point of view, guiding principles and guiding ideas are mental concepts that are supposed to help bring together things that divide (knowledge, interests, values, etc.) and push back pure arbitrariness through social obligations. They are not to be confused with ‘guidelines’ as those are formulated as concrete instructions for action, e.g., in the application of labour science findings. Furthermore, while guiding principles are aimed at individual citizens (like the Categorical Imperative in Kant’s practical philosophy: ‘Act in such a way that...’) and are intended to bind them to moral principles, guiding ideas rather work in institutional contexts. They aim at a structured diversity, at a communal setting, at groups in milieus and the structures of meaning and expectation contained therein as well as forms of cooperation (objectification, routinisation, organisation, juridification, empowerment, professionalisation), negotiated solutions, the formation of compromises, a culture of discussion with leeway given, which are the ideational conceptions that are associated with the orientation towards common guiding principles and guiding ideas. Ideas that are connected with the orientation towards common guiding principles and guiding ideas.” (cf. ibid., transl. by the authors).

Hegel's philosophy of law, they also provide, especially in the form of corporations, the necessary moral foundation that makes moral action in Kant's sense possible in the first place (Autorengruppe FB 4 sfs, n.d., p. 8).

Philosophical Anthropology and Systems Theory

Seen from the broader perspective offered by the German philosopher and anthropologist Arnold Gehlen (1993), a mission statement could be interpreted as a structure that stabilises the fragile position of human beings in an overwhelming and chaotic environment of organisations. Due to the lack of specialisation of their organs, humans are 'deficient beings' ('Mängelwesen'). Unlike other species, they have no fixed instincts in response to external stimuli. Therefore, the world collapses on them as chaos. The deficiency of human nature forces people to shape their lives through meaningful action and accounts for the creation of language, culture, and institutions (Gehlen, 1993, pp. 34ff.; Thies, 2000, pp. 115ff.).² Despite some differences, this view is also not dissimilar to Gareth Morgan's *Images of Organizations* (1998), as organisations could be understood as 'living systems'.

The sociologist Niklas Luhmann (2017) took up Gehlen's (1993) rationale in his systems theory. Any social system emerges from communication, which follows a basic logic. This logic defines the difference between the inside of the system and its outer environment, thereby reducing the unbearable contingency of the world. For example, the media as a communicating social system create their environment by defining it as "news" or "non-news". All else is insignificant or even invisible. For the media to persist as a system, all of their communicative operations need to be open for a new turn that follows this logic. Otherwise, the system would collapse. Therefore, "news" is not just information, but is always an open question that prompts the next "news". The basic logic of social work is the distinction between "conformity" and "deviation" (Baecker, 1994, p. 93 f.). A mission statement of a social organisation could be seen as an attempt to present this basic logic of a communicating social system in an ethically sound form.

Ethics in Social Work

In the field of Social Work, mission statements help to define a normative signpost for the practitioner. Professional ethics consist of individual and social dimensions. The first concerns the actions of the individual, whereas the second points at the

²Gehlen (1993) was a supporter of the "National Socialism" in Germany, at least initially. But, unlike many other German thinkers of that era, his considerations do not contain any explicit anti-Semitic, racist, or social Darwinist ideas. Today, he is viewed and accepted as a conservative scholar (Thies, 2000, pp. 15ff.).

norms of the society as a whole (Schmid Noerr, 2018, p. 100). From the perspective of humanistic psychology, humans are generally defined by their needs. Their well-being and dignity depend on the satisfaction of their needs, social integration being the main basic condition. Therefore, the power structures in social systems must be regulated in such a way that human rights, which focus on the fulfilment of these needs, are implemented (Muckenfuss, 2020, p. 183ff.). Staub-Bernasconi (2021, p. 61) reflects this in the following two dimensions of her “Triple Mandate” of Social Work: (a) theoretically justified explanations for social problems that can be verified in accordance with scientific criteria, and (b) the ethical foundation of social work, which is based on international and national codes of ethics that are aligned with human rights and social justice.

Mission Statements as Managerial Instruments

Mission statements frame the organisational visions, values, and long-term goals and can be understood as guiding principles that communicate both internally and externally. Internally, they not only offer an orientation and motivation for the employees and managers’ identification with their institution but also provide the basis for the development of strategies, goals, and operations. Externally, such statements can clearly present the products and services of an organisation for their (potential) addressees (customers, partners, and other stakeholders) and support public relations and employer branding. In most cases, they exist as formal documents, websites, or leaflets, yet not every organisation has a publicly available description. Graf and Spengler (2008, p. 48) summarise the fundamental questions to which the mission statement should provide adequate answers as follows (Fig. 15.1).

Furthermore, Pearce and David (1987, p. 109) also mention different components most mission statements contain to describe the unique purpose of the business that helps to identify and distinguish the own organisation from the others: “(1) The specification of target customers and markets. (2) The identification of principal products/services. (3) The specification of geographical domain. (4) The identification of core technologies. (5) The expression of commitment to survival, growth, and profitability. (6) The specification of key elements in the company philosophy. (7) The identification of the company’s self-concept. (8) The identification of the firm’s desired public image.”

Mission statements also incorporate basic components of organisational culture (e.g., Babnik, et al., 2014). Cultures refer to a commonly shared system of action, orientation, and symbols. This means that some people consider certain values and beliefs as well as certain actions and ritualised practices as important. In addition, cultures always have conscious/visible and/or subconscious/invisible elements. In general, cultures provide guiding principles for individual and organisational behaviour: On the one hand, we are *socialised* within multiple cultures (e.g., values,



Fig. 15.1 Guiding principles and basic questions for mission statements. (Arnold, 2022, CC BY 4.0; based on Graf & Spengler, 2008, p. 48)

convictions, and norms); on the other hand, cultures are *dynamic and constantly develop* through people’s attitudes, cognitions, and behaviour. Culture cannot be consciously learned but is acquired as part of a long-term socialisation process. To understand the dynamics of mission statements, we can refer to the model of organisational culture by Edgar Schein. According to Schein (2010), managerial decisions convey the basic assumptions and values that were defined in mission statements.

Schein differentiates between three levels of an organisational culture, which range from the visible via the partially visible to the invisible cultural aspects. The *artifacts* that represent the objectified organisational culture are located on the visible level. On the second level there are the *espoused values*, which are partly visible and partly unconscious. The invisible, mostly unconscious parts of organisational culture, the so-called *basic assumptions*, are located on the third level. When applied to a social work organisation, the concept is reminiscent of an image of an iceberg: The *artifacts* are the visible parts of organisations, e.g., the structures and processes that are comprehensible and observable, if sometimes difficult to decipher. This includes, for example, the language we use, rituals that have certain meanings, such as daily routines, clothing, manners, communication rules, technical language, and the correct forms of addressing colleagues. The *espoused values* on the partly visible level are the strategies, goals, and visions of the institution, which are evident and partly written down, e.g., in the form of a mission statement, management concepts or, in general, the main business model or concept of the organisation.

They represent principles of how we work together and what professional attitude should be assumed. The basic assumptions include the premises that are neither conscious nor visible nor written anywhere, e.g., an image of the child, world views, convictions of humanity: in other words, they are views and perceptions, thoughts and feelings that are important in the organisation. We can also ask ourselves questions such as these: How do we maintain relationships with the outside world? How do we deal with clients? What non-implicit beliefs about action are there? What convictions of transparency and openness do we uphold?

In their meta-analysis of the research conducted between 1990 and 2010, which measured the effects of a mission statement on an organisation's performance, Desmidt et al. (2011) observed, despite study-specific difference and contradictions in the measurement, some positive correlation between mission statements and financial performance. According to Desmidt et al. (2011, p. 469), the most-cited benefits of mission statements for an organisation's performance are these: (1) They do not only provide a sense of the organisation's direction and purpose but are also the basis of any strategic thinking and planning (cf., e.g., Kemp and Dwyer, 2003). (2) They facilitate the allocation of organisational resources and decision-making (e.g., Bartkus et al., 2000). (3) They clarify the goals and strategies to be communicated between the organisation and external stakeholders who provide tangible and intangible resources needed for operations (e.g., Sanchez & Heene, 2004). (4) They summarise the value propositions of the organisation, support sense-making processes, and motivate the activities of its members to achieve the strategic, tactic, and operational goals (e.g., Campbell & Yeung, 1991).

Despite the relevance of mission statements and the development processes linked to them, they also have their drawbacks. Not infrequently, these documents trigger negative reactions and emotions from managers and employees in social institutions when there are possible conflicts and actual disillusionment. Mission statements are sometimes just ineffective formulations for glossy brochures, which are composed by top management and have no connection to the actual practice of the frontline staff. A critical assessment points to the risks of mission statement processes (cf. Nagel & Wimmer, 2014, p. 280). According to Maak and Ulrich (2007, p. 243 f. cit. by Liedke, 2017, p. 113; transl. by the authors), such critical evaluations should include different criteria to assess the merits and limitations of mission statements, such as: "(1) *Inclusivity*: Can a mission statement be shared equally by employees, addressees, cooperation partners and other stakeholder groups? (2) *Credibility*: Is the mission statement realistic and is it in line with the values lived by the organisation? (3) *Desirable goal formulation*: Can the mission statement motivate people to participate in ensuring that the formulated objectives are achieved? (4) *Clarity*: Does the mission statement avoid empty phrases in its formulations? (5) *Concreteness*: Does the mission statement enable concrete steps to implement the goals and make them

controllable?” These and other criteria will also be helpful for the analysis of mission statements in the didactical model proposed in the next section of this chapter.

Teaching and Learning Approach – The Module ‘Foundations of Pedagogical Anthropology’

Background of the Module

Scientific theories of pedagogy and, above all, the reality of education and pedagogical practice are based on certain views on the human being, which are, however, often not explicitly reflected upon. In the history of pedagogy, different views on the human being can be repeatedly found in the literature (Stein, 2013). Even today, there is no uniform conception of the *conditio humana* and there are also differences between individual educational professionals (Stein, 2013, p. 13).

Pedagogical anthropology is concerned with the connection between images of human beings and their explicit and implicit upbringing and educational relationships. Thus, the tasks consist, on the one hand, in understanding a human being from the perspective of their upbringing, education, and socialisation and on the other hand, in considering the pedagogical implications of different concepts of a human being. As far as its methodology is concerned, pedagogical anthropology proceeds historically-hermeneutically, conceptually-theoretically, qualitatively-empirically, and culturally-comparatively. Pedagogical images of humankind contain descriptive and above all normative ideas about what “humans” are and what they can and should make of themselves. In a complex educational process, pedagogical images of a human being have interpretative, orientational, and legitimising functions because they enable attributions, structure expectations, and legitimise educational measures. Without anthropological knowledge, pedagogical theories and practices cannot be understood adequately. Not every pedagogy is a pedagogical anthropology, but every pedagogy has an anthropological dimension (Commission on Pedagogical Anthropology of the German Society for Educational Sciences, 2020).

Therefore, in the anthropology module of the Social Pedagogy and Management Bachelor’s degree programme at a German university of applied sciences, it is a special concern to fathom how a social enterprise arrives at sharing an attitude as a team. In the module, three main learning outcomes should be achieved. First, the module needs to establish an intellectual discourse regarding anthropological views on humankind among students. Next, a systematic examination of pedagogical tasks should follow and, finally, ideas for a corporate culture should be developed. The aim is to not only systematically explore aspects anchored in the mission statement of an institution, but also to find approaches for their implementation in the conceptual considerations of the institution.

Anthropological Images of Humankind

Overview

The lessons are conceived as an invitation to an open-ended scientific discourse. The course starts with a performative intervention. The students meet an extra-terrestrial who is on their first ethnographic fieldtrip to the planet Earth. The extra-terrestrial has many questions and uncovers contradictions and shortcomings with childlike questions. When the alien leaves with a field book full of data it becomes obvious that the ‘human case’ is still unsolved. Most of the subsequent lessons are ‘meet and greets’ with scientific celebrities. We start with the philosopher Immanuel Kant and his idea of humankind as ‘crooked wood’ [krummes Holz]. Another scholar we encounter is René Descartes. His thinking shaped our binary perspective on the human being as having a physical and a mental dimension, whereas the latter is seen as superior. Phenomenologists like Hermann Schmitz (2009) questioned this position and argued for the significance of the corporeality or the dimension of the felt body. Afterwards we meet Helmut Plessner (1975) and Arnold Gehlen (1993), who both sought to establish a philosophical anthropology and described humankind as marked by ‘eccentricity’ and ‘deficiency’, respectively. Scholars like Norbert Elias (1987) or Lev Vygotskij (1992) characterised humans first and foremost as social beings. Furthermore, psychology has introduced three classic perspectives: Psychoanalysis, Behaviourism, and the Humanist Approach, each providing its own description of essential human traits (Schilling, 2000). Johan Huizinga (1987) foregrounded human playfulness and described the human being as ‘homo ludens’. Many others, e. g., Paul Mecheril (2010, 2016), emphasise migration as an intrinsic human condition.

To get acquainted with each author’s perspective, the students get a reader with primary and secondary sources relating to the above-mentioned scholars in the first meeting. In the subsequent sessions we discuss our understanding of these theoretical positions and their practical implications for professional action in Social Work. To link theoretical findings to affective dimensions, we make use of different performative methods. It should, however, be said that there always remains one essential constraint: Scientific knowledge is never undoubtable, which means that there can be no direct transition from knowledge to ethics. What we know about the human being stays hypothetical. Therefore, a professional attitude includes accepting the fact that knowledge is fluid and depends on the context and one’s own position. There is no understanding as such but only an ongoing discourse (Schilling, 2000, p. 253 f.).

Practical Implementation

To exemplify this, the session on migration as a trait of humanity will be described below in detail. In the weeks prior to it, the students are asked to collect some demographic data regarding their ancestors: What was their parents’ and grandparents’

place of birth? What did they or what do they do for a living? What characterises their cultural context? With this information in hand, we start a re-enactment. A compass card is placed in the centre of the floor. It symbolises the position of our university. The students have to place themselves in a geographic relation to this position: first as themselves, then as their parents, and finally as their grandparents. The teacher interviews each person in turn about all of their positions: *Who are you? Where do you live? Which language do you speak? What is your job? Is there anything remarkable about you that you like to tell us?* As story after story is told, they slowly fill the room. After the last answer students are asked to walk back from one generational location to the other and then to the position where they started, in silence and only accompanied by the sound of a singing bowl (Fig. 15.2).

Then, the focus of the session turns from the participants' familial entanglements to anthropological theory. We start with a quotation that suggests viewing migration as a universal human form of action. Subsequently, dimensions of a social worker's professional attitude in the context of migration are presented and discussed. They concern a specific concept of culture in the sense of cultural studies, a critical analysis of culture-related issues of power, and the attitude of "not knowing", because knowledge can all too easily lead to an abuse of power when 'others' are defined (Mecheril et al., 2010, p. 92ff.). A book chapter that has been provided for individual reading is discussed. Here, we focus on the excluding power of common terms regarding migration. These terms mostly define a country as an inflexible container with an in- and an outside. All those who are 'inside' are supposed to share specific traits, such as a certain ethnical background, religion, language, or interests. With the experiences and the knowledge we have so far gained, it is easy to deconstruct the 'cultural container' as a purely imaginary entity (Mecheril, 2016, p. 12ff.).

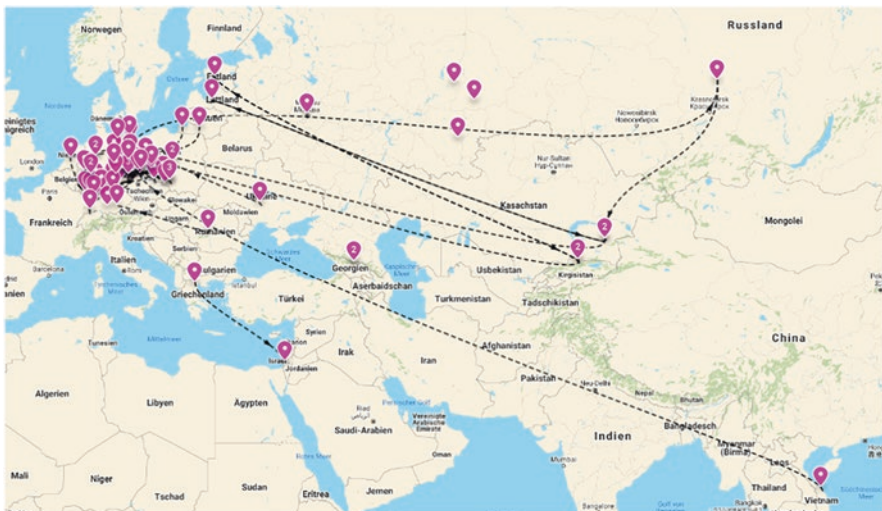


Fig. 15.2 Padlet™ World Map created by students in winter term 2020/21. (Authors' own illustration)

Finally, we draw conclusions for the professional action: Social workers have a responsibility to support people who have been denied recognition due to their individual history of migration. Social work has to address the diversity of experiences of “otherness” and make these experiences visible and tangible.

Social Pedagogy and Pedagogical Anthropology

Schilling’s Model of Pedagogical Anthropology

Anthropology, or the study of human beings, deals with the questions of how humans are to be conceptualised, what dimensions a human existence has and what needs arise thereof. Etymologically, the term is derived from the Greek words *ánthropos* meaning a “human being” and *lógos* meaning “science”. Most anthropological theories underscore the tripartite nature of human beings (Schilling, 2000). The conception of humans in education is based on the insights of the reference sciences, such as psychology or philosophy, from which pedagogy derives its specific guidelines for action. Schilling (2000), for example, deals with the following six dimensions or areas that make up the human being (bold font), the derived needs (italics) of the human being and the resulting tasks for pedagogy (underlined) (cf. Fig. 15.3).

Didactic Approach and Implementation Steps

Student guidance, counselling, and support by the teacher involve the following (also media-related) didactic considerations and steps in planning:

1. Basic functions, tasks, and significance of a mission statement in a (socio-) educational organisation or institution.
2. General discussion of Schilling’s model of pedagogical anthropology, its dimensions, requirements, and pedagogical tasks.
3. Transfer of the model to the target groups of the institution (client, team, manager, parents and relatives, network partners).
4. Search for references to the individual dimensions in the mission statement of one’s own institution.
5. Search for references to the individual dimensions in the concept of one’s own facility.
6. Questions about the practical implementation of the mission statement or the concept in the facility – Discussion of possibilities and obstacles.
7. Documentation of the results with the help of the provided templates.
8. Presentation of the results in the form of a short scientific paper.

Methodologically, in the sense of self-organised learning, students are given the opportunity to complete individual phases of the assignments alone or in groups,

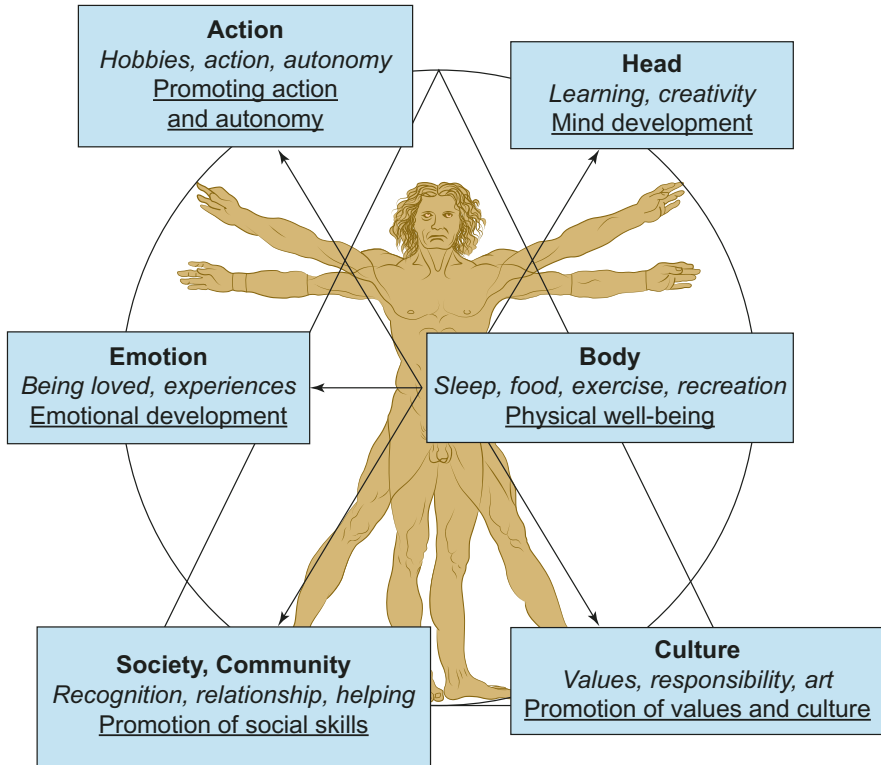


Fig. 15.3 Dimensions (bold font), needs (italics) and pedagogical tasks derived from them (underlined). (After Schilling, 2000; in Stein, 2013, pp. 13–15)

whereby the latter is preferably recommended. They also have the freedom to choose the intensity of guidance provided by the lecturer. Depending on the experience and participation requirements of the student group, the lecturer evaluates this degree of freedom together with the students and determines his or her future role in facilitating and coaching.

The learning objectives are to systematically understand the concept of humankind underlying the mission statement of an institution and to analyse and critically reflect on its practical implementation. There, (socio-) pedagogical and management-related aspects are to be interlinked. In addition, the learning paths for fulfilling the assignment give students various opportunities to practise their methodological and social skills in a group context. This also serves to support the group dynamics and strengthens the structure of the lesson.

Together with the lecturer, the students first work on the definition, purpose, and function of a mission statement. They learn that a mission statement is a clear, structured, long-term objective within the framework of values in a company. Mission statements are complex background beliefs in social contexts, which can bring together ideas, values, and interests. To become practicable, they require examples

(cases, models; also role models). Corporate mission statements are derived written principles of corporate management, mostly without legal binding force and immediate practical relevance. Mission statements have an orientational function for stakeholders (they convey values and norms), an integrational function (sense of “we”), a decision-enabling function (they define rules of communication), and the function of providing behavioural security. In this way, mission statements promote identity, identification, transparency, loyalty, and a positive image of an organisation.

This discussion is followed by an examination of Schilling’s model of pedagogical anthropology and its dimensions and requirements as well as some pedagogical tasks that help to understand its structure.

Transfer Performance for the Dimension of Culture and the Target Group of Refugees

With the help of the example of the dimension “culture”, which includes “*Values, responsibility, art*”, the students were led to analyse systematically the pedagogical work tasks of “promoting values and culture” in a selected company to not only juxtapose theory with practice but also to gain initial insights into whether there are cross-connections with the company’s corporate image or mission statement.

Already at the beginning of the work task, the students should establish whether their observations are led by a set of criteria (see Table 15.1) and are target-group specific with the help of a PowerPoint™ Presentation. Regarding the students’ accomplishment of the work task, it was very easy for them to present the dimension based on the above criteria by using the example of clients (here: refugees). The results of the student’s discussion are just exemplary and limited to this specific area of social work. They cannot easily be generalised.

Discovering, and thinking about, themselves as a company’s own target group is also a very winning thought process for the students. With guidance, however, they became increasingly successful in establishing a reference to the discussion of the mission statement. Overall, it is easier for the students to reflect on the employee perspective. But taking up the perspective of a manager, too, has set new and important impulses. It is also very important to establish references to cooperation and networking and thus to place one’s own institution in the social space of a lively region.

Analysis of Mission Statements from the Perspective of Social Work Management

Didactic Approach and Implementation

The analysis of mission statements is also an integral part of the social work management education on the study programme *Social Pedagogy and Management*. Therefore, students are introduced to the managerial perspectives already at an early

Table 15.1 Student’s presentation of the dimension of culture based on the example of working with refugees. (Authors’ own illustration)

Criteria	Target group: Working with refugees	Target group: staff	Target group: leaders	Target group: relatives, e.g. parents	Target group: network partners
Implementation in daily work	<p>We conduct regular “Together Cafés”, modelled on the World Café, on various topics such as justice, equal treatment, and values with refugees.</p>	<p>We deal with challenges faced by staff from the LGBTQIA+ community. Availability of vegan, vegetarian, flexi-vegetarian food must and is thought of when cooking together. Regular exchange takes place in the form of weekly staff meetings. However, this can also take place in mini-meetings arranged at short notice.</p>	<p>Our leader regularly attends meetings. He/she is close to both teams, tries to sense conflicts immediately and ensures their quick resolution. He/she is available for mediation.</p>		<p>Networking between the communities and the gatekeepers (scene experts - legal / illegal graffiti scene). Reliable dialogue partner, binding.</p>

<p>Implementation in the mission statement</p>	<p>A wide range of “door opening” services. We see ourselves as contact persons, development workers, hand-holders. But we also provide safe space for discussion and friction. We are basically in favour of mutual respect despite different opinions and positions. We want to place ourselves our counterpart’s shoes and at least understand the position of other people even on difficult topics. This does not mean having understanding for everything.</p>	<p>We communicate values through positive examples. All employees act as role models for values and convey them in their actions. The interaction in the team should be respectful, binding, and honest.</p>	<p>General principles and rules of internal cooperation: Agreements and deadlines must be adhered to.</p>	<p>Spike Dresden works as a social educator together with the respective communities under one or more objectives and has a networking effect. Our so-called gatekeepers are an elementary resource for building bridges between the social educator and the respective micro-communities.</p>
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(continued)

Table 15.1 (continued)

Criteria	Target group: Working with refugees	Target group: staff	Target group: leaders	Target group: relatives, e.g. parents	Target group: network partners
Implementation in the conception	We give space to try out ideas and are open to development. It is an atmosphere characterised by appreciation, honesty, mutual respect, openness, and transparency.	Agility	The head of the centre is responsible for the overall organisation and coordination, and implementation of decisions and objectives. During the open meeting, the specialist on duty is responsible. For projects and specifically assigned tasks, the designated person/project management is responsible. There is an overview of the right to issue instructions, which ensures transparency.		Gatekeepers are to be understood as scene insiders and employees of the youth service provider who are directly connected to the respective target group and at the same time have the necessary professionalism. The general society (macro-community) is also involved.

<p>Theory and practice?</p>	<p>The theory-practice link is sometimes difficult because parents (both leaders) and their children work together. Bringing together the two fundamentally different teams (integration + scene) is also still in the discovery phase.</p>	<p>Opinions of younger people are sometimes dismissed on the grounds of their lack of life experience. Vegan nutrition is partly portrayed as exaggerated.</p>	<p>Open, honest cooperation is very important to our director; if this is ever called into question, the issue is addressed openly, and an attempt is made to find a solution quickly. All staff members in the facility have different management tasks and responsibilities, which must always be carried out in open and fair cooperation.</p>	<p>Not all work professionally. Employees hope to gain advantages through their unique feature of being “the gatekeeper”.</p>
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Table 15.2 Didactic Framework for the case study analysis of mission statements from social work management perspective (Authors' own illustration)

No.	Steps	Timing	Learning outcome	Method
1	What are mission statements about?	Self-study <i>before</i> class	Acquisition of theoretical background	Instructional input (pre-class lecture), flipped classroom (e.g., video, self-evaluation)
2	Mission statement quiz	30 min	Repetition of basic concepts	Quiz with Kahoot™ ^a
3	Criteria for a critical analysis	15 min	Knowledge enhancement	Instructional input ^a
4	Introduction to case study analysis	15 min	Understanding the case and case study method	Instructional input ^a
5	Initiation of the group learning process	5 min	Initiation of group work	Group work ^a
6	Analysis of mission statements	60 min	Applying criteria of analysis	Group work ^a
7	Pitch of group results	30 min	Presentation of results	Students' presentations ^a or gallery walk ^a
8	Lessons learned	25 min	Reflexion of learning process	Class discussion ^a
9	What have you learned?	Self-study <i>after</i> class	Repetition and individual reflection	Flipped classroom (e.g., quiz, gap text, short essay)

Note: ^aThese methods can be applied to in-class or virtual meetings

stage of their studies. After the successful completion of the module, they will have achieved the following specific learning outcomes: (1) Students can explain the purpose, structure, and design of mission statements in social work and human service organisation; (2) Students can analyse mission statements regarding specific criteria to assess their quality. The underlying didactic framework combines instructional and cognitivist learning in and outside the classroom, which is based on case studies and flipped classroom approach: e.g., instructional inputs, group work, analysis of case study material, and e-learning. The following Table 15.2 summarises the process of implementing the case study analysis.

As can be seen, the analysis is divided into pre-class, in-class, and post-class activities. The same didactic structure can be applied to in-class as well as blended (online and/or virtual) learning environments. The case study analysis starts with an introduction to the basic terminology, concepts, and structure of mission statements in the organisational management context prior to the class meeting (1), which need to be memorised and will be tested in the Mission Statement Quiz (2) at the beginning of the class session. Thereafter, students acquire additional knowledge about criteria for the assessment of the quality (3) of mission statements (e.g., their clarity, credibility, inclusiveness, realistic and concrete objectives, etc.; cf. Maak & Ulrich, 2007). The main exercise in the lesson is a group work activity containing different case studies for each group in which students analyse the content of mission statements (4–6) by means of the criteria introduced at the beginning of the lesson. After

completion of the analysis, each group presents their results (7) in the plenum session to the others and reflects on the learning process during the analysis (8). After the lesson, students are asked to apply the newly acquired knowledge and skills in a short self-study exercise as an e-learning activity (9).

As a result, students did not only apply the criteria introduced in the lesson but also developed new criteria that were helpful for such an analysis: e.g., the level of detail (specific vs. general), scope (concise vs. comprehensive), completeness (all aspects and questions applied vs. focus on selected questions), use of language and translations into other languages (e.g., simple/inclusive language), and a clear distinction between different levels of an organisation (normative, strategic, operational). Additionally, the students also reflected on the following aspects:

- Differentiation of target groups as addressees of the mission statements.
- Mission statements need to be clear, generally understandable, and well-structured.
- Layout and design need to be appealing to the reader but should not be presented in an exclusively graphical form.
- The length of the text does not matter; short and concise information is also helpful if everything is clearly articulated.
- Different working areas can develop their specific mission statements (e.g., for day-care centres, assisted living, workshops for people with impairments).
- A mission statement should not be too long for the reasons of readability, and it should be well structured. Its language should be a good mix of technical terms and simple language to address everyone.
- Mission statements should be updated and checked regularly.

Regarding the students' evaluation, most participants enjoyed this kind of lessons. It helped the students to quickly become familiar with the analysis criteria and procedure from a management perspective and to acquire knowledge and skills that would enable them to initiate the development of the mission statements after their studies.

Discussion and Conclusions

As has been shown, the analysis of mission statements in the anthropology module 'Foundations of Pedagogical Anthropology' can be regarded as a valuable teaching and learning approach. It helps to improve students' learning, especially regarding a critical reflection on various levels, such as the anthropological images of humankind, the pedagogical anthropological theory and practice, and the implications for social work management. The interprofessional composition of the team of lecturers – Dr. Dörte Görl-Rottstädt (Professor for General Pedagogy), Dr. Markus Andrä (Professor for Social Pedagogy and Social Work) and Dr. Maik Arnold (Professor for Social Work Management) – reflects the methodological and didactic spectrum of the disciplinary approaches involved. Mission statements are not only practical

instruments of corporate culture due to their socialising character but also suitable learning objects for social work management education as they help students to enhance their reflective skills. The module described in this chapter enables students to embark on a journey through the history of philosophical assumptions and images of humankind, which enriches the discussion about the theoretical and practical implication of mission statements in social pedagogy. Besides, the approach also paves the way for an in-depth interdisciplinary collaboration between different academic disciplines and cultures (e.g., philosophical and pedagogical anthropology, social work, and management). Students can better understand the development of mission statements and their theoretical foundations. After completing the module, they can critically analyse and evaluate them under the consideration of both pedagogical and managerial aspects and dimensions. Furthermore, the teaching approach presented in this chapter helps to successfully achieve the main learning outcome of the study programme ‘Social Pedagogy and Management’ that consists in the development of ‘translational competence’. “Such a competence is required because, frequently, scientific findings cannot simply be applied to concrete practical contexts. Moreover, a competence to translate from one domain of action to the other is needed in order to adjust, integrate, and transfer the scientific knowledge into practice and to provide a ground for decision-making processes” (Arnold, 2020, p. 112 f.). In other words, students understand the connection between different domains of action – namely, that mission statements are both the product of strategic thinking in the management of social work organisations and socio-cultural phenomena that guide pedagogical actions.

Although the didactical framework builds on only one implementation example, the following recommendations might prove helpful for implementing this teaching and learning approach in other contexts, too. Firstly, combining self-directed and collaborative tasks helps initiate and promote student-centred learning. In general, learning outcome can be effectively achieved if self-direction and instruction are balanced. Previous research has shown that teachers can be understood in this context as learning advisors, learning designers, learning facilitators, moderators, or coaches (Görl-Rottstädt et al., 2022).

Despite these advantages, the approach presented in this chapter must also be subjected to a critical analysis and assessment. Mission statements are but social constructs that have different functions in the life of organisations. Although they are an essential part of any organisational culture, it is questionable whether they convince all stakeholders. Future research in the field of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) should focus on the connections between didactical approaches in social pedagogy and social work management education. Thus, answering the following questions would doubtlessly help to improve didactical interventions: How convincing are mission statements? How can we describe the relationship between mission statements and individuals’ identification with and commitment to the organisation? How effective are mission statements in motivating individuals’ actions? Do mission statements foster so-called ‘ideological communities’ (Parker et al. 2004)? Regarding the last question, mission statements can also be understood as specific phenomena that clearly reveal the gap between what ‘is’ and what ‘is

ought to be'; it is not always possible to draw practical conclusions from normative concepts (Schilling, 2000, p. 253). As any research has its limitations, the teaching and learning approach presented in this chapter and the conclusions that have been drawn from the analysis cannot be generalised. At the same time, the joint discussion of the methodological approach by the team of lecturers supported the reflection process and promoted mutual understanding between the disciplines.

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Chapter 16

Promoting Self-Determination and Motivation as Leadership Skills: A Didactics to Strengthen Autonomy Support and the Importance of Role Models in Social Work Management Education



Frank Unger and Uli Sann

Abstract This chapter presents Deci and Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as a practical conceptual framework for social management degree programs and leadership development in general. Furthermore, it is suggested to apply Miller and Rollnick’s ‘Motivational Interviewing’ (MI) as an essential tool, if not the ‘missing link’ between the benign postulate of participant-centered teaching and its practical as well as sustainably effective implementation. The appreciative, dialogical interaction between teachers and students is pinpointed as the crucial element of successful teaching as well as a of good leadership behaviour. The core of the chapter constitutes the discussion of methodological-didactic considerations of Self-Determination Theorie, Motivational Interviewing, and their connection. The crucial idea is that the way, teachers, and instructors behave and how they are experienced by their students and employees, is one, if not the utter most important pedagogical intervention for intrinsic learning motivation and sustainable learning success. The proposed framework provides a large number of concrete approaches, interventions and trouble shooting ideas. Finally, exemplary experiences in concrete implementation and ideas for further theory-practice transfer are outlined and possibilities of application for (later) professional activities are explained.

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Introduction

The social economy has an impact on many areas of our society. It is not only a significant sector of the economy, but above all a complex field of action that operates between “universalistic basic values and societal standardizations of the provision and care of existence on the one hand and individual or group-related particular interests on the other” (Effinger, 2018, pp. 17f., translation by the authors). The most multifarious requirements for an effective as well as efficient design and management of social economy organizations, the manifold changes in the world of work, which are also part of the daily routine in the social economy, and the countless challenges that employees face on a daily basis must be professionally met by managers. Effective managers act flexibly (that is, adaptively) and at the same time stably (that is, they are reliable and provide guidance e.g., Unger & Sann, 2020). Therefore, managers must increasingly supplement or replace traditional modes of action and attitudes (such as small-scale, controlling, directive leadership) with new elements of leadership (e.g., strengthening self-determination and control, coaching, offering inspiration). This also changes the requirements for competencies of successful leaders in the social economy; in some cases, novel questions arise that call for corresponding skills and abilities (ibid.; Arnold, 2019, pp. 159ff.). Research offers possible answers to questions regarding the practical application and teaching of timely leadership competencies.

Self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2017, 2020; Gilbert & Kelloway, 2015) can be described as one of the best-known theories of motivation. It originated in the field of promoting (intrinsic) motivation in the learning environment but later also gained currency in the work and leadership context, where it guides/guided empirical research and practical applications. Today, SDT provides a timely framework for promoting motivation, achievement, and well-being/satisfaction on the one hand and reducing anxiety, stress, and burnout on the other in both learning and work environments (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Based on the three basic psychological needs: supporting autonomy, promoting competence, and strengthening (social) relatedness, a wide range of empirically well-documented possibilities opens up for leadership and teaching/learning success.¹ In addition to the numerous and fields of application, SDT thus also offers the teacher who seeks advice concrete didactic impulses for the imparting of competencies. Therefore, a double teaching/learning field needs to be considered here: SDT as a framework for successful leadership in the twenty-first century and as an effective teaching approach in social management. The frequently voiced need of concrete tools for teachers as well as managers can be answered by additionally adopting the Motivational Interviewing

¹For example, the better the relatedness (as quality of the social relationship), the more open people are to receiving ‘negative feedback’ and thinking about it constructively, and more likely they are to act on it (e.g., Fong et al., 2019; Mabbe et al., 2018; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2020). Dealing with critical feedback openly and constructively is an important learning and developmental factor. Here, close social relatedness can be a (co)decisive impact factor.

approach (MI, according to Miller & Rollnick, 2015; also Hohman, 2021; Unger & Sann, 2020). In some other fields, SDT and MI are already successfully combined (e.g., Hohman, 2021; Miller & Rollnick, 2012).

After a brief presentation of the requirements for managers in the social economy and some basics of learning and motivation psychology, the main characteristics of and the central empirical findings on SDT and MI in the teaching-learning context will be outlined, and the interaction between teachers and students will be discussed against this background. Here, the main focus is on the methodological and didactic design of courses and the strategy of ‘learning from the model’. The way in which teachers are perceived is one of the most important factors of sustainable learning success. Finally, ideas for a transfer from theory to practice are outlined, and possibilities of application for (later) professional activities are discussed.

Leadership in the Social Economy

There exist multiple definitions of leadership, whose emphases strongly vary, thus giving rise to (sometimes heated) debates on the concept”. Today, leadership is without any doubt considered a significant influencing factor in organizations. In this context, the term ‘management’ appears alongside leadership. Due to the variety of approaches in the field of leadership there is no clear definition or even a clear distinction between the terms ‘leadership’ and ‘management’. In accordance with Vahs (2019, p. 19), we understand management (also corporate management) as “the totality of all fundamental actions that relate to goal-oriented control of the company”. For example, Grunwald (2018, pp. 379f.) identifies the following main areas of responsibility for managers in the social economy: strategy development, marketing, resource management, organizational development, and controlling. Leadership in a narrower sense puts people and relationship-building at the centre of action. Here, too, leadership/management tools are used as a matter of course. They should be understood as an important basic skill – but by no means the only or the most important one (Unger et al., 2022; Weibler, 2016, p. 26). Basing on this, we define leadership both as a conscious, targeted, and socially accepted exertion of influence on people (their experience and behavior) and as a reciprocal process in a specific context that implies adherence to shared values, fulfillment of tasks, and achievement of goals (e.g., Schütz et al., 2020, pp. 87ff.; Rosenstiel & Nerdinger, 2020, pp. 21ff.; Weibler, 2016, p. 93).

The question of what type of leadership is necessary or useful for achieving the desired effect in each case is discussed in as many different ways as the concept of leadership itself.² According to Comelli et al. (2014, p. 86; see also Rosenstiel & Nerdinger, 2020, p. 27), the achievement of results (reaching goals) or impact (=

²It depends on whom you ask: leaders, leaders’ superiors, employees, stakeholders, leadership trainers, management coaches, etc.

economic success) presupposes an initial ‘humane leadership success’ – i.e. a positive response from the employees. Humane leadership success includes, for example, job satisfaction, commitment, employer loyalty, team-oriented behaviour, self-directed learning, health, etc. (Unger et al., 2022). In this regard, one sometimes also speaks of ‘good leadership’ or ‘the ethical side of leadership.’³ We understand good leadership as trustworthy and responsible action that sustainably succeeds in pursuing and balancing both humane and value-creating goals to an advantage of all those involved (see also Unger et al., 2022; Kovács & Stief, 2020). Good leadership emerges from an ethically based motivation and attitude. At the same time, it has the effectiveness of its interventions at its heart, too. Leaders thus think and act in ways that are both ethical and effective (Kovács & Stief, 2020; Weibler, 2016, pp. 648ff). Even if the link between leadership actions and their various effects is not always clear, numerous research results nevertheless prove a significant connection between ‘good leadership’ and performance, motivation, job satisfaction, employer loyalty, a positive organizational climate, and even better qualitative results as well as more creativity and innovations (e.g., Unger et al., 2022; Unger & Sann, 2020; Weibler, 2016; Ng & Feldman, 2015).

Good leadership does not come into being without preconditions. It is a responsible and demanding task (e.g., Regnet, 2020, pp. 55 f.) – also in the social economy. In addition to management tasks, such as strategic planning, operational control, the initiation of cooperation and networking, or the increase of innovative capacity, special attention must be paid to all employees. In this regard the pedagogical goals, the varying needs of those involved and business requirements are not always in harmony. This and other leadership dilemmas are similar in many areas of the social economy (Grunwald, 2018a). Trust, ‘appreciative communication’,⁴ sufficient participation, and transparent decisions as well as tolerance to ambiguities, the handling of contradictions, uncertain and unstructured situations or different expectations of oneself and different roles one has to fulfill are but a few examples of competencies that can be helpful on this path.

Although the above-outlined challenges are in themselves enormous, leadership aspects or approaches to leadership development are largely neglected in the social economy field as compared to the free economy (e.g., Unger et al., 2022; Hodges & Howieson, 2017; Dressler & Toppe, 2011). However, in view of other challenges

³Another term is ‘the bright side of leadership’ in contrast to the ‘dark side of leadership’ (Rosenstiel & Nerdinger, 2020, pp. 47ff.).

⁴A survey of 4000 employees in Germany, France, Spain, and the UK by Boston Consulting Group in October 2020 found that employees want more ‘heart skills’ (i.e., listening, empathy, connection, and fostering team spirit) from their leaders, but those still rely too much on ‘brain and hand skills’ (intellect and clear thinking, drive and decisiveness). Respondents want a wise mix of all three components, with empathic qualities predominating (Hemerling et al., 2020). The importance of empathy should never be underestimated. In the context of counseling, for example, it has been found that explicitly empathic counselor behaviour noticeably increases the likelihood that clients will accept external stimuli (regardless of specific counseling/therapy style; Hohman, 2021, pp. 47ff.). From our experience, this is likewise applicable to the learning context and the cooperation between teachers and learners.

the social economy likewise faces (e.g., demographic change and the associated shortage of skilled workers, digitalization, and increased demands on employees, which not infrequently result in psychological stress and burnout), it appears to be of great importance that leadership issues in the social economy also receive increased attention, because “the future will place high demands on personality and people management” (Regnet, 2020, p. 73). Above all, leaders who place people at the centre of (management) action will be in demand. Such leaders should demonstrate high integrity and a willingness to trust, to inspire employees, to support them individually, to maintain and care for their health, to strengthen participation and teamwork, and to promote internal and external networking. Therefore, social and communicative competencies top the list of relevant leadership skills for the future. At the same time, in a world characterized by change, strategic and reflective thinking, and flexible action, innovation orientation, problem-solving and decision-making skills are becoming ever more central. Here, it is important (especially in unclear situations) to be calm and confident as well as candid participative, and goal-oriented (Unger et al., 2022; Unger & Sann, 2020). Erika Regnet (2020, pp. 65ff.) mentions, among other things, the following key traits for future leaders: motivational ability, ability/willingness to learn, intercultural management skills, teamwork, management of diversity and change, communicative competence, health, resilience (along with other self-management skills), and systemic, holistic thinking.

While there are certain personality traits that can partly determine the influence and success of leaders or support leadership success, essential leadership competencies can also be learned (Felfe & Franke, 2014; Hardré & Reeve, 2009). Considering the previously outlined requirements and framework conditions in the social economy, the basis of successful leadership already explained above should also be taken into account for social management and the teaching of corresponding management (leadership) competencies: humane leadership success represents the decisive basis for organizational success. It is as true for the field of social management as for other economic sectors that ‘soft skills become hard skills’ (see also Schütz et al., 2020; Regnet, 2020, p. 73), and therefore, in teaching about, e.g., leadership interaction and communication, the topics of promotion of employee motivation/satisfaction or health-oriented leadership should have a status at least comparable to that of, for example, management tools and marketing or financing topics. In our view, the aforementioned aspects are only effective in the long term when combined. If managers use effective leader communication that strengthens motivation, satisfaction, and well-being as well as performance and create framework conditions in which employees can make good use of their competencies, then the corresponding management topics will, in our opinion, also receive the necessary attention and qualitatively appropriate application. A ‘subset’ of leadership approaches is the different ways in which leaders in the workplace try to motivate their employees (motivating style; e.g., Hardré & Reeve, 2009, p. 167). Motivation can be understood as the product of individual characteristics of people, their motives, and the characteristics of a currently effective situation in which incentives act on and activate motives (Brandstätter, 2020, pp. 238f.; Schütz et al., 2020,

pp. 37ff.). “If one wants to fathom the causes of (lack of) motivation and identify starting points for strengthening it, one must keep both in mind – the person in his or her individual motivational aspirations [...] and the environment in the form of the concrete work situation [...] with its specific incentives in the sense of more or less attractive and thus motivating opportunities for action” (Brandstätter, 2020, p. 239). Thus, it becomes clear that motivation is, on the one hand, individual and dependent on the individual person but on the other hand, it can certainly be stimulated externally. This applies to the leadership process and to the teaching/learning context alike.

Learning, Motivation, and Emotion: Psychological Basics⁵

Learning processes – both those in formalized curricular contexts and those resulting from everyday interaction experiences – are closely connected with motivations and emotions. When looking back on their past learning experiences, many people remember very specific things or, above all, very specific people. “Hardly anyone remains free of strong emotions in the process. Particularly when looking back on one’s own school years, the memory of very positively or negatively experienced people or special events is often in the foreground. Often such emotionally highly significant experiences shape later attitudes toward certain learning content or even toward learning as a whole, and thus have lasting (de)motivating effects on learning behaviour far beyond school and university years” (Sann, 2021).

Conversely, numerous motivational processes are also involved in the emergence of positive learning emotions and the fulfilment of one’s own needs (e.g., for relatedness, experience of competence, and self-determination), the personal experience of success and failure, or concepts about how we typically explain certain events to ourselves. Motivation and emotion are closely intertwined, especially in learning, and are significant far beyond the official learning experiences (Sann, 2021). A fundamental understanding of emotional and motivational processes is central to designing successful teaching and learning processes (Unger & Sann, 2020a). Currently, much of the available evidence comes from research in educational sciences (especially from classroom research). However, it can be assumed that this research can be transferred to higher education learning and to learning in the context of interaction between leaders and employees (e.g., Sann & Preiser, 2017; Unger & Sann, 2020a).

The success of ‘classical knowledge transfer’ is already strongly influenced by whether students and employees feel taken seriously and valued and whether they experience their teachers and instructors as interested in the teaching content and possibly even as enthusiastic facilitators (e.g., Hattie, 2009; see also Unger & Sann, 2020a). It has been shown that a friendly, positive, and individualized response to

⁵This subchapter is a summary of a presentation of Sann (2021).

learners' needs influences learning success (Tandler & Dalbert, 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2020; Wenzel & Wigfield, 2009; Perrez et al., 2006). Emotions that inhibit learning, such as fear, anger, or boredom, as well as prejudices or negative attitudes of teachers toward the class can significantly impede successful course delivery (e.g., Tandler & Dalbert, 2020).⁶ In learning arrangements that place more emphasis on the active role of learners (e.g., project-based instruction, problem-based learning, or independent elaboration of content via online platforms, etc.), issues of independent learning and performance motivation are even more important. With the introduction of competence-oriented curricula and the increasing spread of online and blended learning approaches (Hartnett, 2016) in (higher) education and the world of work, self-organization as well as self-regulation and therefore motives and emotions are becoming more essential than before.

Learners and teachers influence one another through their motives and emotions. Teachers who approach learners with motivation and positive emotions have a more satisfied audience who are more likely to be motivated to learn (Frenzel et al., 2009; Tandler & Dalbert, 2020). This is as important for learning success as the specific instructional behaviour (Becker et al., 2014). A good instructor-learner relationship is an essential factor for the instructor's wellbeing. A poor relationship with learners often leads teachers to experience negative emotions, such as anxiety, anger, and guilt (Hagenauer et al., 2015; Farouk, 2012).

In principle, high motivation to learn can be assumed when learning is associated with the expectation and experience of success and positive emotions (e.g., Sann, 2021). An appropriate learning climate and appreciative interaction between teachers and learners, which is characterized by feedback and the facilitation of successes, are also central to it (Sann & Preiser, 2017). There should be no place in teaching-learning-processes for experiences of shaming. Learners should also be encouraged to focus on successful task completion rather than social recognition (ibid.) and to appreciate the meaning of their own efforts for learning success in the sense of sustainable learning motivation. Those who see their own learning successes as self-induced and controllable rather than attributing successes to external factors develop a correspondingly positive assessment of their own effectiveness. Furthermore, the more valuable the desired action goal appears to them and the greater the subjectively expected probability of achieving the goal through their actions, the more strongly people show motivated, goal-oriented action (Sann & Preiser, 2017). The basic assumptions of these expectation-by-value models are well supported empirically (Schunk et al., 2013; also for leadership: e.g., Schütz et al., 2020, pp. 40f.; Brandstätter, 2020, p. 241). Thus, it should be clear to the learners in which advantage a (required) performance or a certain learning process results (in this context, positive emotions often are more effective than external incentives) and how they can achieve this performance.

⁶Pressure also rarely leads to success: people who are forced to do something learn less effectively. In contrast, motivation, cognitive control, and the opportunity to decide for oneself are keys to efficient learning (Estefan et al., 2021).

All the described theories are supported by a large number of findings and suggest, in particular, the importance of appreciative, supportive, and positively experienced interaction between learners and teachers (Sann & Preiser, 2017; Unger & Sann, 2020a) for learning success. Our focus is, however, on so-called intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017, 2020). The distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation refers to whether a behaviour occurs because of external incentives or because of the learner's own internal drives. Extrinsically motivated behaviour is performed due to external factors. Learning is then done, for example, to get good grades, praise, recognition, etc. Intrinsically motivated behaviour, on the other hand, is performed for its own sake. In the latter case, the performance itself is experienced as satisfying. It is performed and maintained because of the positive emotions that accompany it. Intrinsically motivated learners exhibit more favorable learning behaviour by using learning strategies such as repetition, organization, and elaboration, relating new bodies of knowledge to familiar ones, and being generally more open to cues. On the whole, intrinsic motivation is associated with better learning performance. This leads to an increased sense of competence, which in turn increases future intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017, 2020; Schunk et al., 2013). Deci and Ryan (2015) highlight (see section “[Self-determination theory and motivational interviewing as leadership competence](#)” for an in-depth discussion) that meeting the needs for (social) relatedness, experience of competence, and self-determination is critical to whether the performance of a behaviour is experienced as intrinsically motivated. The same applies to teachers, professors, and supervisors who are more motivated to teach and lead and are more vital overall when these factors are present – and when they receive the appropriate support from superiors – which in turn makes it easier for them to facilitate similar conditions for the learners entrusted to them (Slemp et al., 2020; Reeve & Cheon, 2016).

Another area, which is sometimes considered separately from motivation, is that of volition. Volition refers to processes of action planning and implementation, which include the phases of selection, planning, execution, and evaluation of actions. Thus, it is concerned with the area of perseverance or overcoming obstacles and difficulties in task accomplishment, which is highly relevant to learning processes (e.g., Estefan et al., 2021). It is therefore crucial to support learners in selecting tasks and learning strategies that correspond to their current learning level and to help them implement these in steps as small as possible. Obstacles to mastering tasks should be addressed realistically, and individual solution steps should be discussed. A good learner-teacher interaction cannot automatically create these important prerequisites for successful learning, but without the (already widely postulate) respectful and individual-centred interaction, sustainable learning is hardly conceivable (Sann, 2021; Sann & Preiser, 2017; Unger & Sann, 2020a).

Finally, this section addresses the concept of model (or observational) learning, which is particularly important for the relationship between teacher and learning success considered here. Observational learning, first described as model learning in Bandura's social-cognitive learning theory, is about acquiring new and sometimes complex behaviours by observing models and imitating them. Since objects of observation can also be texts, ideas, and even abstract systems of thought, the

broader term ‘observational learning’ has become more established (Wirtz, 2021). Theories of social cognition are concerned with how knowledge, skills, or emotions are acquired by observing or interacting with others. Many behaviours of both learners and teachers are adopted from models. However, not every learned behaviour is actually exhibited (Bandura, 1969). Models tend to act as cue stimuli and increase the likelihood of a particular behaviour. A model is particularly effective when it is perceived as competent, similar, credible, and enthusiastic.

In the best case, it is a so-called ‘coping model’, which explicitly shows the difficulty of coping with the corresponding requirement.⁷ In contrast, there is the so-called ‘mastery model’, which shows the behaviour as already mastered and easily displayed (Bodenmann et al., 2015). Accordingly, it is not the perfect best-practice model that optimally supports a learning process but one that is perceived as realistically achievable. Presumably, one’s own assessment of competence and the associated emotions play an important role in this context. It is also important whether the model is successful with a behaviour. If positive consequences are perceived after an observed behaviour of others, the chance that the observer adopts that behaviour increases. Here, a growing confidence in feasibility and the expectation of a positive outcome play a major role (Schunk et al., 2013).

Two complementary approaches that can support leaders in the sense of good leadership and teachers in the sense of good teaching in many of the areas outlined above (especially with regard to motivation and satisfaction aspects) are the Self-determination Theory according to Deci and Ryan (2015) and the Motivational Interviewing approach according to Miller and Rollnick (2015).

Self-Determination Theory and Motivational Interviewing as Leadership Competence

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a motivational approach that uses empirical methods to investigate how intrinsic factors (e.g., interest, curiosity) or extrinsic aspects (e.g., reward systems, social conditions) can promote or impair people’s motivation, satisfaction, performance, and well-being (Unger et al., 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2017). In particular, the interplay between external influencing factors and internal needs is of great interest. SDT originated in educational work (e.g., Reeve & Cheon, 2016, 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2017, 2020; Reeve et al., 1999),⁸ but it has also been and continues to be extensively researched in, for example, organizational and

⁷It is not without reason that the teachers’ own practical experiences, recounted by them in the classroom, have the effect of stimulating curiosity and motivation.

⁸For the higher education context see e.g., Jenö et al. (2021), Gilbert et al. (2021), Weinstein et al. (2020).

leadership contexts and translated into specific leadership impulses, among other things (Slemp et al., 2018, 2021; Kanat-Maymon et al., 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Gilbert & Kelloway, 2015; Hardré & Reeve, 2009). SDT assumes that people have an inherent drive to learn and develop, a desire to achieve and overcome challenges (in the sense of self-efficacy) and to form good connections (relationships) with others, but they need appropriate frameworks for it to unfold or manifest. Central to this is the satisfaction of the so-called three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017, 2020; see also Brandstätter, 2020, pp. 239f.). Numerous studies were able to confirm the effect of SDT both for pedagogical work and for the field of leadership (e.g., Unger et al., 2022; Slemp et al., 2018, 2020, 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2017, 2020; Howard et al., 2021). At the same time, this allows us to derive clear recommendations for both domains: in the teaching-learning context as well as for leadership interventions, it is advisable to enable autonomy, promote competence experience (in the sense of mastery), and maintain and (even better) strengthen social relatedness (to the learning group, to the teacher, to the work team, and to the leader). The three basic psychological needs can be described as follows (Unger et al., 2022; Slemp et al., 2018, 2020, 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2017, 2020; Brandstätter, 2020):

- Autonomy is experienced when people feel themselves as self-determined, acting on their own initiative and making decisions independently. They can behave in a way that corresponds to their personal interests and values. They have a say in how their environment is shaped or can actively participate in it as best they can (having responsibility for their own lives; the opposite is, among other things, strong control from the outside, pressure, instructions, etc.).
- Need for competence describes the feeling of having sufficient control over an event, especially to be successful in demanding tasks, to achieve desired results (being effective as well as wanting to/being able to do a good job), and, in addition, to be able to further develop one's competencies. The feeling of being effective or mastering a challenge (in the sense of mastery) is something one wants to consciously perceive.
- Relatedness concerns a sense of belonging, mutual respect, reliability, support, and meaningful, deep connections with others, especially the people relevant to one's personal life.

Both in the work context as a whole and for the individual leader, SDT offers a variety of impulses for the design of motivational and performance-enhancing frameworks that simultaneously reduce stress and burnout, strengthen well-being, engagement, creativity as well as proactive behaviours, and intensify employer loyalty (e.g., Slemp et al., 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Gilbert & Kelloway, 2015).⁹ Specifically for the leadership context, the three basic psychological needs can be

⁹For the area of the teaching-learning context, we refer to section "Learning, motivation, and emotion: psychological basics". Moreover, the remarks in this chapter are readily transferable to the pedagogical field.

strengthened, for example, as follows (Unger et al., 2022; Slemp et al., 2018, 2020, 2021; Brandstätter, 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Gilbert & Kelloway, 2015):

Autonomy

The feeling of autonomy is strengthened when, for example, choices and ‘mere’ impulses are given, personal initiative is made possible and encouraged, and external (micro-)controls or sanctions (also, e.g., too judgmental or comparative statements, pressure, threats, or punishments) are avoided in order to maintain a certain work behaviour. Here, for example, the five dimensions of the Job Characteristics Model according to Hackman and Oldham (1980) also offer diverse impulses for an autonomy-promoting work design: autonomy, feedback, skill variety, task identity, and task significance. If, for example, the task cannot be freely determined, there are still other possibilities: e.g., to talk about contents, procedure, time structures or setting priorities together as well as to support the individual work-life-learn-balance. Give reasons for decisions and (even better) involve employees as much as possible (participative leadership) and offer them opportunities to help shape decisions (take an interest in employees’ experiences).

Competence

The need for competence is best satisfied in a well-structured environment (= clear framework),¹⁰ which offers optimal challenges, positive feedback, and opportunities for growth (sufficient space). Tasks, roles, projects, responsibilities should be distributed (or delegated) in a way that best fits the interests and competencies of the individual employee. Consequently, these should be tasks and goals that challenge – without overtaxing (explore this together with employees) and offer the certainty of being allowed to make mistakes (understand these as a reason to learn)¹¹ and receiving support when it is necessary or desired. Finally, individual, timely feedback that expresses respect and appreciation for the employees and at the same time concretely develops competencies is essential for experiencing competencies.

¹⁰ Providing a clear framework does not contradict the autonomy approach. One study of successful empowerment emphasizes that autonomy works well “when organizations give autonomy to their employees through centralized structures while formulating clear rules...” (Welpel et al., 2018, p. 134; for SDT, e.g., Gilbert & Kelloway, 2015, p. 183).

¹¹ At this point, the approach of psychological safety by Amy Edmondson (2018) should be mentioned briefly. Here, the following points, among others, can help to grasp the current situation in a team, also in terms of the feeling of competence such as relatedness: If I make a mistake in the team, I am not blamed for it. Team members can openly address problems and difficult conflicts. People in this team never reject others because they are different in some way. It is safe to take a risk on this team. It is easy to ask other team members for help. No one on this team would deliberately undermine my performance or efforts. When I work with this team, I realize that my unique skills and talents are needed and valued (see also Frazier et al., 2017).

Relatedness

Relationship support means, above all, showing a continuous and authentic interest in employees, providing individual care as well as appropriate (desired) support. This is achieved, among other things, through time and understanding for each individual employee (listening, understanding, acknowledging), leadership styles conducive to relationships (e.g., LMX, transformational, authentic) as well as team-orientation (common goals, good meeting culture that promotes cooperation, provides everyone with sufficient information, etc.). A central aspect (which strengthens all three needs) is that leaders take the perspective of employees 'value-free', which means, among other things, really listening to their ideas and trying to understand them (active listening), asking about their points of view (asking many open questions), thinking about how one could understand the situation (if one were in their position; i.e. empathizing without sympathizing), and enabling them to openly express their feelings in difficult situations.

What was previously outlined for the world of work can well be transferred to the learning context: If intrinsic motivation is present and is not undermined by demotivating framework conditions, the joy of learning and performance practically enhance each other. Intrinsic motivation, however, cannot be expected as a matter of course regarding every learning content. It cannot be created by external incentives, but it can be supported in the classroom. Even if learners do not find a learning content enjoyable, they can experience it as self-determined if they are convinced (or convince themselves) of the usefulness and importance of the content and skills they are learning. If learning is engaged and successful as a result, there is an increased chance that intrinsic motivation will also develop. This can be supported by emphasizing the personal relevance of the contents and creating references to the life world of the learners. Since interest can be aroused or interesting forms of work and learning can be offered, there is also a promising scope of action for teachers to promote effective learning on the one hand and subjective well-being on the other and to prevent boredom (Sann & Preiser, 2017). In principle, all didactic approaches that support the experience of relatedness, competence, and self-determination are extremely useful. And even grading, which is often viewed critically in terms of motivation theory, does not seem to have a demotivating effect when teaching behaviour is appropriately conducive to autonomy (e.g., Reeve & Cheon, 2016, 2021; Hofferber et al., 2014, 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

In many of these areas, it is clear that relationship building, and communication in particular, is of great importance. In our opinion, a communication approach that supports SDT is offered by Motivational Interviewing according to Miller and Rollnick (2012, 2015, see also Hohman, 2021, pp. 29, 32f.; Vansteenkiste & Sheldon, 2006). It is especially well applicable in the field of social work (Hohman, 2021, pp. 10ff.).

Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing (MI) is a client-centred (cooperative – non-confrontational) and at the same time guided (goal-oriented) interviewing approach that aims at supporting people in strengthening personal motivation for and self-commitment to a specific goal and thus (proactively) brings about change, increases helpful behaviours, and decreases unhelpful behaviours (Hohman, 2021; Sann et al., 2020; Strait, 2018; Miller & Rollnick, 2015, p. 47). MI fundamentally assumes that people have appropriate intrinsic motivation for learning and development within themselves – but that change can only be sustained if it is as self-determined as possible, if sufficient meaning and necessity are seen, and if one has both the skills and the confidence to make these changes (e.g., Sann et al., 2020; Güntner et al., 2019). Originally developed as a counselling technique in addiction treatment, MI is now used in a wide variety of fields including leadership contexts (Endrejat & Meinecke, 2021; Güntner et al., 2019; Wilcox et al., 2017; Miller & Rollnick, 2015, pp. 401f.)¹² and in the educational field too (e.g., van Merendonk, 2021, pp. 4, 7; Strait, 2018; Roy, 2017; Miller & Rollnick, 2015, p. 399; Lee et al., 2014; Bala & Johansson, 2012; Sheldon, 2010).¹³ Especially dealing with (better: dancing¹⁴) with resistance and uncertainty when learning new things (in work life as well as in school settings) is a key area of action for the MI approach. MI offers leaders as well as teachers a framework and concrete tools to, for example, improve their listening and problem-solving skills, create higher quality relationships with the people entrusted to them, reduce their ‘corrective reflex’, and promote self-persuasion in employees or students as well as their confidence in their own strengths. Strait (2018, p. 31, see also Miller & Rollnick, 2015) cites some misconceptions about motivational interviewing: “Often, people believe that MI is used to persuade or trick adults and adolescents into adopting behaviors they do not want to do. However, MI’s purpose is to help people adopt behaviours consistent with their long-term goals and core values. Ultimately, we are guides trying to help others safely and efficiently achieve value-based goals”. In this way, leaders like teachers can use MI, to tell employees or students that they are competent by acknowledging their values, goals, abilities, skills, or effort. Meeting them (their thoughts, feelings, and statements) in a non-judgmental way is an indirect way of acknowledging their competence and supports self-efficacy such as self-determination.

¹²Wilcox et al. (2017, pp. 10ff.) emphasize that MI and the transformational leadership approach are a good fit.

¹³For other fields of application, Miller and Rollnick (2015, p. 398) state, among other things, that “Successful practice of teaching, coaching, and healing professions relies on drawing people out of the closet with learning experiences in ways that often have surprising proximity to MI”. At this point we also refer to the book by Melinda Hohman (2021), *Motivational Interviewing in Social Work Practice*.

¹⁴In some publications one can read the statement “dancing, not wrestling” as a metaphor for conveying the essence of MI.

There are some special ‘Core elements of Motivational Interviewing’ (van Merendonk, 2021; Endrejat & Meinecke, 2021, pp. 22ff. ; Rosengren, 2020, pp. 23ff.; Güntner et al., 2019; Wilcox et al., 2017, pp. 34ff.; Miller & Rollnick, 2015)¹⁵:

The **MI-Spirit** (basic attitude) describes a framework in which a conversation (e.g., about change) takes place. It comprises four aspects:

- Partnership (the conversation partners are experts in their fields and meet with deep respect as equals. This means keeping both – one’s own expectation and the expectation of the counterpart – in mind, thus reducing the ‘correction reflex’);
- Acceptance (the other person is accepted as they are with unconditional, positive appreciation – which does not mean approving of everything or always agreeing with certain behaviours. It is above all their desire for autonomy that is respected and supported. Other opinions are welcome and given appropriate space);
- Compassion (the wellbeing of the other person is to be explicitly supported¹⁶ and their needs are to be taken into account);
- Evocation (the central strategy to support development and change, is to strengthen the self-persuasion).¹⁷

The **MI-Process** guides the conversation in the direction of the motivation of the ‘recipients’. It involves four sub-processes that take place in a fixed sequence and at the same time interlock – but can also repeat. Step one is *relationship building* or stabilizing and improving the relationship. The relationship is the central foundation for all further steps, which (in addition to MI) is well documented both for the educational context (e.g., Hohman, 2021) and for the field of successful leadership (e.g., Unger et al., 2022). *Focusing* is the term used for the second step. Here, the specific (shared) goals are clearly identified, and the direction of further action is chosen. The third step is called *evocation*. It aims at finding out the reasons (sense, necessity) of the employees/students, etc. for the respective topic (change) and strengthening the motivation in the direction of the change goal (learning goal, promotion of confidence and hope in own abilities). In *planning* (step four), concrete action steps are developed, and implementation begins.

MI-Methods (MI core competencies, sometimes called ‘Micro Skills’) provide concrete support and techniques that actors can refer to during the conversation. Here, well-known communication strategies are often used – supplemented by ‘MI-specific communication elements’,¹⁸ which are used especially for strengthening self-persuasion. MI methods are often described with the acronym ‘**OARS + I**’:

¹⁵This is an overview-type presentation.

¹⁶In the leadership context, this is an important component of the humane goal of leadership activity (Unger et al., 2022).

¹⁷In some current discussions, the term “evocation” is replaced by the term “empowerment” (e.g., Presentation by W. Miller at MINT Virtual Forum 2021: ‘What Makes Helpers Helpful?’).

¹⁸For more in-depth information, see, e.g., Miller & Rollnick, 2015.

- **Open questions:** to draw out and explore the person's experiences, perspectives, and ideas,
- **Affirmation:** used to acknowledge the recipients' strengths and emphasize the steps they have already taken or are ready to take,
- **Reflective listening.** Based on careful listening and trying to understand what the person is saying by repeating, rephrasing, or offering a hypothesis about what the person is trying to communicate. This is a foundational skill of MI and a main way to show empathy.
- **Summary:** which is basically extensive reflections.
- **Information exchange:** Sharing information is considered a two-way street, and it needs to be responsive to what the client (employee, student, etc.) is saying. Central to the exchange of information is that one first 'asks for permission' to give information (feedback etc.).¹⁹ brief!) input is immediately followed by an evocative question to promote autonomy and self-persuasion (e.g., "What does this information mean to you?"; "What thoughts come to your mind?"; "Why might this information be important to you?"). In this way, one can also communicate concerns or express worries.

It is in the interplay of mind, process, and methods that the 'MI-specific flow' emerges. At the same time, MI draws on many other interviewing and counselling techniques. Miller and Rollnick even emphasize the importance and the meaningful combination as well as the most different fields of application (Miller & Rollnick, 2015, pp. 396ff.). For example, the concept of autonomy also builds a bridge to the self-determination theory of Deci and Ryan (2015, see also Hohman, 2021; Patrick & Williams, 2012; Vansteenkiste & Sheldon, 2006; Markland et al., 2005).

Self-Determination Theory and Motivational Interviewing – An Obvious Connection

The interrelation between MI and self-determination theory and vice versa (e.g., Hohman, 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2017) can be illustrated with the following examples, among others²⁰:

¹⁹We often hear from leaders (as well as from teachers) that it is not appropriate to ask for permission, because it is everyone's personal task to pass on information (knowledge, etc.). Here, we would like to respond to it (without being able to go into it further at this point) that asking for consent at the same time strengthens attention (central to learning processes) and significantly increases the likelihood that the information will actually be 'productively implemented'. At the same time, we are aware that this cannot (and should not) happen 'all the time'. However, if one would like to actually set sustainable impulses with your Input, it might be worthwhile.

²⁰Here, we primarily focus on the area of leadership. Recommendations for teaching and learning follow in the next section.

Strengthen Autonomy

- Leaders reduce the ‘corrective reflex’ (less intervention, correcting, instructing, controlling – and more listening and wanting to understand, making offers, offering choices)
- Approach the world of the other person dialogically (e.g., by using questions to clearly establish the views /wishes of the employees and strengthen confidence in one’s own abilities)
- Assure understanding & being understood (through reflective techniques and summaries)
- Strengthen self-reflection (by using OARS + I – skills)

Promote a Sense of Competence

- Strengthen self-efficacy and explicitly value personal initiative
- Offer support (provide information if requested)
- Jointly develop clear goals and framework conditions
- Acknowledge individual efforts and inputs (e.g., through affirmation)

Maintain and Enhance Relatedness

- Consciously express appreciation and empathy
- Ask open questions, use reflection (including paraphrasing, emotionalizing)
- Avoid judgements and other communication blocks

Motivational interviewing helps to reduce one’s own blind spots, to awaken and deepen intentions to change, and to have the confidence to do so. Since unwillingness and actual or presumed inability to change are the main obstacles to intrinsic and sustained motivation to learn and they consequently also account for the willingness to exert effort shown and the resulting performance, this approach appears to be likewise meaningful and valuable from a pedagogical point of view.

In the previous sections, the importance of positive learner-teacher interaction was described in terms of motivation, emotion, and learning psychology, and the particular importance of addressing the basic needs for relatedness, sense of competence, and autonomy (i.e., the central points of SDT) was emphasized. Finally, MI was presented as an appropriate practical tool. In the following, these considerations will be concretely applied to the field of teaching, higher education, or professional training in the field of social work management education, and some didactic suggestions will be outlined, which essentially draw on the idea that communication takes place in the sense of the MI spirit (or similar attitudes).

Self-Determination Theory and Motivational Interviewing in Social Work Management Education

Self-Determination Theory and Motivational Interviewing as a Teaching and Learning Approach in the Social Economy

How can the approaches of Self-determination Theory (SDT) and Motivational Interviewing (MI) be applied to concrete teaching practice? Is it not trivial to advocate an attitude and way of acting that promote self-determination as a didactic principle? An appreciative teacher-learner interaction? What should this mean didactically? What teaching methods does it suggest? In our opinion, it is not the (one) method (the WHAT) that matters, but rather its implementation (the HOW).

Regarding the transfer to teaching practice, the recommendations already made in the corresponding sections on the consideration of the role of autonomy, experience of competence, and relatedness are indeed valid. The following paragraph summarizes some suggestions using autonomy as an example (e.g., Reeve & Cheon, 2016, 2021, p. 187). We highlight autonomy as one of the three stated basic needs, since it is probably the most difficult for teachers and supervisors to address, as it is often experienced as resistance and refusal instead of a vital and quite understandable need. Autonomy can be supported by the following approaches:

- Take the perspective of the people entrusted to your care (e.g., by conducting formative assessments with students to learn what they really want, need, think, and prefer; use more dialogic leadership communication/feedback tools with employees; ask questions more often and ensure understanding or ‘being understood’). If teachers act here as models in the way described earlier, learners can also incorporate skills for social management into their own behavioural repertoire (e.g., as future leaders).
- Use more interventions that vitalize and support (rather than neglect or frustrate) psychological needs, i.e., communicate a clear framework (better develop learning goals for the group jointly as well as individual learning goals dialogically) and provide sufficient space to acquire new knowledge in a self-determined way. Then reflect on these experiences and transfer them to the field of leadership action in social management.
- Provide justifications for a particular action, work assignments, a chosen course of action, and wishes (explain their meaning/the ‘why’). In other words, let students find ‘their why’ in a supportive way.
- Communicate in informative language (eliciting rather than pushing). Explore the students’ world and encourage them to explore their own world and that of fellow students in greater depth. .
- Take expressions of negative feelings, of uncertainty, and also of resistance seriously and acknowledge it (this can likewise promote a positive error culture in companies and help to deal with change processes).

Corresponding recommendations for action can also be listed for the areas of promoting the sense of relatedness and the experience of competence (see the explanations in the previous sections).

In principle, the didactic considerations outlined above can be applied to every teaching method. Even a task that is instructed on in writing only and without any personal contact can be formulated in such a way that the listed basic needs of the recipients are taken into account. Nevertheless, a corresponding pedagogical approach naturally suggests participatory, project-oriented methods that consider the social involvement of the individuals. It is the attitude (the spirit) that is of paramount importance here. A serious attitude, however, usually shows itself in correspondingly congruent behaviour.

Didactic approaches to teaching, leadership, or in the basic understanding of social work in general, and in social management in particular, remain stale, empty, and ineffective if they only feign to be human-oriented and participative. If the instructors do not actually take the autonomy and the further basic needs of their employees or students seriously, the participative method can even cause damage (loss of trust, increasing motivation deficits, insecurity, etc.). The basic attitude (sometimes called ‘spirit’) addressed in this chapter and the resulting courses of action are, in our opinion, fundamental to a successful design of a teacher-learner interaction conducive to learning and indispensable for effective model learning in the field of social management. If one does not adopt these or only nods outwardly while shaking their head inwardly at the idea of actually implementing them, should start by dealing with various participatory, supportive learning arrangements that promote self-determined learning. The central characteristic of deep interest in teaching based on SDT and MI is regular self-reflection that consistently incorporates the perspective of the recipients. Both SDT and MI offer supporting questionnaires for this purpose.²¹ In addition, Diethelm Wahl (2020, pp. 45ff.) puts forth a checklist for teachers’ self-analysis, which in our view is also well suited to support the approach described in this text.

The previous section has probably already made it clear that the authors do not consider an attitude and course of action conducive to self-determination to be trivial as a didactic principle. Rather, it is a – if not *the* – decisive determinant of successful teaching as well as successful leadership. We have previously mentioned the concept of ‘good leadership’ (section “[Leadership in the social economy](#)”). Analogous to that the concept of ‘good teaching’ could likewise be introduced at this point. If the teacher is likened to a leader, ‘good teaching’ can be understood as acting in a trustworthy and responsible manner that sustainably succeeds in pursuing both humane and value-adding goals in a balance that is good for all those involved (see also Unger et al., 2022; Kovács & Stief, 2020). And as is the case with good leadership, what is received by the recipients is important. The teacher has a special role to play here (for more details, see e.g. Wahl, 2020).²²

²¹ SDT: <https://selfdeterminationtheory.org/questionnaires/>; MI: <https://motivationalinterviewing.org>

²² On the topic of ‘good university teaching’, see Ulrich (2020, pp. 19ff.).

So, in summary (and certainly somewhat simplistically), successful learning very much depends on the teacher – and on his or her good relationships with the learning group as well as good relationships within the learning group. This does not mean, however, that we are talking about a return to a charismatic leader in the lecture hall or ‘wellness learning’ in the learning groups (i.e., not allowing critical discussion, avoiding contrary opinions, not admitting mistakes). No – that is not what we mean. Rather, we believe that a truly critical discourse, an in-depth discussion of topics and an open expression of different opinions, uncertainties or ‘not knowing’ can only steam from a solid, trusting relationship with the teachers as well as in the respective group psychological security in the learning environment. Indeed, there are overwhelming findings that describe the relationship in teaching as almost as important as it is in consulting contexts and in leadership contexts (e.g., Unger et al., 2022, Sann & Preiser, 2017). To be sure, learning naturally occurs under adverse conditions. Sustained motivation to learn, which does not strongly challenge the self-regulatory mechanisms addressed in section “[Learning, motivation, and emotion: psychological basics](#)” and allows learning to be experienced as a pleasure rather than an effort, will usually be associated with a positive teaching-learning interaction from the outset. Ask your students how they experience the framework, the collaboration, the psychological safety!²³ Then discuss what such a dialogical format means for them, why it might also be useful in the context of leadership tasks (leadership, organizational development, change management, strategy development, marketing processes, controlling discussions, etc.) and how it can be used there.

Examples of Use

In our teaching, we use heterogeneous methods, such as theory input, group work, and cooperative learning forms (e.g., group puzzles), literature work, online forums, demonstrations, video feedback, collegial case supervision, reflection reports (e.g., after job shadowing), standardized client and customer situations (simulations), business games, project work, and problem-based learning (see also Howard et al., 2021; Rosenshine, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Ulrich, 2020; Wahl, 2020). Following Wahl (2020; Rosenshine, 2012), we make sure that the plenary phases are not too long (max. 15–20 min) and are followed by various active learning phases (which should account for at least 50% of the event time). At the beginning, prior knowledge is activated (e.g., through mindmaps, partner interviews, computer-based queries), and the self-persuasion process is supported by a discussion of the individual as well as group learning objectives (see section “[Self-determination theory and motivational interviewing as leadership competence](#)”). We offer different ways of

²³“A sense of confidence that the team will not embarrass, reject, or punish someone for speaking up” (Edmondson, 1999, p. 354).

accessing the topic, working on it, and presenting it (choices). It is especially important to have time to observe individual learners closely, to enter into dialogic communication with them, to give them individual feedback that is useful from their point of view, and to discuss with them their further learning steps.

In our experience, project work and problem-based learning are particularly suitable for promoting basic psychological needs within the framework of self-determination theory (especially autonomy). However, we do not share the frequent assumption that these or other group methods strengthen the experience of competence and relatedness *per se* due to their higher necessity of self-organization. Not every group finds itself by itself. Mutual support among group members without any exclusion is also a rare ideal state. Here, therefore, the teacher's targeted support may be needed. We also make these situations a topic (keyword: metacommunication) and discuss the consequences for performance responsibility in social management (e.g., team leadership/team development, diversity management in organizations). Even though instructor-centred methods typically offer less autonomy, there is a possibility of increasing the self-determination balance of the recipients by using MI-techniques.

Despite the postulated high generality and adaptability of this approach, four application examples from the authors' teaching experience will be briefly described in the following to illustrate its transferability.

SWOT Analysis with World Café to Strengthen Self-Determination

Questions about how organizations can analyse their development opportunities in the context of the current situation and possible future trends and develop strategic goals as well as the according operational measures also arise in social management. Thus, tools for environmental, competitive, and organizational analysis are called for. The so-called 'SWOT analysis'²⁴ represents a possibility of systematic environmental and organizational analysis. Here, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are analysed, which can then later be used to determine the strategic thrust of the organization, which is sometimes referred to as TOWS analysis (e.g. Lippold, 2020, pp. 52ff.). For example, we use SWOT analysis to highlight the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an organization (using the simulation of a consulting assignment for an organization as an example, if applicable) as part of our teaching. While the SWOT analysis (in addition to the purely

²⁴In a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), the strengths and weaknesses of an organization that have been worked out, for example, in the course of an organizational analysis, are first compared in a certain systematic way (internal perspective; current situation). In a second step, the environment of the organization is examined. In particular, future opportunities and risks (e.g., socio-cultural aspects, political-legal influences, technological developments, economic changes) are to be identified. Overall, this results in a starting point [in setting/establishing a starting point] for the organization and the creation of development opportunities, products, strategies, HRM decisions etc. (e.g., Lippold, 2020, pp. 52ff.).

analytical-structuring aspect) offers opportunities for collaboration and communicative exchange (in the social economy organization as well as in the teaching of social management), we use the approach of the World Café in a complementary way to offer students the chance to turn to the topic walls (or strategic issues, etc.) that are important to them regarding their preferences and competencies. SWOT and World Café provide both a clear structure (framework) and opportunities for development (space), which promotes autonomy. In addition, the questions are posed in a sufficiently challenging way (although there are choices), so that self-efficacy (competence promotion) is strengthened. The entire process is based on different group constellations and takes place dialogically, which strengthens social relatedness. Afterwards, we reflect on the findings by using motivational interviewing tools.

Goal Planning/Setting (Agreement) and Feedback as a Management Task and Pedagogical Intervention

We encounter the topics of ‘planning/setting goals’ as well as different forms of feedback (partly in the context of controlling tools, and even more with regard to a “dialogical conversation” of people) also in social management. A recent study has emphasized the special importance of feedback and goals (target setting) for strengthening attention and motivation and for maintaining them on a long-term basis (in learning as well as in the working world; Robison et al., 2021).²⁵

We use an individual learning goal agreement for the social management course so that students can contribute their own strengths and weaknesses, ideas and wishes regarding the content of the course. Of course, certain aspects have to tie in with the curriculum (framework). At the same time, it is also possible to introduce individual (or group-oriented) focal points competence-oriented options). The reasons for setting the focus, the future benefits for the field of social management, e.g., the possible hurdles, and one’s own confidence in achieving the goals are identified with the help of motivational interviewing and discussed.

The status of goal achievement (based on the individual learning goal agreement) is a regular part of the teacher-learner conversation, in which the importance of feedback for competence orientation and relatedness is emphasized. The type, quality, and frequency of feedback from the instructor to students is also considered a significant aspect of course effectiveness in higher education teaching (Ulrich, 2020, p. 37). Together with the students, we reflect on the type and manner of their own experience, the context of the goal planning/agreement process as well as the respective feedback and apply this to possible leadership responsibility as well as the various fields in social management in which, for example, the goal topic (e.g., also in the sense of strategic management) can surface.

²⁵The positive effects of goals and feedback have, of course, been known for a very long time (for an overview in a leadership context see Unger et al. 2022).

Individual Learning Agreement in the Context of the ‘4-C Marketing Model’

An alternative to the already outlined individual learning agreement is to implement it in the context of marketing topics in social management events. “Just as the 4Ps²⁶ describe the crucial tools in marketing from the perspective of the company offering the service, the 4Cs are used to describe the same tools from the perspective of the customer” (Lippold, 2020, p. 97). If we apply this approach to teaching in social management, the 4Cs²⁷ could focus on the student. By asking about their needs, prerequisites and possible efforts their limitations as well as their preferences regarding learning and the importance and form of communication, the teacher discusses with the students’ important aspects for the individual learning goal agreement. This is followed by the transfer of the 4Cs to the field of social economy.

Teaching and Leadership Communication: Open Questions, Active Listening, Model Learning

While SDT is already reflected in many frameworks and can also be applied to numerous teaching methods, MI’s great hour strikes at the very point when things get difficult in the learning process. Ideally, the teacher (who sees themselves as a learning consultant or a coach) gives the learning group as much autonomy as possible. If the learners reach their limits, questions about the nature of the difficulty, possible alternatives, further resources, or sometimes, better still, their thematization in the form of Active Listening are appropriate. For example, during project work, difficulties arise in the cooperation among the learning group. The instructor can ask, for instance, what different points of view there are and what possibilities there would be to include everyone. The active listening statement that encourages reflection and productive discussion, such as “You are having a hard time with the colleague’s suggestion because...”, initiates a clarification of the misunderstanding or conflict, which must then, however, be accompanied by the consulting teacher until the learner is sure that the learning group can successfully put an end to it on their own. Otherwise, the experience of competence and the sense of belonging are challenged. Affirmation (“I’m impressed by the counterarguments you have against the contrary opinions ...” or “judging by the energy you put into the discussion, the topic seems very important to you ...”) or an opening question (“What do you really want for your continued collaboration?”; “Suppose their controversy is resolved, what could have happened?”) may also be appropriate.

It is important to note that the teachers’ ability to actively listen varies individually. However, if the basic attitude is to let the learners have their point of view and to nurture their desire for understanding, problem solving, and competence, the teacher can also state his or her own reflections as a hypothesis: “If you don’t have

²⁶ 4Ps stand for Product, Price, Place, Promotion (Lippold, 2020, p. 96).

²⁷ 4Cs stand for Customer needs, Cost to the customer, Convenience, and Communication.

to be right, you can't really be wrong." In this way, the teacher reduces a corrective reflex (which is likely to provoke resistance in students) and strengthens their self-persuasion (and thereby their own empowerment-oriented teaching).

Conclusion

Managers, teachers and students already have to deal with a diverse, challenging, and demanding range of topics – also in the field of social management, and the ongoing enormous changes in the world of work bring about further challenges. Digitalization, increasing complexity, acceleration of work processes, shortened half-life of knowledge, questions relating to the so-called New Work, organizational resilience in times of transformation, social responsibility, ecologically sustainable management, internal and external participation, and professional networking are but a few issues that are currently discussed and must also be taken into account in teaching-learning contexts (Unger et al., 2022).

Many questions arise for the field of social management. Hodges and Howieson (2017, p. 76; see also Unger et al. 2022) list some of them as follows:

- How does the social economy attract, motivate, retain, and develop future leaders?
- How does it succeed in sustainably integrating people who have acquired their (professional as well as leadership-oriented) competencies in other areas (economic sectors or fields of activity)?
- How does it find motivated young leaders within the sector?
- How does social business demonstrate the many ways in which the skills (that make for good leadership) can be developed?

The challenge will be, among other things, to create a reliable framework and at the same time allow sufficient space for employees and managers in the social economy as well as teachers and learners in social management education to work together in a responsible, self-organized, and motivated manner, to further evolve and to achieve impact for the team, the organization, in the entire field of the social economy, and at the societal level. In addition to classical skills, the teaching of social-communicative, self-reflective and digital competencies as well as tolerance of ambiguity are important skills for teaching in social management, especially in the challenges outlined above.

In this chapter we have argued that the interaction between lecturer, teacher, supervisor, or leader on one hand and student or employee on the other is a crucial precondition for successful and sustainable learning. We have furthermore suggested Self-Determination Theory (as a conceptualization) and Motivational Interviewing (as a methodology) as appropriate means to achieve a better interaction in learning environments. We have also discussed the conditions under which interaction can be successful and lecturers, teachers, supervisors, leaders, or other peoples are taken seriously as role models. After that, specific learning

arrangements that we use in our teaching of social management and counseling have been outlined.

Last, the question arises as to whether teachers without a corresponding degree or comprehensive training should presume to provide a quasi consulting (or coaching) service. This is a complex issue. Of course, teachers should inform themselves and expand their knowledge on (we have provided literature references throughout the article), and in the best-case scenario they should also attend an appropriate training course. But at colleges and universities, teachers often teach without any pedagogical and didactical training as a matter of course. While not all, many do it well. Many, though not all do so with commitment and a sincere desire to promote the acquisition of competence by the learners entrusted to their care. We are convinced that the side effects of a basic teaching attitude that grants true autonomy, promotes experience and acquisition of competence, and supports interpersonal relationships and affiliations are minimal. Translating one's sincere interest in learners and their learning processes into appropriate questions and comments may seem awkward at first, but as long as it is done in a benign way, it will probably do more good than harm. Trying it out, reflecting on it together with the learners and optimizing it individually is a first important step. We therefore conclude with a quotation of Diethelm Wahl (2020, p. 199), which can be found as a section in his chapter on effective learning arrangements for the initiation of professional action: "Doing can only be learned by doing!"

Its practical implications are to incorporate communication and even counselling skills in the curricula and employee assistance programmes of teachers, lecturers, and leaders, and to highlight their importance in daily teaching as well leadership behaviour. It also suggests that the reflection of one's own attitude has to become a vital part of teaching and leading.

Further research has to be carried out regarding the implementation as well as the formative and summative evaluation of teaching that shifts its focus towards a truly supportive relationship with learners and a counselling approach. An interesting research question, among many others, is whether an attitude that shows authenticity and sincere interest in the communication partner might actually be as important as methodology, didactics, and specific communicative interventions.

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Chapter 17

Community Engagement in Social Work Management Education: A Service-Learning Framework



Maik Arnold 

Abstract This study presents the findings of a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) project that deals with the problem-based learning process of students in an undergraduate service-learning course at a German University of Applied Sciences. Students learned to implement a crowdfunding campaign. The research is based on a qualitative empirical analysis of students' learning process, which considers the special role of service-learning. Based on the reflection on their learning experiences, the students (a) attained a deeper understanding and exploration of a new topic, (b) improved both their entrepreneurial as well as intra- and interpersonal communication and team skills, (c) engaged in community service and better appreciated social responsibility in a challenging field of society while putting theories, concepts, and methods into practice, and (d) gained experiences in youth work at undergraduate level. Eventually, a service-learning framework will be presented that helps to better implement this teaching practice at micro-, meso-, and macro-level at university.

Introduction

This Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) project deals with the problem-based learning process of students in an undergraduate service-learning course at a German University of Applied Sciences. Based on the continuous reflection on their

While the contents of this chapter are related to another research summary of the underlying SoTL project (Arnold, 2022a), the theoretical background, empirical findings, and conclusions drawn have been further extended to a more detailed analysis and discussion of the service-learning approach in the field of social work management education.

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learning experiences in a ‘Social Work Management Education’ environment, students learned to implement a crowdfunding campaign (Arnold, 2020). The SoTL project is based on concepts and approaches to ‘management education and learning’ that consider the special role of problem-based learning in service-learning scenarios (e.g., Brownell & Jameson, 2004; Csapó & Funke, 2017; Guo et al., 2016; Kolenko et al., 1996).

As part of the SoTL project, students were enrolled in the two-semester-long elective study module *Accounting and Financing of Human Service Organisations* in the bachelor’s degree programme in Social Pedagogics and Management at a University of Applied Sciences in the academic year 2018/19. The underlying teaching approach that included in-class and out-of-class learning activities allowed for a theory-practice transfer in the context of ‘civic crowdfunding’ (Charbit & Desmoulins, 2017) and for a promotion of students’ social engagement. After the learners had acquired basic knowledge of finances and accounting for social enterprises in the first semester, they had to apply this knowledge in the service-learning course in the second one, thus gaining new practical skills and experiences. The students cooperated with a group of highly committed young people aged from 12 to 18 years who initiated a café for youths (‘Schülercafé’) in a rural town and with various other stakeholders, such as a citizens’ initiative, social workers, representatives from the city administration, and the city council. Together with the youths, the students developed a guideline for reward-based crowdfunding and created a website for a future campaign, which they presented publicly. In the project, the students performed different roles and were on different teams, e.g., public relations, crowdfunding platform management, project management, and visual data gathering. All meetings were organised as workshops, which provided a learning space for discussions and the application of the knowledge about crowdfunding acquired before the project and gave the students the opportunity to interact and engage in group work.

This paper not only contributes to the literature on SoTL research regarding the theory-practice transfer in service-learning teaching formats but also provides a more comprehensive view on how problem-solving and crowdfunding skills can be developed in higher education. The paper presents the results of the qualitative-empirical research process that accompanied the crowdfunding service-learning course. The paper also prompts a discussion and reflection of a sustainable framework for good teaching practices in social work management education at the level of the learner, the study programme, and the university (micro-, meso- and macro-level).

Literature Review

In recent years, SoTL has become critical as an avenue of inquiry in student learning and teaching practices (with regard to the field of social work education see Grise-Owens et al., 2016). Relevant terminological classifications and overviews,

concepts, and methodological approaches used in this context have already been presented elsewhere (cf. Cerbin, 2018; Huber, 2014). In addition, SoTL as ‘self-study teacher research’ (Huber, 2014, p. 31) should provide information on the development and impact of learning, didactic methods, and teaching concepts in higher education beside classical teaching and study evaluation (e.g., Chick, 2018). SoTL is widely regarded as a systematic and methodologically supported reflection of one’s own teaching and it aims for making the insights and findings gained from this kind of research known to a wider public in order to stimulate further exchange among teaching staff (Huber, 2014, p. 21).

This research is inscribed between two disciplines, each of them providing vast knowledge for the didactics and teaching in general: social work education and management education and learning. However, a subject-sensitive higher education didactics for the specific professional field of social work management is still a research desideratum. In addition, there is still no discussion of subject-specific didactics and disciplinary didactics, as is common in other disciplines (Watson, 2008, p. 325). All this points towards the necessity of developing a better and more integrative approach to the didactics of social work management (Fawcett & Featherstone, 1994, p. 50) that would help to link knowledge and research findings from both domains: *Social Work Didactics*, which is interested in solving social issues, and *Management Education and Teaching Didactics*, which deals with the application of practical knowledge. This goal should be achieved by promoting closer collaboration between the educators and the users (of the services; Farrow & Fillingham, 2012).

In the recent past, institutions and educators have endeavoured to develop a deeper understanding of what the disciplinary approach of social work and pedagogy entails (Hughes & Wearing, 2017). Also, efforts towards gaining a better understanding of the principles and practice of social work and pedagogy must gain further momentum. However, some scholars observe that despite this increase in the desire to achieve better understanding and hence better teaching, there are still discrepancies between the theoretical propositions and the real and observed practicalities (Matthew & Lough, 2017, p. 20). This discrepancy is due to the existence of a gap between the theoretical concepts learned in class *versus* the reality of practice on the ground (Farrow & Fillingham, 2012, p. 837). Certain didactic methods in the disciplines of social work and pedagogy, like lectures, are questioned with regard to their suitability for teaching assessment (Short et al., 2019, p. 214). Researchers also observe that the didactic reflection “is still comparatively underrepresented within the social pedagogical discussion” in social work and pedagogy (Burgess, 1999, p. 266).

Regarding management education and learning, social work management programmes integrate concepts from the field of management science to provide students with competencies and capability to form independent judgment and to individually participate in the decision-making process (Garvey, 2015). In this context, problem-solving and decision-making skills are crucial to social managers, as they enable them to make quick and reliable decisions, even under uncertain

conditions, thus supporting their strategic thinking and decision-making skills. One essential part of management education is the collaboration between higher education institutions, employers, and other stakeholders from different societal sectors, which helps to equip learners with the skills that allow them to flexibly adapt to the changing processes within human service organisations. Hoidn and Olbert-Bock (2016) posit that learners should transform into lifelong learners to adjust to the ever-changing organisational needs and at the same time further develop their facilities.

Management education also incorporates practically oriented learning that comes in (at least) two forms: as practical classroom learning (which expands knowledge of the field of management) and as work-related learning (which involves learning on the job). Practical learning stimulates students to apply creative thinking as they develop through their study (Agasisti, 2017). Thus, the combination of theory, practice, and reflection has to be brought forward to give students actionable learning experiences (Herbert, 1982). In partnership with the private and public sector and society at large, universities should allow their students to learn from seasoned managers who possess real-world experience and practical information applicable in their professional field.

Having an integrative educational approach that incorporates ideas from all sides or all “stakeholders” and relies on evidence-based practices would be a real game-changer in the didactics of social work management (Lawler, 1994, p. 69). Therefore, to better teach social work management in higher education institutions, such a collaborative, integrative, and evidence-based approach would be necessary. It would greatly change the way this academic discipline is taught and studied by ensuring that the imparted knowledge relates to the needs the study field seeks to address and by incorporating the views of the intended recipients of the solutions. In the following, we present an overview of three interwoven aspects of the social work management didactics used in this study: (i) problem-based learning, (ii) service-learning and (iii) crowdfunding.

(i) *Problem-solving ability* is one of the key competences for the twenty-first century. The term stands for the sum total of the domain-specific competencies including reflexive skills, social and self-competence, team and communication skills, and the ability to solve analytical and complex problems (Csapó & Funke, 2017). Also, the acquisition of contemporary professional knowledge and skills as an outcome of service-learning was analysed under further consideration of learners’ behaviour in the classroom. Research findings suggest that teachers can increase engagement in the classroom by providing exercises that help students to ‘think about their experiences, develop a deeper understanding of the surrounding world, and connect what they have learned in the classroom with real life’ (Guo et al., 2016, p. 16; see also Peterson, 2004). Additionally, the development and promotion of problem-solving abilities and problem-based learning is an integral part of service-learning because beside their cognitive and affective competence development, students should also be able to develop multiperspective solutions to real problems in professional practices and to make decisions in complex and ethically

challenging (dilemmatic) situations (e.g., Connor-Greene, 2002). This includes implementing and evaluating previously developed project plans, leading a team and resolving conflicts, convincing others and communicating on a variety of levels (Brownell & Jameson, 2004). Evaluation of the achievement of problem-solving learning objectives requires specific types of examinations (Csapó & Funke, 2017): e.g., learning portfolios, (single and/or group) presentations, essays, diaries, and randomised quizzes differentiated in accordance with different learning levels. Learning journals and learning portfolios are especially well suited to stimulate reflection, yet their evaluation can only be as good as the evaluation criteria concerning the learning process and achievement of defined learning outcomes (Rosegrant-Alvarez & Moxley, 2004).

(ii) *Service-learning* is a teaching method that promotes the social commitment of learners in connection with the acquisition of new professional knowledge and methodological and self-competences in and outside the classroom. Service-learning has so far been addressed in research concerned with the promotion of entrepreneurial learning (Howorth et al., 2012), pre-service teacher education (Chambers & Lavery, 2012), analysis of and reflection on ethical questions (Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2008), development of problem-based learning in projects of pupils, trainees, and students (Brownell & Jameson, 2004), integration of learning technologies in service-learning (Jia et al., 2018), civic education (Bringle & Clayton, 2012), and development of best practices (Kenworthy & Fornaciari, 2010) as well as in studies on the impact of service-learning on social, individual, and cognitive learning outcomes (Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; Yorio & Ye, 2012).

Service-learning has been found to have a profound impact on the personal, social, and cognitive aspects of learning and therefore to expand the pedagogic reach into the community (Bernadowski et al., 2013). To understand both its impact and the concomitant cultivation of an education culture, Yorio and Ye (2012) carried out an extensive meta-analysis. The study expounded on the value of the personal insight that service-learning cultivates and on the improvement of students' cognitive capacity to objectively put themselves into a wider context (Yorio & Ye, 2012). The authors found that 'service-learning provides students with a type of *reality* and *reciprocity* experience, allowing them to develop a deeper understanding of social issues. The elements of *reflection* and *reality* align with and enhance the outcome of personal insight' (Yorio & Ye, 2012, p. 11). Service-learning was also found to improve students' grasp on the complexity of social issues by exposing them to a variety of community contexts with the power to make the learners expand empathy, develop cultural competence, and help prevent a reproduction of the intertwined power dynamics that undermine the evolution of equality and diversity (Bringle & Clayton, 2012).

Juxtaposing service-learning perspectives with incidental learning in project-based seminars, Barth et al. (2014) studied the potential of this method for exposing and improving consumption patterns in order to lead changes within higher education institutions. They also integrate a concept of 'transdisciplinary collaboration' (Lang et al., 2012) into service-learning. In this approach, students and practitioners

are equal partners in planning, decision-making and acting. In general, the engagement of ‘students as partners’ in SoTL has already been discussed in the literature (e.g., Bonney, 2018). ‘Solutions’ are not developed in university and brought to the community as a service. Rather, the whole process of problem definition, project planning and management is the subject of deliberation between the parties involved in a transdisciplinary learning process (Barth et al., 2014, p. 75). Thus, the merging of service-learning with policies that support social justice is community engagement taken to the next level, and it has the power to show students what an ethical organisation looks like.

First and foremost, service-learning empowers both educators and students through its ability to address the ways how federal policies undermine educators’ autonomy (Kelly, 2013; Stenhouse & Jarrett, 2012). The policies rooted in standardisation have proven to freeze the teachers’ creative capacity to increase students’ employability and project management skills and to prepare them for the job market. Service-learning is one of those approaches that promote activism, engagement, and participation, hold students accountable for how their choices impact society at large, and prompt teachers to demonstrate, and reflect on, ‘reality’ rather than only talk about it (Kelly, 2013; Stenhouse & Jarrett, 2012). Thus, the implementation of a service-learning project in the final years of a bachelor’s degree programme is, for one thing, helpful in enabling ‘project-based learning’ (e.g., Kokotsaki et al., 2016), and for another, it offers a valuable strategy to prepare students for a future professional life as social pedagogues because it involves individual, group, and project work.

(iii) Crowdfunding as an alternative source for raising financial resources from a large number of capital providers or donors (‘the crowd’) for various types of projects, companies and initiatives has been broadly discussed in scientific research since 2010. At that time, estimates of the crowdfunding market already ranged from \$3 billion to \$5 billion per year (Deloitte, 2013), which has constantly increased since then. Originally understood as a way of funding financial gaps in the early phases of a company’s life cycle, crowdfunding quickly became a tool to finance artists from different sectors (e.g., Agrawal et al., 2011). The typology of the donation- and reward-crowdfunding and lending- and equity-based crowd investing is prevalent in scientific literature since its early stages (Beck, 2012, p. 15; The World Bank, 2013). So far, empirical studies have been making use of qualitative and quantitative methods, first analysing market data linked with interviewees and later, after platforms established themselves, as a data provider for surveys as well (e.g., Mollick, 2014). Those studies were interested in the quality and strength of personal social networks and campaigns and their impact on the success of a project. Current research still rarely considers civic crowdfunding, such as government, public and non-profit institutions and communities themselves: ‘In academic literature to date, there has been no consideration of civic or community-oriented projects (*civic crowdfunding*) as a distinct subgenre of activity, let alone one that faces unique

challenges and questions' (Davies, 2014, p. 19; Hui et al., 2014). So far, attention has been paid to the online engagement of offline communities (Stiver et al., 2015) and their potential to contribute to the production and consumption of local public goods (Charbit & Desmoulin, 2017).

Method

Research Design

Since service-learning is an under-researched area in both German social work and social management literature, we adopted an exploratory qualitative approach well suited to the interpretative paradigm. The research follows the methodological principles grounded in the hermeneutics of symbolic action theory and cultural psychology (Straub, 2006). This approach is, in some important respects, supported by the so-called documentary interpretation (Bohnsack et al., 2010) and comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Sample

The project involved social work students at the end of their studies who had completed an undergraduate service-learning course at a German University of Applied Sciences in the academic year 2018–2019. The final sample consisted of 11 students in their final year of the bachelor's degree programme. Seven of them were female and four male; their age ranged from approximately 21 to 35 years. Participants were selected with the help of a purposive sampling strategy, while the selection depended on demographic factors (e.g., to ensure maximum variation and heterogeneity) and the objectives of the study (Palys, 2008). This was a pragmatic decision, as this sampling strategy does not involve additional costs (the study being self-funded); at the same time, it provided a good theoretical representation of student participation in service-learning courses on social work study programmes. All participants signed an informed consent document, which stated that their participation would be voluntary, all data gathered would be anonymised and that an exit from the study was possible at any time and would not entail any disadvantages. In the project, the students performed different roles and worked on different teams, e.g., in public relations, crowdfunding platform management, project management, or visual data gathering. Their task was to organise a crowdfunding campaign for a group of youths in a rural district near the university.

Data Collection

Focus Group Discussion A focus group discussion was conducted with the students in the course (Krueger & Casey, 2015). The interviewer strictly adhered to the methodological principles of openness, impartiality, and communication; therefore, the thematic structure and the linguistic dimension of the discussion reflect the speakers' own sense of significance as well as their expressive abilities.

The Critical Incident Method Additionally, data were collected using the critical incident technique (CIT). The CIT was originally developed in psychology (Flanagan, 1954) and widely applied in health and social care in a variety of ways to facilitate the integration of theory and practice: "In the area of social work, the CIT has been mostly used as a tool for teaching and learning rather than as a research method, though it is recognised as a qualitative method of data collection. [...] Due to its retrospective nature, the CIT technique is a valuable reflective tool for enabling social work students to recall learning experiences using their own words, thus helping them to learn from practice" (Papouli, 2016, p. 59).

Critical incidents are short, mostly spontaneous and unplanned narratives about past or current events and experiences or observations, which can have positive or negative attributions and which "mark significant turning points or change in the life of a person or an institution or in some social phenomenon" (Green Lister & Crisp, 2007, p. 24). In this study, critical incidents were collected from students with a semi-structured questionnaire developed by Papouli (2016) and translated into German. It consisted of only two sections: (A) General Instruction and Key Questions Related to the Critical Incident; (B) Additional Questions about the Critical Incident.

Data Analysis

All data collected were transcribed verbatim and analysed for several different purposes (Deppermann & Lucius-Hoene, 2004) including the explanation and analysis of the meanings that participants ascribed to their actions, experiences, cognitions, self-thematisations, and evaluations during the project. Particular attention was paid to a variety of types of human activities (and possible internal sub-differentiations of those types). Of special interest were the questions how students understand and explore crowdfunding of social enterprises, how they made use of intra- and inter-personal communication and team skills, how they engaged in the community and took social responsibility in challenging fields of society while applying theories, concepts and methods to practice, and how this service-learning course might prepare them for a prospective job in child and youth work. All quotes from the focus group discussion and CITs are translated by the author.

Results¹

Focus Group Discussion

The focus group discussion was analysed and summarised to present a variety and diversity of dimensions and codes of students' experiences, knowledge, and skills relating to the participation in and management of the project in general. Relevant codes were identified during the sequential analysis of the transcripts, documents, and field notes, which were synthesised from participants' first-hand experiences (so-called *in-vivo* coding) as well as via theoretical coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The codes were then grouped to main categories that emerged from the analysis of the different meanings of the students' actions, experiences, cognitions, self-thematisations, and evaluations during projects, and sub-categories were developed to highlight their internal differentiations. Because of space restrictions, the discussion with the students is occasionally quoted directly. Further, interpretations and comparative analyses are not extensive, and representations are sometimes restricted to mere hints. The results of this comparative interpretation can be grouped under the following six thematic headings (see Table 17.1): (a) Participation in previous projects, (b) Prior knowledge and experiences, (c) Individual learning experiences in previous projects, (d) Assumptions about project-based learning, (e) Support in the learning process, and (f) Learning objectives for the future.

In summary, the research findings point toward both *individual and collective experiences acquired through participation in previous projects*, such as voluntary work, internships, and student assistant jobs. Those activities helped students not only to acquire knowledge and experiences but also to develop a better understanding of the transfer between the theory they learned in their studies and the professional project practice. One of the interviewees summarised it as a *transfer from practice to theory*:

Well, my project was at the beginning of my studies and I was relatively inexperienced and didn't know so much. And that was the exciting thing about it. Because I have always used this as a resource for the different modules in my studies and I learned from it afterwards, more or less reflectively, so to speak. And then I was able to draw a lot of knowledge from these work experiences. And that was, yes, the transfer from practice, the other way around from practice to theory, this was reverse learning (transcript, p.3, lines 15–17).

This concept of reflection and abstraction can be best understood as a *reverse learning cycle* (Kolb, 1984; see discussion).

When asked what kind of *assumptions they have about problem-based learning in projects* in general, the respondents pointed out that it helped to acquire strategic management and action competences. During projects, students often have the

¹This presentation of results includes an analysis of six categories originally described in Arnold (2022a), which were summarised in the results section, and four new categories developed from the analysis of the critical incidents collected in the same SoTL project.

Table 17.1 Summary of thematic headings from focus group discussion

Thematic Headings	Summary and Description
(a) Participation in previous projects	Voluntary Ecological year Internship project as student assistant
(b) Prior knowledge and experiences	Prior knowledge is linked to the type, scope and number of stakeholders of the project
	Theoretical knowledge about the project implementation
	Objectives, assignment, and framework must be clear before the project start
	Prior project experiences are helpful
(c) Individual learning experiences in previous projects	Motivational effects of projects: Hands-on experience, experimenting with new things, exchange with others, travelling; motivation decreases with project length
	Project at the start of a study programme enables reflection, theoretical learning (transfer from practice to theory)
	Facilitation of learning from practice: Processes, making use of finances, exchange with participants, networking, (social) management
	Suitable projects are resources when studying for theory-practice-transfer; practical experiences are better than fictional cases in class
	Project experiences need to be theoretically founded and reflective
(d) Assumptions about project-based learning	Learning from failure (trial and error-learning) is part of a project, it motivates and broadens one's horizons
	Self-reflection, experiences of self-efficacy and self-affirmation are part of projects
	Collaborative learning facilitates learning about other people's behaviour and the development of new projects
	Learning takes place on different levels: e.g., individual, group, organisation (micro-, meso-, macro-levels)
	Aims and conditions of successful projects: Projects need to be predictable and conclusive, and participants need to be accessible
	Projects help to acquire transferable skills: e.g., presentation of results to others, improvisation talent, responsibility, trust, latitude for (entrepreneurial) decisions, openness, attitude for continuous learning, flexibility
(e) Support in learning process	Support during projects: Learning on-the-job; step-by-step inputs, mentoring depending on learning needs and level of experiences
(f) Learning objectives for the future	Projects are part of lifelong learning: no two projects are alike
	In principle, practical knowledge contains practical experiences, processes and structures, phases, components of project, funding, topics
	Evaluation of project impact is necessary for continuous learning

unique opportunity to make mistakes under real live conditions and to learn from them:

So, I always think that mistakes should be used for learning. So, you can't just make mistakes and go away, you should really take them with you and learn from them. And there can be really good things, even if a team was not able to work well together, you can use exactly those points that did not work and maybe improve them the next time and develop something completely new from it. So now, I don't see this as a setback, but rather as an advancement. Mistakes have to happen because everything can't always be so perfect and great (transcript, p. 6, lines 2-8).

Reflexion and learning from failure are expected to be part of all projects, and this is also a practice deeply embedded in a co-creation process.

While working in different professional environments and teams, the students require certain *support in their learning process*. Contrary to traditional teaching contexts, during internships and projects, students wish to be supported via mentoring, coaching, and other flexible ways of guidance, sharing knowledge and experiences with experts and professionals in the field:

At the beginning, I totally lacked the instructions that someone would give and support me, especially during my voluntary ecological year. Because you have several instructors, one from the local institution itself and one from the care provider. And the task of carrying out this project came from the care provider, but there was no instruction at all from their side as to what should be done. And as I said, I started relatively late (in the project), but, eventually, the manager of my facility started to sit down with me a bit and helped me to implement this or that. And if I hadn't had (the manager), I didn't know, I wouldn't have finished the project to this day. I think instructions are very important and that someone also has a plan of what they can tell you (transcript, p. 7, lines 7-15).

People who are not 'tuned in' to projects may have different desires and expectations – of excitement, adventure, a change of scenery, fun and enjoyment – and may also try to have these wishes met. Along with deeper practical learning, motivation or aspirations, other individual learning objectives for future professional development, too, attract young people to project-based work. One interviewee highlights that project work requires an attitude of openness and an integrated perspective of lifelong learning:

So, I just spontaneously think of (...) lifelong learning. No project will be the same. And you can't transfer it one to one. Things will always happen that you have never experienced before. And just this openness that you learn openness or an attitude that you are flexible. That is the basic essence for me. So, I cannot say now what I still want to learn, but (...) I just go into every project openly and pull something out of everything that I can still learn. It never stops (transcript, p. 9, lines 10-16).

Critical Incidents

The students reported about 20 critical incidents in their e-portfolios, which were a part of their course assessment and included a reflection on experiences made during the conduct of the actual service-learning project. Those incidents describe the

students' perception of the problem, negotiations with the practice partners, organisation of the learning process, ways of making decisions, communication and conflict resolution skills, and team development within the framework of the service-learning project. The analysis of the critical incidents yielded the following four categories: (a) *Frustration arises from stakeholders' change of plans*, (b) *Unequal participation in the team process*, (c) *Effective collaboration between different teams and a lack of orientation*, and (d) *Acquisition of practical knowledge about social work management*.

Stakeholders' Change of Plans Leads to Frustration in the Team During the service-learning course, the students realised that practice projects are very extensive and far more complex than other instructional formats and that they depend on various factors. Sometimes, an original plan might not be implemented or has to be changed. In students' reflection there can be found a theme that recurs throughout the service-learning course: it is necessary to be flexible and to cooperate closely with the practice partners and all the shareholders to best serve the clients' needs. Having several stakeholders on board helped not to set one's own expectations too high at the beginning of the project and to react reasonably to possible setbacks. As prior experiences had already shown, the practice is not always predictable. This insight has been thoughtfully expressed in this critical incident:

While the current status of the youth café [purpose of the project; M.A.] was being clarified, it became very clear that we cannot achieve our original goal. The reason for this was that the status of the youth café had not yet progressed far enough to actually start a crowdfunding project for partial funding. It was not anticipated that this project would make sense before autumn, or more likely not before next year. After we had received this feedback from the practice partners, the goal had to be changed completely. In consultation with the other participants, the new goal was formulated (CIT 1).

Unequal Participation in Team Process and Mediation of Conflicts The knowledge of the composition of groups is a prerequisite for understanding how team processes work and how reactions of some group members could be evaluated. The knowledge of communication strategies taught in previous social pedagogy courses helped one respondent to understand that it is important to address problems in such a project openly, and that was the main reason a feedback round was carried out to mediate a conflict between different teams. During the service-learning course, students found it necessary to work together on the project, to involve everyone equally, and to solve problems together:

In the course of the project, groups were formed that had different tasks. However, one group, in particular, became less important during the project, which resulted in fewer tasks for this group. As an alternative, the group members made little contribution to the other groups. In addition, it sometimes happened that tasks were not completed on time because those responsible had simply forgotten them. Other reasons for the lack of participation were other appointments (...), coming too late and lacking motivation. The people who were often present became increasingly frustrated during the project. They felt they had been treated unfairly and exploited. This also had a negative impact on motivation (CIT 2).

Effective Collaboration Between Different Groups and Team Members and Lack of Orientation Students also reflected on the struggles during the cooperation with fellow students, and a few experienced a lack of orientation or even felt excluded because their doubts had not been taken seriously at the outset. This also shows that the teachers have to switch into the role of mentors who support the project progress and teaming process:

The days and weeks passed, and my motivation was gone. I didn't feel to be involved in the project and unconsciously excluded myself. There were no tasks and in the public relations group really nobody knew what we should do. So, we sat partly in the seminar without having really done something and that frustrated me. I couldn't help myself and turned to the mentor to describe my situation. This has relieved my concerns and motivated me to ask directly in the group which tasks I can take on. But that was not necessary, because in the next session the topic was raised by others too. It is a feeling of 'swimming' and that we have not made any progress and of having only half of the time. The mentor also brought us a reflection sheet that helped us to see that something needed to be done. Otherwise, the group would have fallen apart completely (CIT 17).

Acquisition of Practical Knowledge About Social Work Management Beside the acquisition of theoretical knowledge about the different ways of financing projects in human service organisations, during the project, students also developed their entrepreneurial skills and leadership competencies as social workers. These included, for example, self-management, ability to take the perspectives of others, empathy, and strategies of empowering clients with adequate measures and attitude, as the following text sequence shows:

Our task was to create guidelines for the youth group which we worked with in the crowd-funding project. For this, we had to meet with them. It was considered whether it should be done digitally, but a personal meeting was more convenient. The results of this meeting were: The young people wanted a self-organised café with the aim that this becomes a link between the schools. They were scared that their right of participation could have been limited by the social worker [accompanying the project; M.A.]. The young people already had many contacts and partners and did not need any further support from our side. In addition, an appointment was made for the presentation and handing over the guidelines. (...) Such meetings will also occur frequently in my future job (as a social worker). Then, I will try to get more involved in discussions and not just be the silent observer, in which I will become more confident. The rules of conducting a discussion helped me. My thinking and acting as a social worker has not been changed by this situation, but I could see now how a project/meeting works in practice. The practical reference was, therefore, very easy to see. For one thing, I learned that the more people were involved, the more it would become difficult to find time for a meeting. Either you search for an appointment forever or you run the risk that not everyone can be present. I also learned that young people should not be underestimated and that they can be trusted to do a lot (CIT 12).

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to not only present the results of a comprehensive literature review, but also emphasise the importance of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. In the following, the findings of the qualitative-empirical research process accompanying the service-learning course will be reflected. The results clearly show that during the project, the students gained valuable insights and developed various practical skills and competencies. Moreover, the students described both positive and negative project occurrences that resulted in a positive learning experience. It could also be seen that service-learning projects provide a fruitful ground not only for a deeper understanding and application of theoretical knowledge (in this case, about crowdfunding), but also, and especially, for experiences under real-life conditions in the ‘world’ of social work management practice. The results from the exploratory qualitative analysis help to highlight a variety of insights into the way we can better understand the nature of problem- and project-based learning during service-learning courses and the challenges, potentials, and risks linked to it. The results confirm the depth and complexity of such a teaching and learning format, as has been documented in literature (e.g., Barth et al., 2014; Madsen & Turnbull, 2006; Yorio & Ye, 2012). Regarding the results of the analysis, the following perspectives are of paramount importance:

- As the students have described based on their experiences, *reverse learning* can be understood as a valuable and pragmatic concept of reflection and abstraction (in addition to, e.g., Kolb, 1984) in higher education: After (i) a concrete new situation is encountered (e.g., by making new experiences or by reinterpreting the existing ones), a learner (ii) reflects on the observations of this new experience (e.g., by reviewing it; in this regard, possible inconsistencies between experiences and their understanding are of utmost importance), (iii) draws an abstract conceptualisation (e.g., the conclusive lessons learnt from that experience; this may lead to new ideas or help to refine or modify existing abstract concepts), and (iv) will later try an active experimentation (e.g., planning or applying the lessons learnt in the real world, seeing what results from it, making new experiences, etc.). Theory and practice could be understood as two moments of one action process linked to one another as partly related, permeable, mostly autonomous fields of actions that both strive for different logics of rationality (Bosch et al., 2001). Service-learning courses support the development of students’ professional competence in a specific way: students must actively ‘translate’ their knowledge from theory to practice and back. It can be assumed that some parts of the project work cannot be justified and developed without reference to research in social sciences and business studies (e.g., on how crowdfunding works ‘in theory’); conversely, research can also learn from experiences gained in professional practice. In higher education, experiential learning can trigger such translations between theory and practice in both directions (cf. Arnold, 2020).
- *Reflective learning from failure* was also part of the project that helped to develop a practice of co-creation between the students, the social workers, the youths,

and the other project stakeholders (Parker et al., 2020). In their study about students' learning outside the classroom, which was based on reflective logs and interview data, Parker et al. (2020, p. 28) have shown that in experimental dissertation projects, reflective learning is triggered by and emerges from 'performative failures': "A failure of the performative, however, does not equate to a failure of reflexivity or learning. In fact, we find that failed performatives are often the trigger for more reflexivity" (Parker et al., 2020, p. 31). As the analysis of the critical incidents evidences, students' experiences of frustration, unequal participation, and a lack of orientation are closely linked to the fact that learning and reflection of the performative actions are recursive processes that trigger the acquisition and development of practical competencies and skills, which seems to be at the heart of problem-based learning (Csapó & Funke, 2017).

- *Changing role of the lecturer and support in students' learning process.* As we know from previous research, lecturers are relevant to the successful implementation of service-learning. In service-learning courses, they often have to assume the role of a mentor or coach (Halberstadt et al., 2019, p. 12). Compared to traditional teaching contexts, mentoring, coaching, and other flexible ways of guidance and knowledge-sharing gain in importance during internships and projects as means of supporting students' learning process.

Service-Learning Framework The following model – as previously described in Arnold (2022a) – could be understood as a theoretical synthesis of the results presented in this study and an adaptation and further development of the lecture-oriented service-learning framework by Halberstadt et al. (2019), which helps to widen the perspective beyond the interaction between students and lecturers and integrates different factors and dimensions of the complex institutional and learning environment. Contrary to the original concept, the framework presented here focuses not only on the triangle of the lecturer, students, and practice partners, which played an important role in this study, but also expands the number of the context factors that influence the service-learning environment which Halberstadt et al. (2019) did not take into account in their multilevel framework (Fig. 17.1). It will also lead the discussion and reflection to more sustainable teaching practices by integrating discipline-specific didactics in higher education and the achievement of teaching and learning goals for service-learning at the level of the learner, study programme, and university (micro, meso and macro-level).

At the *macro-level*, structural and institutional resources (e.g., finances, training, coaching activities), lecturers' qualifications in higher education didactics, and intense collaborations with practice partners would be the fundamental requirements and conditions to be provided by the university itself. Amongst others, a so-called 'multi-stakeholder competence' is expected from all involved stakeholders (e.g., see in the context of coaching in Schedler & Rüegg-Stürm, 2014). In this sense, actors in higher education institutions have to integrate and process different interests, expectations, and rationalities of stakeholders involved in problem-solving activities (cf. concepts of organisational 'hybridity' and 'multirationality' in Arnold, 2017).

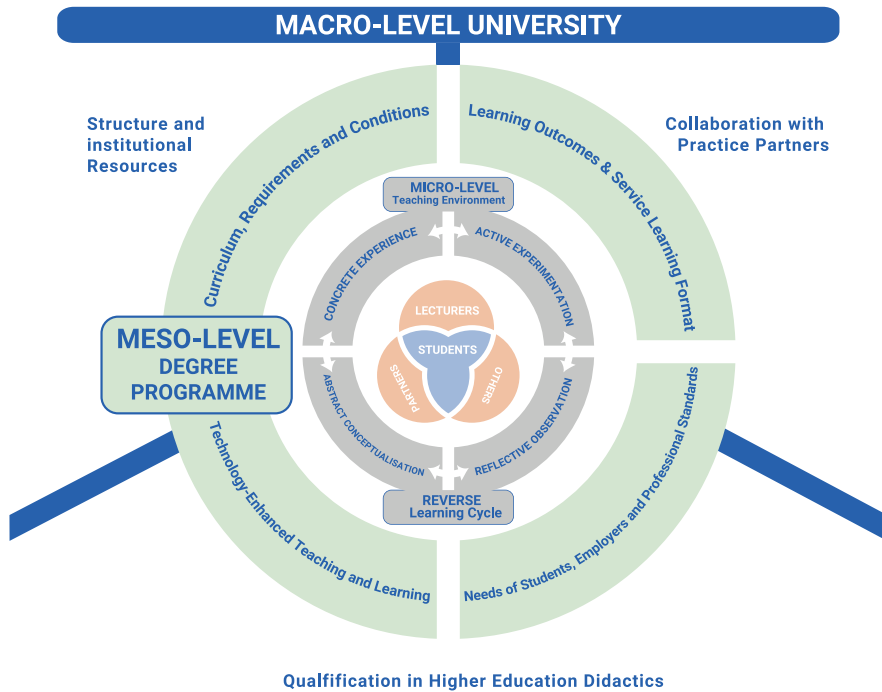


Fig. 17.1 Service-learning Framework (Arnold, 2022b, CC BY 4.0)

The *meso-level* identifies different parameters relevant for the design of the learning environment, e.g., the basic conditions and requirements of the curriculum, the learning outcomes and teaching format of the service-learning course, and the needs and requirements of the students, employers, and professional standards. We also need to consider the technology-enhanced teaching formats (hybrid teaching, blended learning such as with flipped classroom approach, learning management system, and use of social networks for communication), which have a tremendous impact on the teaching and learning processes in service-learning courses.

Finally, based on Kolbs' (1984) experiential learning cycle, which involves all the stages of the concrete experience, its reflexive observation, the process of abstract conceptualisation, and the active experimentation, the framework focuses on the real-life teaching situation (*micro-level*). The arrows between the different stages are deliberately pointed in two directions because the teaching environment should also allow reverse learning; learning is always situated between the different stages. All interactions between the different stakeholders at the micro-level involve not only students, lecturers, and practice partners (youths, teachers, social workers) but also others (in this case, e.g., crowdfunding platform providers, citizens' initiatives, city administration, politicians, landlords). To continuously reflect on the theory and practice of learning and teaching, the SoTL research – as shown in the inner circle – can be organised, for example, in the sense of an iterative participatory

action research process (cf. Galletta & Torre, 2019). After a (1) theoretical conceptualisation follows (2) the empirical research on the teaching-learning approach before (3) the developed teaching formats were implemented (e.g., in the learning and knowledge management system) that subsequently (4) must be further optimised, developed, and adapted (e.g., regarding the digital literacy skills of teachers). In this way, principles of the learning organisation can be integrated at the micro-level and the organisational change of the educational organisation can become reality (e.g., Kools et al., 2020). This process should be repeated continuously, so that the practice of teaching and learning alternates with its research.

To summarise, the framework presented here adheres to the fact that a service-learning environment requires a specific setting on three levels: the institutional, the programme-specific, and that of concrete teaching and actors' interactions.

Limitations and Future Research Possibilities This research also has some limitations and shortcomings. The literature review presented at the beginning is largely restricted to the three main research areas of problem-based learning, service-learning, and crowdfunding. In future, scholars should also grow more aware of other perspectives in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning research (for an overview see Chick, 2018) that lay the ground for the development of discipline-specific higher education didactics, e.g., a didactical approach to social work management, which does not yet exist. In addition, the underlying qualitative empirical study presents primarily subjective and idiosyncratic findings based on few participants and restricted to the data collected from students on only one social pedagogics degree study programme, which cannot be easily generalised. Interpretations of qualitative data are at risk of random assessments, variable interpretations, and student complaints. Future research could focus on the collection of diverse and larger data sets, employ different research designs such as quantitative approaches, longitudinal studies as well as mixed methods approaches, and should also include other stakeholders. Finally, the findings in this study need to be understood within the concrete framework of universities and higher education institutions in general. Applicability of the developed model of a service-learning environment also needs to be tested in various other educational and socio-cultural settings where service-learning takes place.

Conclusion

This study focused on a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project in the (still little explored) academic field of social work management education that dealt with the problem-based learning process of students in an undergraduate service-learning course at a German University of Applied Sciences. Based on the reflection on their learning experiences, the students (a) attained a deeper understanding of and explored a topic in their field of training, (b) improved both their entrepreneurial as well as intra- and interpersonal communication and team skills, (c) engaged in

community service and better appreciated social responsibility in a challenging field of society while putting theories, concepts and methods to practice, and (d) gained experiences in youth work at the Bachelor's level. A focus group discussion and the CIT method were the most effective tools to explore and describe students' problem-solving skills and team development. Subsequently, a service-learning framework was developed that helps to better understand the triangle relationship between students, lecturers, and practice partners, the situation-specific nature of the project-based learning, the institutional requirements within this learning format, and its environment and actors.

In future, a discussion and reflection of sustainable frameworks for good teaching practices, management didactics in higher education, and the achievement of teaching and learning goals of service-learning at the level of the learner, study programme, and university (micro-, meso- and macro-levels) need to be continued in other domains of SoTL, too. It is necessary to consider how service-learning could be offered in higher education beside other practical assignments and how transferable skills could be better trained by using experiential and experimental learning formats. Future research should focus on collection of critical incidents for teachers and students (e.g., as an OER sharing platform) and further development and integration of technology-enhanced, blended, and virtual learning scenarios to positively impact student success in a degree programme.

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Chapter 18

Teaching and Learning Challenges in Management Education in Brazilian and German Higher Education Institutions: Implications for Social Work Management Education



Renata Vidart Klafke, Claudia Tania Picinin, and Maik Arnold 

Abstract Considering the professional education of well-qualified and practice-oriented social work managers committed to both defending and guaranteeing the social rights of diverse populations and enhancing the socioeconomic condition of communities, social services, and agencies, it is necessary to explore new methods of thinking about how management education can be pursued. This chapter compares the challenges of teaching management in the social sciences in their respective universities in Brazil and Germany. What is presented here derives from the authors' reflective practices to support management learning and teaching in the respective field of education. After a description of teaching and learning perspectives in the social sciences, two sections deal with specific challenges in teaching management in Brazil and Germany. The paper concludes by discussing the transfer of those experiences to social work management and its implications for educating future social work managers.

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Introduction

In essence, social work is concerned with the social dynamics and challenges individual groups of people and society at large must face: “The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (NASW, 2021). These challenges make different prevention and treatment strategies necessary to improve the living standards of all inhabitants but in particular those of the vulnerable population to eradicate oppression, poverty, inequality, social exclusion and all forms of discrimination and social injustice based on consistent respect for human rights. In this view, the social work profession promotes social change, problem-solving in human relationships, and liberation of people to enhance both individual well-being in a social context and the well-being in society. Social work professionals have not only a function in society solely restricted to the realm of current everyday challenges but are also involved in planning, prevention, and generating information for the welfare services (Mota, 2013). Over the centuries, it was the hospitals and nursing homes in the Western Medieval World that served as a historic forerunner of today’s human services programs and for multiple purposes, like caring for the sick and poor, providing food, shelter, as well as medical services and social assistance for the good of humanity and society (Truell et al., 2021). It was not before the nineteenth century when hospitals became more restricted institutions, as they are today.

Turtiainen et al. (2022) believe that the emotional requirements of social workers’ tasks are deeply rooted in and influenced by the social environment and changes in the social welfare system (and the outcomes produced in society). Recent research by Zebrack et al. (2022) is a clear example of this professional’s involvement in improving social well-being. Their research helped to „identify activities that delineate and distinguish Competencies, Opportunities, Roles and Expertise (CORE) oncology social work” (Zebrack et al., 2022, p.2). Although social workers in oncology are the primary providers of psychosocial care, the authors believe there is a vital set of behaviour and duties centred on social work values and principles applicable to other situations, such as case management and care coordination, professional advocacy and political action, organizational support and service, and professional education (Zebrack et al., 2022, p.9). Similarly, Kurevakwesu (2021) conducted a study that analysed the main factors that affect managers’ mental health such as a lack of resources. Based on these findings, the research elucidates the roles that social workers in psychiatric care can play to improve mental health services, mainly during the pandemic COVID-19 period.

Considering that social service is the field of social work committed to defending and guaranteeing the social rights of the population, it is worth highlighting, reflecting, and debating the teaching and learning techniques used in social workers’ training. But we also need to elaborate on how to pursue the management education of social workers. Following Austin (2018) that management and community practices

Table 18.1 Comparison between Social Work and Management Education (based on Arnold, 2020)

	Social Work Education	Management Education
Purpose	Providing solutions for social issues and prevention	Application of practical management knowledge and skills
Learning objectives and contents	Social work values, knowledge, and skills, application on nano-, micro-, mezzo-, and macro-level Integrative knowledge forms relevant academic disciplines, e.g., anthropology, education, psychology, sociology, management, and political sciences	Evidence-based practices by incorporating the views of the intended recipients of the solutions Development of students' capabilities to become future generators of sustainable value creation for business and society and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy Research and benchmark practises in coaching, outcome assessment, learning styles, online learning across cultures and environments
Modes of learning	Dialectic and systems analysis as key to theory and methodology Collaborative learning through group and teamwork Communication training and social counselling methods	Combination of practical classroom learning und work-based learning Frameworks, materials, processes, and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership
Transferable skills	Systemic, communicative, and social skills, and digital literacy Critical reflective skills towards increased self-awareness of social justice and civil society Social research methodology	Critical thinking, creative problem-solving, collaboration, communication Flexibility and adapting to ever-changing organisational needs Information, technology, and media literacy

evolved in a parallel process, we must focus on both the didactics of social work and of social work management (see Table 18.1).

Lynch et al. (2021, p.1) sought to address the question of how social work educators in Ireland and Australia can “respond in a time of major ‘disruption’ where there are both opportunities and constraints.” The article explored country-specific challenges and opportunities faced by educators and social (science) students who emphasize the importance of “teaching practices which seek to create a ‘Community of Learners’, generate a process of collaborative critical inquiry, engage students in reflective praxis enriched by contemporary theory and research, and foster a deep, connected and adaptive perspective on global and local issues“, such as on climate change, technological innovations, a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic (Lynch et al., 2021, p.1). In this sense, social educators should manage any eventual conflict of interests and turn the teaching process more attractive and realistic for the present generation of students with a different profile from the one that entered the university by their parents and grandparents.

The research work carried out by Martínez-Martín and Lozano-Martín (2021) analysed the conflicts existing in the university environment (specifically with undergraduate students at the University of Granada, Spain, in the degree programmes Labour Relations, Human Resources, and Social Work. The main results

revealed the existence of conflicts from the following interactions (i) between students themselves, (ii) between students and faculty, and (iii) between students and service and administrative personnel. Not surprisingly, (i) students' professional and educational interests, (ii) issues related to academic assessment and excessive bureaucracy are pertinent at the individual conflict's perceptions.

Other research manifests a latent interest in analysing and discussing cross-cultural differences in teaching and learning in Brazilian and German (higher) education context and in both fields of education: social work and management studies. For example, Strohschneider and Güss (1998) analysed the culture-specific behaviour of Brazilian and German students in problem-solving activities. The results show differences in the emotional reactions to tackle problems: "The German students, experiencing anger and fear, seek to understand the problem, its causes, and exact nature, but they doubt the description that is given and are more likely to act in a way that puts the blame on others. The Brazilian students, on the other hand, experience fear, disappointment, and concern and accept the situation as it is" (Strohschneider & Güss, 1998, p.711). The authors identify two culture-specific cognitive learning problem-solving styles: presence orientation (Brazilian students) and process orientation (German student). Another study by Friedlmeier et al. (2008) focused on caregivers' developmental goals in Brazil and Germany kindergarten teachers and mothers of 5-year-old children and analysed inter- and intracultural commonalities and cultural differences regarding these goals that varied depending on either the perception of prevailing norms in their culture or personal value preferences: "Altogether, intercultural differences were stronger compared to intracultural differences between mothers and teachers. The functional analysis showed that Brazilian and German caregivers, primarily mothers, orient their developmental goals toward the perceived cultural norms rather than toward their personal evaluation of these norms. Teachers show a similar pattern but also take their personal beliefs (here self-construal and evaluative orientation) into account" (Friedlmeier et al., 2008, p.60). Without further ado, the authors conclude that future research would also be necessary about the implications of such cross-cultural differences in teaching and learning in social work and management education.

Thus, through the lenses of the authors' expertise, this chapter compares the challenges of teaching management in the social sciences in their respective universities in Brazil and Germany. What is presented here derives from the authors' reflective practices to support management learning and teaching (cf. Reilly, 2017). The chapter starts with a description of teaching and learning perspectives in the social sciences in general (Sect. 2). The following two sections deal with the challenges in teaching management in Brazil (Sect. 3) and Germany (Sect. 4). Finally, in the concluding remarks, the authors discuss the transfer of those teaching experiences to the field of social work management and its implications for educating future social work managers.

Teaching and Learning Perspectives in Social Sciences

One of the most used pedagogics' foundations applied in social sciences is constructivism, which relates to Immanuel Kants' *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant, 1781/1998) and discussed by developmental psychologist Jean Piaget. According to Piaget (1973), an educators' preparation is the primary issue of all pedagogical reforms. If it is not satisfactorily resolved, it will be useless to organize beautiful programs or build theories about what should be done. Piaget (1973) proposed that educators are responsible for offering suitable learning situations and tools that promote students' thinking. He advocates student-centred learning, active learning, experiential learning, and peer interaction practices. In this sense, he argues in a constructivist perspective that sees learning as a construction process where teaching and learning are brought together.

Other studies have lately emerged, such as the approach of 'Programmed Teaching', which was founded on a novel understanding of the idea of information content; each topic of knowledge may be split up into extremely small parts (Hubackova, 2014). According to this approach, the teaching process is challenging, because educators (especially those committed to social sciences) are no longer expected to simply transfer knowledge; rather, they are expected to guide students in developing values, attitudes, and skills that will allow them to grow as citizens.

Universities do not always teach systems of knowledge, but often overburdens their students with isolated and meaningless facts: some do not incorporate tools and intellectual techniques, and some rarely provide a favourable environment to social interaction conducive to knowledge construction (Lauder et al., 2012). Bearing in mind that universities are no longer just formation centres, however, institutions that meet the basic principles of modernity, whether in relation to labour principles or in the provision of services to society (Tenório & de Andrade, 2009).

Nogueira et al. (2012) investigated what a good professor profile in the social sciences will look like. The authors found out that the most valuable features (students' perceptions) were mastery of content, ability to explain and link between theory and practice.

In Brazil, as in many developing countries and society, students and even professors say that teaching at all levels of education is a challenge (Viana & da Silva, 2017). Some specialists on education state that, even after some educational reforms in the last decades, universities have not evolved following the fast pace of the transformations in the world, to become attractive to students.

According to Park and Choi (2014), traditional courses convey an image of educational philosophy about teaching and learning, which comprises a normal lecture hall with uncomfortable seats and all students facing the whiteboards.

It is well known that the teaching-learning process is complex, and it does not simply involve knowledge transfer (Tenório & de Andrade, 2009). It is also about knowledge articulation in specific contexts. And when we lecture management and

social sciences, knowledge transfer and a good class perspective will probably depend on students' experience, teaching techniques, and the opportunities to participate in academics.

Teaching and learning can be understood as a two-way street. Educator's commitment does not simply guarantee a successful class from a didactic-methodological and knowledge-building viewpoint. Good professors are predisposed to change, to learn new methods, and to accept critics to become a better docent. Students must also understand that a good learning process involves commitment from both sides and evaluation in a co-responsibility process that can reverberate in the constitution of a collaborative class project (Darder, 2014). In this sense, the teaching-learning process is a collective construction that strengthens the inseparability between those who think, who plan and who do the work.

Social sciences should encapsulate the real world and the application of scientific knowledge to solve problems faced in communities and vice versa developments in the society are objects of research (cf. Arnold, 2020; Bosch et al., 2001). If the learning process is not collaborative, students cannot easily receive the inherent content of the learning. Everting is loose and decontextualized, which does not allow for any adaptation and assimilation of the evolution of concepts or understanding of the respective scientific knowledge. Theoretical contents should be worked connected with practice. This way of conceiving knowledge is one of the axes of innovative practices in higher education (Tenório & de Andrade, 2009; Costa, 2015). In certain cases, it overcomes a dichotomous conception that treats knowledge in a fragmented and static way. So, it gives a new and dynamic content articulation developed in concrete reality.

To identify and enhance student's perception of what makes a good educator in the social science, Klafke et al. (2020) aptly stated that a recurrent problem reported by the students, especially by the public universities' undergraduate, is the disconnect between what is taught and the practical reality of the job market. Another point of emphasis is that certain professors' lack of comprehension of the variations in profile between morning and evening students, because the latter frequently work out of need and cannot balance work and family with a lot of homework.

Because social sciences are very dynamic, they possess a "short shelf life" for a certain amount of time, since its contextual and temporal characteristics. There are many factors such as conditions, perspectives, actors, information, etc., that make it impossible to grasp the meaning of an isolated or reintegrated social fact. After these preliminary thoughts about teaching and learning challenges in the domain of social sciences, the next two sections will focus on the challenges in management education in Brazilian and German universities.

Challenges in Management Education in Brazilian Higher Education Institutions

In Brazil, the rise of management education as an academic profession in higher education started in the late 1960s with the establishment of management departments and the subsequent expansion of public institutions. Brazil has spent in the last few years around 5% of its GDP on education, a proportion equivalent to many developed countries and one of the largest in Latin America. However, many challenges remain, especially in relation to the quality of education (Schwartzman, 2014).

In developing countries such as Brazil, the higher education educator must deal with situations, which to some extent become challenges in the teaching and learning that can be characterized as follows:

1. *Professors specialized in one specific field of knowledge (e.g., in a given undergraduate course) have to teach in other fields of study:* For example, a candidate fills a public vacancy to teach in Human Resources but is then relocated to lecture philosophy, as there is a lack of a professor for it in the same institution. This is a challenge since the professor must lecture/teach on a subject in which the professor is not an expert, what might also compromise the teaching and learning process. Relocating a professor requires more planning and preparation, as the new field of knowledge is usually not the professors' specialty. Between 1975 and 1979, the First National Postgraduate Plan newly included the objective to train university professors from time to time, to avoid these situations and to find an appropriate solution (Lievore et al., 2017). Nevertheless, this situation is still on the table.
2. *Lack of governmental incentive to establish partnerships with companies and other institutions:* There is a collective speech favouring partnership between university-industry-society. However, the government and sometimes institutions do little to favour such partnerships. In a broad way, the partnerships are made individually by the professors themselves. But in Western countries such as Sweden, university collaboration has had a positive influence on the innovative activity of large manufacturing firms (Löf & Broström, 2008).
3. *Implementation of active methodologies:* For many years, the teaching methodology used was the traditional one – a big lecture room, a lecturer and hundreds of students with/from different profiles, courses, and backgrounds. At this moment, an attempt is made to break this paradigm and implement teaching methodologies in which students are protagonists of their learning. Here, there is a challenge because docents are not prepared to implement and conduct such a format, sometimes they are not even familiar with technology. Other times, students are “accommodated” in the traditional teaching model. For instance, Zhang et al. (2019) address the improvement of students' problem-solving skills through project execution planning in the teaching of civil engineering and construction management in China. The study found that students can improve their

problem-solving skills through design and design thinking. Perhaps such ideas and models should be implemented more often in social science classrooms.

For professors in management education in Brazil apply the same rules of the Law No. 12.772/2012 (Article 20), according to which Federal Institutions of Education (FIE) professors are subject to one of the following work regimes:

- I. 40 weekly hours of work, full time, with exclusive academic dedication, research, extension, and institutional management activities; or
- II. Part-time job of 20 h of work per week.

Exceptionally, upon approval of a competent higher authority, FIE may allow the adoption of a 40-h weekly working regime, full time, observing two full-day shifts without exclusive dedication to areas with specific characteristics. By committing to a 40-h workweek with full dedication, a professor restricts the opportunities for taking experiences and interacting with the market and community for updates, causing lessons to become obsolete or confined to theoretical topics.

The number of management courses offered has increased significantly in Brazil, from roughly 240° programmes in 1978 to over 1500 in 2017 (Ranking Universitário Folha, 2016). This growth, however, does not appear to have occurred with a sufficient level of course quality, and professors who are still underprepared for teaching may be a serious flaw. It is incorrect to suppose that having a degree or working with management is sufficient for teaching. However, didactics and pedagogical training have been necessary for a professor's successful performance in the classroom (Boaventura et al., 2018).

According to Schwartzman (2014), one of the main reasons Brazil has problems with its general higher education is that Brazilian society has lacked the elements that would motivate its people to organize, develop and value their own educational institutions, such as understanding that education increases self-esteem and implies ideological freedom. Motivation must be present during the teaching-learning process, and de Camargo and colleagues (de Camargo Fiorini et al., 2021) argue this requires a skilled professor who knows his students' realities as well as their aspirations. The role of educators in motivating students is critical because establishing a positive attitude encourages learning. There is also the need to combine practice with theory, to unite the theoretical emphasis of classical universities with the practical emphasis of technological ones.

For a long time, technology Universities (TUs) have shaped public perception and opinion since nineteenth century Europe, which can be regarded as the original birthplace of technological education (Pilatti & Lievore, 2018), and spread to other countries throughout the twentieth century. In comparison, following a global educational trend and maybe because of the dissociation from theory and practice in social sciences, the first TUs were established on Brazil soil as public universities, not before 2005. Besides more "technical" degree programmes like engineering, as the name suggests, these universities feature more sociological faculties like business management, social work, and economics. TUs are characterized by the strong connection with the organization sector and for producing useful societal

technology. They were established because of social and technical developments and a demand for qualified labour (Pilatti & Lievore, 2018). Thus, the teaching staff plays a fundamental role, from the formation of a more practical and innovative professional to developing research and technology transfer.

Research conducted by Lievore and Pilatti (2018) aimed at identifying reasons these universities were different from the “more classic” (focussed on theories/lectures and less practice) universities, since they would show pedagogical practices and characteristics focused on the social development, proper of this university model. Curious as it might seem, according to the results of that study, TUs have, since its creation, not formalized explicitly the profile of their professors and their functions within teaching technology. This brings them closer to the professionals of the classical universities, and causes a distancing from the characteristics that should ideally characterize the TU. According to the authors, the main problem lies in the teaching and hiring requirements, which follow the same model of the ‘Classical Universities’ (Lievore & Pilatti, 2018).

Challenges of Management Education in German Higher Education Institutions

The greatest challenges confronting German public universities in recent years have been budgetary limits, a lack of investment in structure, revival, and training, and the exchange about contemporary didactics and teaching approaches among faculty members. Because the resources come from government funding, management sciences use the classic teaching structures and methods, e.g., rooms with multimedia (for slides presentation) and whiteboard or technological advanced equivalents, which can be scaled to large cohorts of students. But universities that focus on technological developments have a much tighter interaction with societal sectors, which result in impact hubs for start-ups and long-term collaborations. Collaborations between universities and organisations (for-profit and non-profit) have the potential to provide reciprocal advantages: On the one side, organizations cooperate with universities (to find a well-educated and cheap workforce) to develop research, to increase the efficiency to develop future products, services, etc. Universities contribute to the consolidation and improvement of knowledge, developing more effective methods for resolving real-world issues, and the establishment of new paths for research and development. This theory-practice-transfer in university-industry collaborations enables the progressive production of knowledge and innovation; it also contributes to the growth of intellectual property via patents and publications.

In Germany, Universities of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschulen) evolved from conventional engineering schools and comparable professional institutions in the late 1960s and early 1970s and were adopted also in other countries such as Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Finland, Cyprus, and Greece. In contrast to the more research-oriented “traditional” university, the Fachhochschule is more

practice-oriented, but it offers degree programmes in engineering, computer science, business and management, arts and design, communication studies, and social service, among other professional fields. Nowadays, Fachhochschulen also host large-scale research projects supported by the government or business. Even the power to issue a doctoral degree - historically reserved for full-fledged universities - has clouded in recent years, as a few Fachhochschulen were granted the authority to confer doctorates on their own graduates.

The establishment of a different type of university, as in the previous cases of Brazil and Germany, to provide a more practical and differentiated education, but which, under current legislation, is subject to the conventional model of competition, an exclusive work regime that adheres to traditional teaching: Either professors are highly theoretically qualified but lack enough practice in the respective field or they are very practice-oriented and less experienced in teaching students. In this view, private universities could have a greater chance of success in the dynamic educational market. Compared to state universities, private universities offer small study groups, stronger relations to practice partners, and more specialized study programs (Platz & Holtbrügge, 2016).

TUs and Fachhochschulen were similar to French and German Technological Universities, where professors have a research-oriented profile and constantly interact with the community, bringing social and industrial problems from their region into the classroom and inside experiments (Lievore & Pilatti, 2018). The idea of professional practice integration is to explore for answers with practitioners and students, which is a common brainstorming exercise.

Most conventional universities, unlike TUs and Fachhochschulen, define quality in terms of inputs – the quality of students and staff, resources, and facilities, for example – rather than outputs, such as performance. As indicated by their shift in focus from resources to outcomes; from teacher-centred to learner-centred (Du Pre et al., 2006). Compared to the Brazilian case, there are similarities and differences regarding developing teaching and learning: The German situation is – in contrast to the professorship in more research-oriented universities – somehow similar at (more practice-oriented) Fachhochschulen, where professors have to teach 18 h or – due to the higher education acts and regulations of teaching responsibilities in the 16 federal states – up to 20 semester hours per week (full-time) (KMK, 2019). The ‘rest’ of the time – usually a 40-h working week – has to be spent for exams, research, continuing education and university administration. Different rules may apply to honorary teaching and other teaching staff. One challenge in developing higher education didactical competences in teaching is training professors or candidates in higher education didactics to better adapt to students’ learning needs, which have shifted dramatically in recent years (e.g., millennials and generation Z), and to facilitate the successful transfer of knowledge and skills between theory and practice. Unlike lectures and traditional case studies, simulations, service learning, and games, for example, are effective teaching methods for assisting students in learning about organisational management as well as in comprehending the complexity, ambiguity, and interpersonal relationships inherent in real-world situations (Arnold, 2020, p.113f).

Concluding Remarks

Education and practice in social work and management education have increased responsibilities in community development. There is a critical need for well-qualified and practice-oriented social worker managers who can strive to enhance the socio-economic condition and quality of life of society. Universities follow the trend both in Brazil and Germany. We live in a fast-paced, hyper-connected society where major social and structural changes occur at accelerating speed. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic only highlighted and accelerated these transformations.

Regarding future development of social work management teaching and learning approaches, we can suggest the following conclusions discussed in this chapter: (1) Advanced didactical competencies in teaching are a fundamental requirement for education in social work management. (2) Experiential learning may be induced in higher education through discussing case studies, reflecting on course group work, or reflecting on professional experiences. (3) Facilitating cooperation in university-industry partnerships between higher education institutions, employers, and other stakeholders from diverse societal sectors should be promoted. This could be achieved through including practitioner research in social management education via teaching research projects, service learning, and third-party financing. (4) In the future, more effort must be put into advances in theory or empirical evidence on successful and creative teaching techniques, technology, institutional structures, and educational policy. Likewise, given that the educational activity is done in a group and in a social setting, the professor must establish a motivating environment. This means developing learning situations in the classroom in which the student has an active role in building knowledge, properly using didactic resources, formative evaluation, modern and catchy teaching methodologies, and providing challenging activities. All these didactic activities can also be part of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Activities (cf. Arnold, 2022).

The authors do not present a recipe or a magic formula for creating an inventive and engaging classroom environment, mostly because we do not have them. Because the educational phenomena and cross-country comparisons are much too complicated to simplify, it is necessary to bring this subject to light and critically reflect on professors' and students' roles.

A common issue raised by students is the mismatch between the subject taught, the techniques utilised, and the labour market's actual reality (Benali & Ally, 2020). Students describe a disconnect between academic learning and the "real world." Universities have been tasked with the responsibility of providing meaningful education and civility. Adult education is a sphere of practise and thought that unavoidably transcends the bounds of traditional schooling. It includes professional growth and community development, which cannot be acquired alone from reading books and classics. Nowadays, professors must have broad sensitivity to the idiosyncrasies of their students. Many modern educational scripts follow this trend: why not encourage students by linking more 'academic' knowledge with popular wisdom

(or what is currently in vogue “out there”), showing how important a strong educational foundation is to understand the ‘practical’ world.

In certain ways, we should abandon degrees as the only barometer of abilities and competences. But a question remains: Do certificates mark an end or just a conclusion about something? The argument is that students are engaged in a continual and active learning process that does not end with completing a university degree (Costa, 2015). Another point of attention is regarding professors’ or even Universities’ autonomy. Most colleges have been influenced from the start by political, economic, religious, and ideological concerns; science of any kind is a secondary focus.

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Chapter 19

The Use of Virtual Reality Roleplay to Improve Communicative and Digital Skills in a Transnational Collaborative Learning Environment: Implications for Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education



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Abstract Virtual collaborative learning and teaching benefits from using immersive technologies to develop key competences, such as collaboration, virtual communication, and problem-solving skills, as well as social and digital skills. Based on the formative evaluation of the skills in the Hotel Academy project, which aimed at the development and implementation of a transnational desktop/VR-based roleplay, this chapter will draw attention to both the potential of virtual reality and the

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learners' experiences of presence and immersion during its experimentation. Additionally, findings from the summative validation of the underlying didactical framework to develop transnational and cross-institutional blueprints for the implementation of this specific VR environment in higher education institutions will be presented. Finally, conclusions will be drawn regarding the future use of such role-playing in social work management education.

Introduction: Immersive VR Roleplay for Collaborative Learning

The ability to work in a decentralised, location-independent, and international context that make use of virtual collaborative information and communication technology (ICT) has become an integral part of the professional capability of so-called 'knowledge workers' since before the COVID-19 pandemic (Walberg et al., 2000). The European Union and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) both see collaborative skills, virtual communication, problem-solving abilities, and the conscious use of network-based online technology as key '21st century skills,' along with the development of social skills and the capacity to produce digital content (e.g., Carretero et al., 2017; Fadel, 2008). Additionally, these capabilities are crucial for all societies. Specialists in this field must also possess international knowledge and cross-cultural competencies. As a consequence of technological improvements and digital transformation, there is a constant need for future tourism managers with basic communication and digital literacy skills (e.g., Aktas et al., 2017).

Against this background, the Erasmus+ Hotel Academy project (2019–2021) intended to build a shared curriculum that facilitates virtual transdisciplinary, transnational, and transcultural cooperation and exchange amongst three European universities in Cyprus, France, and Germany. Immersive technologies were used as the major didactic approach in the curriculum's implementation (Fischer et al., 2021). *Roleplay* as an instructional technique provided learners with authentic professional challenges based on complex, credible life events. It is also significantly associated with the development of communication and empathy skills in general. Through roleplay, students learn to analyse problematic situations and develop innovative solutions in complex social systems by taking over a wide range of authentic roles. Starting from there, students acquire strategic competencies that strengthen both their professional and personal development (Baciu, 2016).

The use of immersive technologies such as *virtual reality* (VR) in roleplay has a high potential for the development of the mentioned twenty-first century skills. VR is

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understood as the “use of computer technology to create the effect of an interactive three-dimensional world in which the objects have a sense of spatial presence” (Bryson, 2013). With the help of information technology and behavioural interfaces, the behaviour of 3D entities, which interact in real-time with each other and with one or more users in a pseudo-natural immersive environment via sensorimotor channels, can be simulated in a virtual world (Fuchs et al., 2006). As such, VR is based on the two main concepts: *immersion* and *interaction* (technological dimension) and contributes to the creation of *physical presence*, *self-presence*, and the *social presence* or *co-presence* (Lee, 2004; Slater, 2009). By users’ immersion in a virtual world and the associated experience of presence, learners merge with the learning environment – immersive role-playing is, therefore, felt to be natural and realistic. In such environments, learners then have the opportunity to change their perspectives, cooperate with one another, and solve authentic problems. In immersive roleplays, the potentials of game-based learning and VR learning can be combined, which allows for learner-centred access to education, and which also enables the development of learners’ social and communicative skills.

The purpose of this chapter is to first summarise the potential of virtual reality in higher education before the findings from a formative evaluation of learners’ user experiences in an immersive desktop/VR roleplay as part of a transnational virtual collaborative learning project are presented. The paper continues with a summative validation of the underlying didactical framework and the development of transdisciplinary, transnational, and transcultural blueprints for the implementation of this specific VR environment in higher-education institutions. Finally, conclusions will be presented regarding the future use of such roleplaying in social work management education.

Potentials of Virtual Reality in Higher Education¹

Virtual Reality Technologies

Milgram et al. (1994) defined a “virtuality continuum” as a fundamental taxonomy of mixed reality that spans from the ‘real’ to the ‘virtual’ environment. Mixed Reality (MR) falls into two categories: Augmented Reality (AR), which is a real environment enhanced with virtual aspects, and Augmented Virtuality (AV), which is a virtual environment enhanced with real elements. Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and Mixed Reality (MR) are together referred to as eXtended Reality (XR) (Milgram et al., 1994). Numerous technologies and devices can be used to provide sufficient access to virtual environments, including desktop computers, tablets, and smartphones as well as glasses for augmented-reality experiences (e.g., Microsoft Hololens™, Magic Leap™) and Head-Mounted Displays (HMDs) for virtual-reality experiences (e.g., HTC Vive™, Oculus Quest™). Since 2015, new generations of HMDs have entered the consumer market, offering

¹ While the contents of this section of the paper are related to another systematic literature review about the potentials of VR (Fischer et al., 2021), the theoretical background and the literature review have been further extended to a more detailed description.

improved performance at lower costs and accelerated the adoption of these technologies. While the primary use is in video games, a broad variety of corporate sectors also made use of these technologies (e.g., Yang, 2019). Additionally, XR technologies are rapidly being used in education and training, particularly in businesses (e.g., Bailenson et al., 2008).

Ever since, VR has been defined as a scientific and technical field that uses information technology and behavioural interfaces to simulate individual behaviour of 3D entities in the virtual world, using sensorimotor channels to interact in real-time between multiple users in pseudo-natural immersion (Fuchs et al., 2006). As a result, VR is founded on two concepts: *immersion* and *interactivity* (technical dimension) and the construction of *presence* (psychological dimension), while “the strong illusion of being in a place in spite of the sure knowledge that you are not there” is part of that experience (Slater, 2009, p. 3551). In this context, three key components of presence have been identified as indicators of elements that contribute to a high-quality experience (Lee, 2004, p. 41):

- *Physical presence*: “the extent to which one feels present in the mediated environment, rather than in the immediate physical environment” (Steuer, 1992, p. 76). It is supported by the perception of objects in the virtual environment as a real object, the possibility for the user to locate one’s body in relation to the environment or to carry out spatialized actions.
- *Self-presence*: “a psychological state in which virtual (para-authentic or artificial) self/selves are experienced as the actual self in either sensory or nonsensory ways” (Lee, 2004, p. 46). It relates to how connected one feels to his or her virtual body, emotions, or identity.
- *Social presence* or *co-presence* is understood as “the sense of being together with another and mental models of other intelligences (e.g., people, animals, agents, gods, etc.) that help us simulate other minds” (Biocca et al., 2001, p. 2). It depends on the ease “to which a user feels access to the intelligence, intentions, and sensory impressions of another” (Biocca, 1997a, b, sec. 7.2).

Depending on the environment that is provided, the interactions, and the participants, VR can simulate different kinds of experiences and provide new ways to engage with digital content. Thereby, VR allows users to experience, create and act, rather than solely observe others in the virtual environment (e.g., Mikropoulos & Natsis, 2011; Slater & Sanchez-Vives, 2016). Interactions are possible not only with the environment and objects but also with other participants, possibly remotely, or with agents, offering new opportunities to collaborate (e.g., Zheng et al., 2018). Depending on the identity of other participants or of the avatar the user is embodying, VR can induce modifications of behaviour, adopting behaviour and attitudes of their avatars’ (Ratan et al., 2020) enhanced empathy-related abilities (Bertrand et al., 2018). In addition, VR provides unique 3D representation possibilities to create 3D models and make concepts tangible (Dede et al., 1996), represent what is barely accessible (Freina & Ott, 2015), and is available as complex data sets (Olshannikova et al., 2015).

VR may be incorporated into cross-device development as digital tools, enabling and combining new modes of interaction with digital content. To this end, Brudy et al. (2019, pp. 4–5) cross-device taxonomy to describe important properties of VR experiences in six dimensions:

- the *Temporal dimension* distinguishes synchronous (e.g., simultaneous use) and asynchronous interactions (e.g., sequential use);
- depending on the temporality, several *Configurations* can be considered with several devices, including VR and other equipment;
- *relationships* are then defined with one or several users;
- the *Scale* defines the nature of interactions between the users: personal, social, public;
- the *Dynamic* indicates whether the users' motion control is mobile or fixed (e.g., in a dedicated place);
- the *Place* defines whether the users are collocated or remotely located.

As the usage of digital technologies, such as virtual reality, has increased rapidly, notably for educational purposes, concerns and critiques have defined the debate over their use and implementation (e.g., Fischer et al., 2021; Spitzer, 2014). To justify its correct adoption, compelling proof of VR's additional value is required (Wolton, 2018). Conversely, anxieties and distrust are not always justified. Future research is required to assess the dangers and advantages of emerging technology. This will help foster a responsible attitude to the use of virtual reality and other digital technologies. As a starting point, the technology should not only serve a clearly stated aim and be well integrated, such as within a multimodal framework, but also be adequately linked and interfaced with other devices or activities. These are the prerequisites for effective adoption and assessment of the added value if any.

A Didactical Framework for Implementation of Virtual Reality in Higher Education

Despite the various potentials and risks of VR, its expansion into higher education is still slow. The peculiarity of formal education such as in vocational education or higher education is that institutions often face challenges regarding processes of standardisation and regulations that can either promote or prevent educational innovations. Therefore, the consequences of these challenges in the mentioned educational context and related aspects of the implementation of VR in higher education need to be analysed thoroughly.

A respective framework for the sustainable implementation of learning and teaching innovations was proposed by Euler and Seufert (2007), which provides the conceptual and theoretical basis for the documentation and validation of the didactical framework in the Hotel Academy project (see Fig. 19.1). The didactical framework describes different dimensions for the implementation of innovations and,

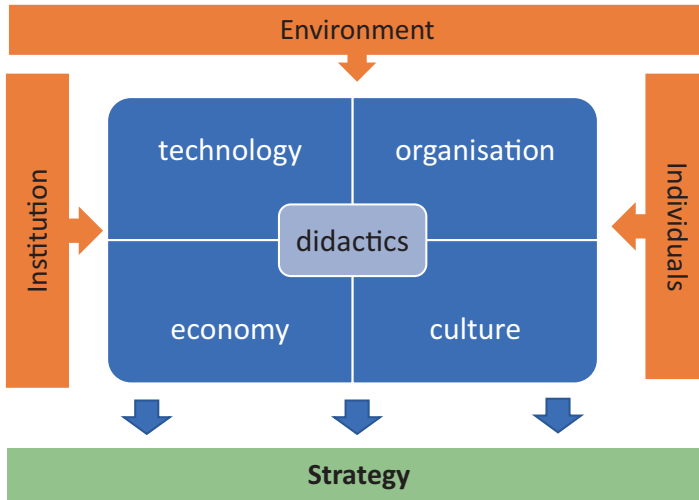


Fig. 19.1 Framework for VR-implementation in formal education. (Based on Euler & Seufert, 2007)

therefore, primarily supports the development and definition of innovation strategies in educational institutions (cf. Dyrna et al., 2020).

Following the idea of the Euler-and-Seufert framework (2007), so-called “education managers” must balance out risks and potentials of educational innovations in five main dimensions: Didactics, Organisation, Technology, Economy, and Culture.

- The dimension *Didactics* focuses on the pedagogic benefit of educational innovations, the achievement of learning objectives, and the impact on curriculum design.
- The dimension *Organisation* emphasises the structural and procedural embedding of educational innovations in educational institutions.
- From a *Technology* perspective, aspects of IT infrastructure, IT policies, or IT governance must be considered when implementing VR into the formal processes of educational institutions.
- To successfully integrate educational innovations into an institution in terms of *Economy*, costs, and benefits must be balanced and existing business models be further developed.
- The dimension *Culture* describes behaviour, norms, and forms of cooperation and communication of the stakeholders. Sustainable implementation of educational innovations requires cultural adaptations and must, thus, be accompanied by change management activities.

In addition, the following three parameters must also be considered for the validation of the framework’s sustainability and, respectively, for the development of institution-specific VR strategies.

- The *Education System* defines the set of rules for structures and processes in the teaching and learning setting in which VR will be used. For example, scenarios in higher education institutions are characterised by more design freedom than school scenarios.
- The *Institution* contains the equipment, existing strategies, or cultural values as well as the existing support offers. A well-developed IT infrastructure or experience in dealing with digital educational innovations, for example, facilitates the implementation of VR.
- *Individuals* are the target groups and stakeholders involved in establishing VR, e.g., it needs to be discussed: What experiences and expectations do the people involved (stakeholders) have?

The mentioned didactical framework as an integral part of the Hotel Academy project has been evaluated according to the following methodological approach.

Typology of Experimental Use Cases for Immersion and Participation in VR Environments

To provide students with the best possible environment for participation and learning, certain conditions must be organised in the VR environment. This is an aspect that has not much been reflected in the pedagogical exploration of VR technology in education. For the initiation of VR sessions five main phases had to be anticipated:

1. Defining learning objectives;
2. Scenario creation;
3. Choice of one or more scenarios;
4. Choice of technological supports;
5. Which kind of scenario testing is needed for validation?

Additionally, the participation of users in the experimental setting has been classified into four specific user types (see Table 19.1), as the immersive experience in the virtual environment depends on the different states of participation and interaction of users. This typology is a result of the observation and analysis of the various experiments in the Hotel Academy project conducted by the authors (cf. Arnold et al., 2022; Fischer et al., 2021): (a) those who explain virtual roleplay, run the roleplay, and analyse the content of the experience; (b) those who attend the experience without really being able to interact; (c) those who fully participate in the

Table 19.1 Typology of users

	Immersion	No Immersion
Active participation	A	B
No participation	C	D

immersive virtual experience with no participation; (d) those who do not participate in the immersive virtual experience.

Category A: Immersion and active participation. Students in this category were able to actively participate and fully benefit from the immersive virtual experience in the roleplay.

Category B: No immersion and active participation. The teaching staff had been chosen to monitor the test. They explained ahead to the student the situation they must face and the objectives to be achieved. They were also responsible for monitoring the students during the roleplay and initiated the group discussion at the end of the roleplay. The experience is determined by different factors, for example:

- Digital teaching approach: face-to-face or remote;
- Group composition: a homogeneous or heterogeneous group of students;
- Availability of technical assistance;
- Interference of the instructor during the roleplay.

Category C: Immersion and no participation. Represents the group of spectators. For the cross-institutional experiment, students from three different campuses participated or observed the roleplay ‘from outside’. The students met in an auditorium to validate their experiences. Most of the participants had been briefed in advance, but their degree of technical skills and investment varied. Some students had already participated in previous simulations.

Category D: No immersion and no participation. Students in this category had registered for the roleplay and would have liked to participate but had not met the requirements for the experimentation (i.e., computer equipment and software requirements). However, downloading the application on mobile devices and desktop computers brought technical issues. It was necessary to switch on a proper configuration lately, moving to PC.

The phases of the virtual experience in the roleplay can be divided into the following three stages, which are described and illustrated in detail in Fig. 19.3:

- *Phase 1* corresponds with all the information communicated before the virtual roleplay starts. This phase is itself divided into several sequences: The instructor presents the session to the spectators and participants and introduces the main objectives and course expectations.
- *Phase 2* corresponds with the roleplay with multiple participants. A scenario chosen by the instructor and the partner consortium was played twice in different ways.
- *Phase 3* corresponds with the debriefing with various approaches that range from spontaneous individual reactions to focus group discussions and questionnaires sent just after the roleplay and questionnaires distributed several weeks after the experience. All these data were necessary to better understand the user experience feedback.

The Desktop/VR Roleplay and the Hotel Academy Project

In the research and development project “Hotel Academy” (2019–2021), a research team from European University Cyprus (EUC), MBA ESG in Paris (France), Fachhochschule Dresden (FHD) (Germany) and Manzalab in Paris (France) developed a desktop/VR-based roleplay scenario for students and faculty members at three different higher education institutions specialised in tourism and hotel management training and education. More specifically, the designed learning environment based on VR technology (VRLE), the Hotel Academy TEEMEW app, provides a unique opportunity to handle a multitude of situations compared to real-life experiences. The objective was to focus on the didactical, methodological, communicative skills necessary for learners’ (future) professional activity. This app was first optimised for use with VR headsets (Oculus Quest 2™). However, because of COVID-19 hygienic constraints and the inability to personally meet with students to provide them with the VR experience, a modified desktop/VR version was used for cross-institutional remote experiments. Numerous iterations have been carried out so far. Additionally, other technologies were used, including Microsoft Teams™ (for conversation purposes), Kahoot™ (for game-based learning), and MS Forms™ (for questionnaire purposes).

Both users and instructors must install an executable file on a Windows™ operating system in order to utilise the desktop/VR version. A back-office allows the teacher to invite students, organise their placement inside the amphitheatre, upload materials for display (photos, movies, presentations, and other documents), and ultimately, prepare the roles that will be performed (max. of eight actors and their roles e.g., hotel staff or guests).

Once the application is launched, each student creates their avatar and is then seated in the amphitheatre. The instructor is positioned at the amphitheatre’s centre stage. Each student and instructor has their own screen and interface. Instructors may use these panels to present media and to begin role-playing situations set in a separate 3D hotel lobby. The actors are teleported to this hotel lobby, while the other learners stay as spectators in the amphitheatre (see Fig. 19.2).

Before the scenario begins, the instructor describes in detail to the students the circumstances of each scenario and then decides with the group who will play which role (e.g., reception frontline staff, manager, or guests). Actors can communicate and hear one another in the situations; spectators and teachers may interfere if their microphones are activated. A high-quality headset is necessary for excellent audio quality and to prevent the occurrence of echo other Larsen effects (Hodgson, 2010, p. 118).

The learning path in the Hotel Academy TEEMEW app is divided into three distinct phases:

1. A *preparatory phase* during which learners identify their roles in both immersive VR scenarios and in spectator mode outside of VR.

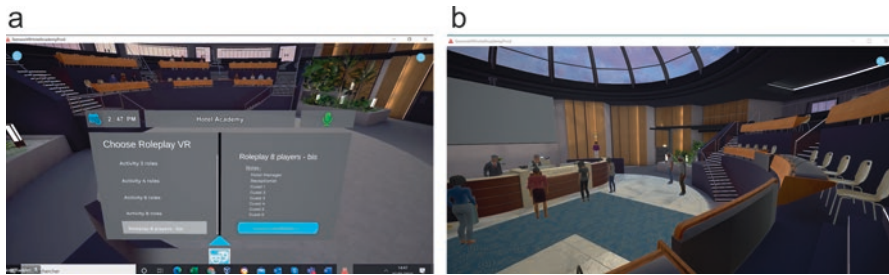


Fig. 19.2 Role-play design: instructors' and actors' point of view in the hotel lobby, and amphitheatre (Authors' own illustrations)

2. During the *scenario phase*, learners take on the role of hotel management, hotel personnel, or tourists and put their abilities to the test in a range of difficult circumstances.
3. In the *final feedback and discussion phase*, learners collaborate in a collaborative, cross-institutional virtual classroom to discuss and assess their learning experiences.

This three-phase activity is integrated into two bachelors' degree programs and one masters' degree program offered by the participating university partners in Cyprus, Germany, and France, as it already incorporates complex interactivity that prepares students for additional professional qualifications.

Experimentation and Evaluation of User Experiences in the VR Roleplay²

Methods

The experimentation and evaluation design employs a mixed-method approach, which enables triangulation of multiple types of data and sources (written and oral, observations and user experiences) and allows for a variety of procedural and formative evaluation objectives: a comprehensive impression of user experiences as well as monitoring of the learning process, exploration of the learning arrangement, and reflection on the roleplay's design (Arnold & Mayer, 2010, p. 537). Questionnaires, participatory observation, and reflective focus group discussions with learners and instructors at each stage of the process have been used as

²While the contents of this section of the paper are related to a preliminary evaluation of the first two institution-based pilots at the ESG and FHD in March and May 2021 (Arnold et al., 2022), the methodological approach, the empirical evaluation, and description of the findings have been further extended to a more detailed analysis and discussion with regard to the development of the didactical framework for the implementation of virtual reality in higher education institutions.

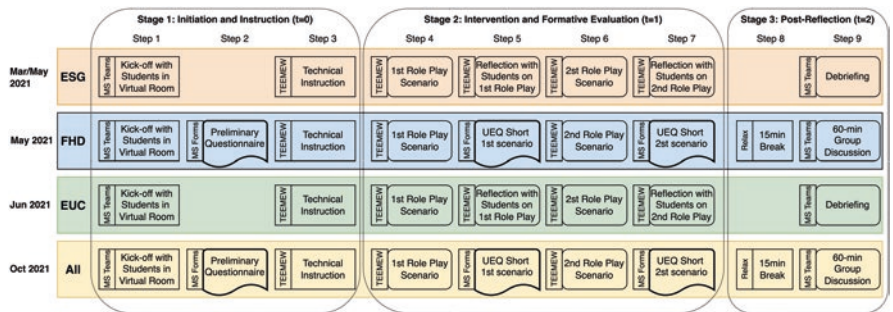


Fig. 19.3 Evaluation design for piloting the VR Role Play. (Extended, adapted from Arnold et al., 2022)

evaluation instruments. The evaluation included the three stages: (1) initiation and instruction (t = 0), (2) intervention and formative evaluation (t = 1) and (3) post-reflection (t = 2), from the initiation and teaching phase through the intervention’s formative assessment and learners’ post-reflections (see Fig. 19.3; for a detailed description of the methodological approach see Arnold et al., 2022). Additionally, we facilitated guided online group discussions using a virtual learning environment (TEEMEW and MS Teams™; Gokhale & Machina, 2018).

Additionally, the short version of the User Experience Questionnaire (UEQ-S, German translation) was used to quickly and directly assess the feelings, impressions, and attitudes elicited by the TEEMEW desktop/VR experience, the scales of which (pragmatic and hedonic quality) and various translations have been successfully validated elsewhere (e.g., as measured by Cronbach’s Alpha; Schrepp, 2017).

Sample and Data

Experimentation with single pilots at the mentioned campuses began in March 2021 and was concluded in September 2021 with cross-institutional piloting (for an overview, see Table 19.2). Between March and May 2021, ESG recruited three (out of four) students and one lecturer from a postgraduate degree program in “Management de l’Hôtellerie” (MBA). In May 2021, FHD piloted the curriculum with five students, one professor, and two instructors from the undergraduate degree program “Tourism and Event Management” (B.A.). In June 2021, at EUC, the roleplay scenario involved five students and two instructors from the undergraduate degree program “Hospitality and Tourism Management” (B.A.). The experimentation and piloting were completed in October 2021 with a final cross-institutional virtual collaboration learning scenario, involving seven students, four lecturers from ESG, FHD, and EUC, and two instructors. Manzalab supported the technical administration of the roleplay scenarios in all piloting scenarios and was responsible for the assessment documentation.

Table 19.2 Sample size

Dates	Partner	Students, active	Students, spectators	Lecturers	Instructors	Admins
03/22/21	ESG	4	1	1	1	2
05/07/21	FHD	4	1	1	2	2
05/10/21	ESG	3	1	1	1	2
06/16/21	EUC	4	1	2	2	2
10/12/21	ALL	7	7	4	3	3
Sum		22	11	9	9	11

Procedure and Data Analysis

Each campus followed a similar procedure for piloting and evaluating the VR role-play (see Fig. 19.3). The *first stage* ($t = 0$) involves the initiation of the experiment in a virtual meeting room (MS Teams™). Students were requested to complete a preliminary questionnaire before the technical instruction in the experiment at FHD and EUC, as well as during the cross-institutional experiment with all partners, to evaluate their pre-knowledge and prior experiences with communication training of this kind. The *second stage* ($t = 1$) featured the intervention itself as well as a formative assessment: Following their participation in two distinct roleplay scenarios, students engaged in a reflection process. All pilots were assigned to one of two scenarios:

- *Scenario I:* The role-playing occurs at a five-star hotel in a coastal city. The hotel's structure is hierarchical, and all jobs are well-defined. The hotel has 220 rooms of different sorts, as well as two meeting rooms that are recognized as the best in the region. The hotel has two restaurants: one serving world food and another serving themed food (fish restaurant). On Sundays, the themed restaurant is closed. Both eateries are quite famous and well-known in the neighbourhood, attracting both visitors and residents from all over the region. Customer service is the hotel's top focus as a policy and for sustaining and keeping the hotel's excellent quality of experience. In this regard, the hotel's guests are regarded as the hotel's primary market.
- *Scenario II:* This roleplay takes place at a three-star hotel in the heart of a metropolis, a heavily industrialised area with offices of many enterprises. This area is densely saturated with hotels, restaurants, and other sorts of convention centres, and the city's transit infrastructure is superb. The hotel has a capacity of 50 rooms of different sorts and has a high occupancy rate (85%) during this time owing to the city's heavy commercial activity. Two of the rooms are undergoing repair due to a water supply interruption. The hotel's administration intends to increase its star rating in the next few years, and as such, client pleasure is a primary concern. Each consumer is significant. Thus, to satisfy this condition, management provides for pricing policy freedom among employees (e.g., special rates, upgrading to a higher type of room at a discounted price, sales promotions, etc.).

In the single experimentation at ESG, students engaged in an open discussion with Manzalab staff and with their lecturer. In the single experimentation at FHD and EUC and in the cross-institutional experimentation, students completed the UEQ-S (verified German and English translation) immediately after each scenario and before the group discussion, since the “objective of the UEQ is to allow a quick assessment done by end-users covering a preferably comprehensive impression of user experience. It should allow the users to express feelings, impressions, and attitudes that arise when experiencing the product under investigation in a very simple and immediate way” (Schrepp et al., 2017, p. 103).

The evaluation procedure was concluded in the *third stage* ($t = 2$) with a debriefing discussion with a guided 60-min group discussion in each of the different experimentations.

The analysis of the students’ UEQ-S questionnaire responses followed the process outlined in the most recent version of the Microsoft Excel™ tool, which may be found at www.ueq-online.org. The findings from the various open and guided focus group discussions were derived through a systematic application of qualitative content analysis steps, which included (re-)reading all transcribed data, comparing the data for similarities, differences, and contradictions, creating codes using thematic and in-vivo coding, and summarising headings into main categories until thematic saturation of the data collected was achieved (Guest et al., 2020).

Results

Due to the limitation of this chapter, the presentation of the results focuses only on the cross-institutional experimentation which includes findings from the pre-knowledge questionnaires, the User Experience Questionnaire, and the focus group discussion. A preliminary analysis of the single experimentation at the ESG and FHD can be found in a previous publication (Arnold et al., 2022).

Pre-Knowledge Questionnaire

In the survey before the cross-institutional experimentation only three of the participants completed the pre-knowledge questionnaire, due to technical issues. Nevertheless, we present the results of this rather small sample and will only highlight the most pertinent feedback. All students were enrolled in an undergraduate or postgraduate hospitality and/or tourism study program. Two of the three students had already participated in previous communication training. And one of the respondents also reflected on the previous roleplay in which the student participated:

It consisted of different roleplay games with an actress in presential mode. We played two different games: (1) There was a problem with my guest (actress) and I had to deal with her (actress) as a receptionist. (2) There was a problem with a person in my team (actress) and I had to deal with her as a manager.

The answers to the question if they feel prepared when conflicts arise in communication in the professional world, e.g. with customers or colleagues, the answer varies widely from “yes, perfectly” via “rather less” to “no”. Their motivation to participate in the planned experimentation was a bit cautious, including: “I don’t know it yet, but it seems to be an excellent technological device. I’m used to presental mode, and it will be very interesting to interact with students from other schools”; “to have an idea of what I might be facing in the future working environment.” Also, the expectations for the upcoming experimentation were positive: “To be given some skills for better communication when problems come up. And to be assessed after my performance”; “a realistic hotel scene simulation experience;” “to communicate all around the world easily.”

Users’ Learning Experiences in the User Experience Questionnaire

The evaluation of piloting the TEEMEW Second Version at all three universities (EUC, ESG, FHD) took place in October 2021. The following findings are based on the user experience questionnaire (UEQ-S) after piloting the mentioned roleplay scenarios ($t_1 = 1$). Results will be presented based on the user experience questionnaire (UEQ-S) after the first (t_1) and second (t_2) scenarios. Respondents were asked to fill in an MS Form with the short version of the UEQ (German translation) immediately after the first ($t_1 = 1$) and second scenarios ($t_2 = 1$). The pragmatic quality consists of efficiency (item: efficient), perspicuity (items: easy, clear), and dependability (item: supportive), while the hedonic quality consists of stimulation (items: exciting, interesting) and novelty (items: inventive, leading-edge) (Schrepp et al., 2017, p. 3).

As shown in Fig. 19.4, the user experiences of the roleplay scenario on the pragmatic scale (supportive, easy, efficient, clear; mean scale value 1.056) was perceived by the participants highly positive for the sub-categories supportive, easy, and efficient design (value of 1.7) except for the sub-category “clarity” which was assessed

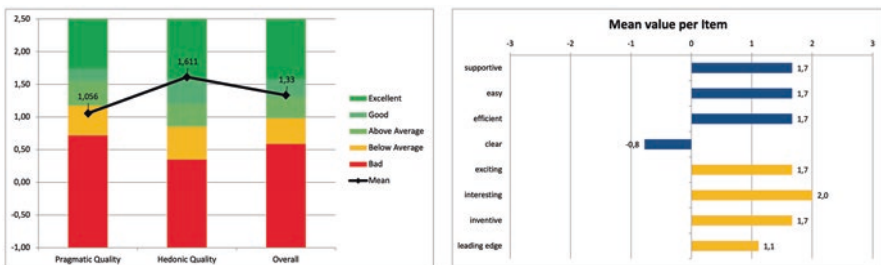


Fig. 19.4 Scales pragmatic quality (blue) and hedonic quality (yellow) EUC-FHD-ESG at t_1 (Authors’ own illustration)

negatively (-0.8). On the hedonic scale, all sub-criteria were understood as positive ranging from 1.1 to 2.0 (mean scale value of 1.611 in total). The sub-category “leading edge” received the weakest positive appreciation (above average). Based on these results, the pragmatic qualities (goal-oriented aspects) of the TEEMEW app were assessed positive in total, but only as “below average” (50% of results are better, 25% of results worse). On the hedonic scale (non-goal-oriented aspect), the quality of the roleplay was understood as “excellent” (in the range of the 10% best results). Overall, the user experiences can be benchmarked still as “good” (10% of results better, 75% of results worse). Based on these results, students appreciated the learning experience in TEEMEW as positive, but were curious about the clarity of the product as already mentioned in the preliminary evaluation (Arnold et al., 2022). These and other findings will be further reflected in the analysis of the qualitative data collected from the group discussion and participatory observation (see next subsection).

In the second part after the UEQ, all nine participants were asked VR-related questions. These questions included five statements to which the respondents needed to react on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”). If students felt that the people in the virtual environment were aware of their presence, 78% said “yes, perfectly” compared to 22% “no, not that much”. Asked whether they correctly identified or localised sounds in the virtual environment, 67% of the participants replied “yes, perfectly”, while 22% said “Was okay, but there is a way for improvement” and 11% said, “No, I felt disturbed most of the time”. To the statement “My thoughts/activities ran fluidly and smoothly. At each step I knew what to do,” 78% of students “agreed” or “strongly agreed”, while 11% “disagreed” and another 11% replied “neutral”. Asked if they felt just the right amount of challenge, 89% of the respondents “strongly agreed” or just “agreed” and only 11% were “neutral”. To the statement “Learning to operate in the virtual environment would be easy for me,” 89% of the students “strongly agreed” or “agreed” while only 11% were “neutral”. We also openly asked the respondents if they wanted to add or comment on something. The following suggestions were made based on students’ experiences in the desktop/VR setting:

- *Preparation*: “The device is easy to use. The more the roles are prepared in advance, the better the exercise will be. We can prepare what to say in order to make it difficult for our receptionist (I was a customer) to deal with me”;
- *VR Environment*: “pretty nice experiment and environment”;
- *Immersion*: “Since we did not use VR glasses, it did not feel extremely useful/immersive – more like a call – the visuals did not seem to be that important since we did not move our head around. But it was good to have a visual indicator to see which role is talking. When using VR glasses the immersion/usefulness could be perfect for me”;
- *Transferability*: “Once it works properly, the device can be used in whichever social context, not only reception”; “I find it an innovative way to prepare with the right tools and to prevent certain unwanted situations”;

- *Motion*: “Moving around the amphitheatre, doing, moving hands”;
- *Audio*: “improve audio quality”, “fix audio issues”, or “product needs development”.

Overall, this means that this app was evaluated positively at both instances and users could complete their tasks without unnecessary effort, feel in control of their actions, and be excited and motivated to use the product. Compared to evaluations of other products, the data collected can be benchmarked with data sets of the full UEQ (280 studies; 14,056 respondents), which allows for conclusions about the relative quality of the evaluated product compared to other products (e.g., Schrepp et al., 2017). Our data shows that pragmatic qualities have been evaluated positively above average and hedonic qualities as well as the overall impression of TEEMEW app have been rated as of excellent value.

Group Discussion and Participatory Observation

At the end of each experimentation, all participants were involved in various group discussions that helped to highlight the different experiences, activities, expectations, and recommendations of the students, lecturers, and instructors in the role-play. The following main categories (see Table 19.3) were derived from the detailed analysis of the group discussion with all participants during the cross-institutional virtual collaborative learning experimentation.

Table 19.3 Main categories in the group discussions and participatory observation (Authors’ own illustration)

Main categories	Description
(1) Presence in the virtual environment (VE)	How the presence of the VE is received by the players as well as how the players feel their individual presence acting out in the VE: Approx. 75% of the participants referred to this aspect in a positive way, while the others formulated critical responses.
(2) Reflection on roleplay design	Thoughts about how good and adequate the roleplay is designed so that it indicates a clear expedient quality during the whole use and play: Almost everyone, approx. 90% described the roleplay design as truly functional; its effectiveness and consistent simplicity were praised throughout.
(3) Reflection on one’s own action and immersion during roleplay	Deeper thoughts about one’s own actions within the VE, and how these actions lead to a truly immersive development during the play: These reflections imply aesthetic and narrative impulses. Here, the experiences varied widely, while positive and critical aspects kept the balance. Not everybody saw her/his personal intentions/actions well portrayed and received. 50–50 in terms of scale.
(4) Reflection on learning and teaching	Participants reported also about how the play can (even better) be of use for consistent and feasible implementation while teaching (and learning). Although most of the participants had few to add to this matter, a few good ideas were collected here, which shows that the playful VE evokes thoughts and inspiration throughout its presence.

Discussion and Practical Implications for VR-Based Learning

The evaluation of the experimentation analysed different aspects that impact users' experiences while learning in a virtual collaborative learning environment (VCLE). To summarise, the experiment yielded the following empirical findings: *Firstly*, participant responses have been overwhelmingly favourable (in terms of feedback in the UEQ as well as in the focus group discussion). The primary cause for this finding is assumed to be the participant's strong enthusiasm and interest in the VR roleplay scenarios that went well beyond the possibilities of the everyday classroom experiences (see preliminary questionnaire). Indeed, all users noticed the high potential of learning experiences in the different VR roleplay scenarios, which were continually enhanced in terms of technical and didactical quality since the single experimentation at the partnering universities. Although avatars lacked the capability of spacial movement during the game, the true objective of the virtual situation became evident to everyone: the VR roleplay developed in the Hotel Academy project helps to improve strategic thinking and professional problem- and conflict-solving capabilities. Each participant's attention is called directly to their rhetorical and communication skills, as well as their potential for cooperation while minimising the cognitive burden. As shown in recent research, the importance of cognitive load as a factor impacting students' engagement with desktop-based virtual reality is still a field that needs more in-depth research (Vesga et al., 2021). Our findings point to the fact that, even in the desktop VR environment, students were willing to devote their full attention to the underlying learning task.

Secondly, the following variables are considered significant for the preparation of the VCLE. A critical aspect is the size of the room and the number of headsets, as well as the technical challenges with the TEEMEW App and WIFI connectivity. A lot of time and effort is necessary to prepare the equipment for the VR sessions, as this might jeopardise the experimentation, resulting in wasted time. On the hardware side, a pre-validation of computers, their setup, and their capacity to execute the different apps is required too. The mentioned experiences in the desktop VR environment where the pilots took place may be comparable to the use of virtual reality headsets. In terms of material requirements, participants must be in more or less separate locations, with no more than a handful in the same room, and, furthermore, must be wearing over-ear headphones. To avoid being bothered by a variety of circumstances such as ambient noise, sound feedback, and a poor Wi-Fi signal.

Thirdly, the VCLE's fundamental 360-degree audio system was clearly praised, and participants in the roleplay were able to distinguish other actors as near or more distant. The audio configuration emerged to be the most critical aspect and high-quality headphones (over-ear, with a decent microphone) are an unavoidable requirement. However, despite the good results in the desktop VR version of the TEEMEW app and its troubleshooting at an early stage of the implementation of the VR technology, truly immersive VR could be realised in the near future (with Oculus™ VR headsets, support staff in the lab, high-quality over-ear headsets).

Fourthly, concerning the roleplay's didactic and pedagogical framework, specific role descriptions and a standardised scenario script will improve the teaching and learning experience of the roleplay across campuses. It would also be beneficial for participants' learning experiences, their academic achievements, and the VR roleplay's integration into regular curricula. Additionally, it was discussed and suggested in the focus group discussion that status information (associated with scenario scripts) be represented in a concise and goal-oriented manner. For each scenario, two to three crucial facts describing the scenario's fundamental circumstance might be shown in the user interface through a foldable text or menu section. This would allow instructors to exert strategic control over the roleplaying session.

Validation of the Didactical Framework

Procedure

The aim of this validation procedure is to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the developed didactical framework and its prototypes. This has not only enabled the project partners to get valuable feedback at an early stage and before a permanent implementation of the framework takes place, but also to improve its quality and reflect on the current learnings. Furthermore, it also helped to add a rather neutral third-person perspective based on stakeholders' opinions, meanings, and ideas both inside and outside the project. The evaluation is based on a summative evaluation approach (cf. e.g., Arnold & Mayer, 2010; Scriven, 1991). More specifically, a community-based participatory research perspective (cf., e.g., Hacker, 2013) was implemented to analyse the framework based on the needs of different stakeholders in the project, to understand different use cases, to develop shared best practises, and to increase the quality of the process, implementation, and outcomes of the projects' measures. The qualitative data collection tools included questionnaires for semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

As can be seen in Fig. 19.5, the whole validation procedure was embedded in a reflective practitioner cycle, including *defining* the *object of research* (didactical framework), *constructing* research based on a specific *research perspective* (community-based participatory research), the collection and *analysis of data* (via semi-structured interviews and focus-group discussions), and the *reflection* of the findings (conclusions and blueprints) at the end of the process (*summative evaluation*).

Data Collection and Procedure

The data collection methods included



Fig. 19.5 Framework for the validation (Based on Arnold, 2022a, CC BY 4.0; Arnold & Rebane, 2021)

- *Semi-structured interviews* with different internal users and external stakeholders at the different universities (ESG, EUC, FHD) and the project coordinator (Manzalab) in three European member states Cyprus, France, and Germany: Based on a set of questions, each partner collected information, facts, and data regarding of up to 3 VR scenarios available and/or interactive roleplaying and/or other cross-institutional collaborations and/or in the hospitality and/or tourism sector.
- *Semi-structured focus-group discussions* were conducted with all project partners (ESG, EUC, FHD, Manzalab) and with the members of the Advisory Board.

The data collection, analysis, and documentation took place according to the timeline in Table 19.4.

The interviews and discussions were guided by the questions in Table 19.5

Table 19.4 Timeline for the data collection (Authors' own illustration)

Activity	Month	FHD	EUC	ESG	MVZ
Planning and information of all partners	09/2021	X			
Development and test of questionnaires	09–10/2021	X			
Collection of semi-structured interviews	10–12/2021	X	X	X	X
Focus group discussion with all project partners	12/2021	X	X	X	X
Focus group discussion with Advisory Board	12/2021	X	X	X	X
Reports on IO5.1 and IO5.2	10–12/2021	X			

Results from Framework Validation³

The experiences from the VR projects Hotel Academy, which are based on semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders within and outside the project, were incorporated into the didactical framework. In the following sections, the criteria for a successful implementation of VR in formal education along the dimensions of didactics, organisation, technology, economy, and culture will be summarised and discussed regarding the state-of-the-art in the field of VR technological and digital education.

Didactics

Previous research focused on the learning effects and didactic design of VR, e.g., the positive learning effects of immersion, attention control, focusing, spatial perception or presence (Lee et al., 2010; Merchant et al., 2014; Bailenson et al., 2008). With these special characteristics, VR stands out from many alternative digital forms of learning and also supports learning goals to develop cognitive, affective, and motor as well as social skills (Howard & Gutworth, 2020; Tekedere & Göker, 2016). Domains in which the training of movements and behaviour is centred benefit greatly from VR. On the other hand, however, there is a limitation that VR scenarios would automatically lead to concentration problems, cognitive overload or even VR sickness over time (Saredakis et al., 2020). Due to the time limit of about 10–15 min (to avoid side effects), VR technologies can, therefore, only be used very selectively in formal learning settings. However, this inevitably leads to media breaks, as learners must reorient themselves and get used to the display and control technology to learn effectively. These transitions between the different learning settings (with and without VR) or between learning in both analogue learning locations and VR must be didactically planned and accompanied, but there is less information in the literature on how this should be done from a perspective of learning theory.

³While the contents of this section are related to another analysis of the didactical framework (Fischer et al., 2021), the literature review and discussion have been further extended with regard to the development of didactics and pedagogies in the field of social work management education.

Table 19.5 Semi-structured guideline for interviews and discussions

<p>Technology What kind of technologies do you use in your organisation in general e.g., VR, AR, mixed reality, digital/desktop variants? How is the scenario^a used? What kind of technologies are required for the use of this specific scenario^a? Where do media disruptions occur and how are they handled? How will the content and the developed applications be made available for long term use? How do you define and ensure technological quality? How is the scenario^a integrated into the existing infrastructure of your organisation? What support structures are put in place in your organisation for the use of the scenario^a (e.g., IT service, technical support, qualification)?</p>	<p>Organisation Who is in your organisation responsible for the development and implementation of the scenario^a? Which actors (with which tasks) and which structures are involved in the development of the scenario^a? How do you ensure the structural and process-related quality assurance in your organisation? How do you organise the process-related responsibilities and roles?</p>	<p>Didactics How was or is the scenario^a incorporated in the curriculum and university teaching? What didactic challenges existed in the implementation of the scenario^a and how were these overcome? How are students prepared for the scenario^a? What kind of supervision/ support of students (e.g., during the scenario^a) does teaching staff provide? (<i>Teaching perspective</i>) How are different learning phases linked to one another (e.g., before, during and after the scenario^a)? (<i>Learning perspective</i>) What results or output has been achieved? Which impact had the scenario on different participants and/or stakeholder? How do you ensure the transfer of learning and results? How do you ensure the active participation of the participants within the scenario^a?</p>
<p>Culture What cultural and social challenges were identified by the participants during the implementation of the scenario^a and how were these considered? Which competencies do teachers need for the implementation of the scenario^a and how are these taught to the teachers? What regular exchange formats do exist between the actors of the organisation? What measures have been taken to promote acceptance and create incentives for teachers and students?</p>	<p>Economy What are the costs of the scenario^a? How was the scenario^a financed? How is the financing of the infrastructure, in particular support structures, ensured? Does a business model exist for the long-term provision of the scenario^a and how does it look like? How do you ensure the strategy/project controlling for an effective and efficient use of resources?</p>	

^a For example: VR scenarios and/or interactive role plays and/or other cross-institutional collaborations and/or in the tourism and/or hospitality sector

Organisation

The findings highlight the importance of organisational implementation of VR. They focus on the processes of the technical and didactical development of VR environments, but less on its integration into formal education. Nevertheless, the integration of VR in educational offerings is very demanding and intervenes deeply into the *teaching organisation* itself – it requires suitable technology, rooms, and infrastructure, i.e., it is, therefore, hardly conceivable without central support. In contrast to many other digital learning innovations, VR scenarios affect the *physical environment*, i.e., in addition to technologies, suitable rooms are also sought in which learners can move freely (Saredakis et al., 2020). Since the use of VR is only recommendable from a pedagogical perspective and for short periods of use (see above), the *organisational effort* involved in VR development and its use compared to the learning time is significantly higher compared to alternative learning formats. In addition, special expertise is required for VR development, technological and didactical VR implementation. These human resource capacities are crucial requirements for a successful implementation. From an organisational perspective, it has the beneficial effect where the selective use of VR usually only makes up a small part of the formal educational settings. It would not necessarily require a change of *regulations or policies* (e.g., study regulations, curricula), unlike other digital learning and examination formats.

Technology

Overall, it can be said that many articles address the fundamental technological characteristics of VR, but without taking into consideration the specifics of formal education. The formal context indicates that institutions operate within a normative framework of *IT management* with precautionary measures for *data protection and data security*. In the training context, adaptive systems permanently use and produce sensitive user data that is worth protecting. Regarding the hardware equipment, various options can be used in terms of display and control in the VR (Sung et al., 2016). VR applications can be received via smartphones and cardboards, HDMs, or computer screens, but positive learning effects increase with the degree of immersion and thus with the degree of *technical complexity*. The same applies to the control mechanisms. Learners can navigate in VR environments with controller, body, or eye movements, but positive learning effects correlate with the degree of immersion and presence experience. From an educational point of view, this speaks in favour of high-quality equipment. Besides this, the *physical environment* (Saredakis et al., 2020) is essential for VR-based Learning scenarios, as it requires movement possibilities. In contrast to many other digital educational innovations, the *hybrid character* of VR becomes particularly clear here, i.e., the educational technology has an impact on digital and physical space.

Economics

VR technologies can be used to stimulate new developments, but are also associated with dangers (e.g., VR-based laboratories) or limitations. In addition, scenarios can be implemented for which there is no alternative form of representation (e.g., people pass virtually through a human heart). The resulting economic advantages contrast with the comparatively high *costs of VR development* – both for infrastructure and for staff. Due to the increasing spread of VR, the development of the costs for hardware and software (e.g., display and control technologies) is dynamic, so the necessary equipment can currently be purchased with a low budget compared to higher personnel expenses for staff. The development of VR requires a high level of *human resources and technological expertise*. The growing demand for VR from industry and science continues to lead to a shortage of human resources and to increasing staff costs. In addition to the development costs, the financial expenses for the operation of VRs, due to the equipment of hardware and software as well as the physical learning locations, are still considerably high. Overall, it can be summarised that the cost consideration of immersive VR (IVR) is currently not the focus of scientific discourse, and it needs more experiences of VR implementation to evaluate economic effects.

Culture

VR environments support adaptivity e.g., through customizable avatars, visualisations or positions in space and can compensate for *intercultural differences* in collaborative learning scenarios. Traditional learning settings in formal education include not only teachers and students but also physical objects (e.g., material, equipment), which are usually arranged by the teacher. The control of the environment (e.g., seating arrangement) lies with the teacher. In the VR environment, this environment is configured externally by designers and programmers. This involves a *cultural change* and a development of the attitude for teachers. The learning setting becomes significantly more complex, and the role of teachers changes due to technology. This can lead to *resistance*, which in turn makes services necessary to *support teachers* in changing their teaching practice. It can be assumed that the use of VR technologies in laboratories, makerspaces, or learning locations such as libraries will increase because the teacher is supposed to play a passive role and resistance is therefore hardly to be expected.

Education System

Euler and Seufert (2007) mention that sets of rules for structures and processes in teaching and learning determined by the education system must also be considered. Cross-border and cross-institutional learning was beneficial in as much as it was

perceived as enriching and future-oriented; at the same time, it likewise entailed challenges with regard to the time-zone shifts, disparities of local academic and holiday calendars.

Institution

The existing institutional infrastructure has an important impact on the integration and implementation of new technologies as each institution contains equipment, existing strategies, or cultural values as well as existing support services. For example, a well-developed IT infrastructure, labs, and think tanks within the organisation or expertise in dealing with digital educational innovations will strongly facilitate the implementation of VR. Nevertheless, to support digitisation processes, in the last years, an increase in specific funding for organisations to develop e-learning structures aside from their ever-growing IT infrastructure was noted by all partners. In addition to technological advancement, other aspects will increase the transformative potential for organisational changes such as staff development around technology-enhanced learning and other drivers for institutional support (e.g., Almpanis, 2015).

Individuals

During the project, different target groups and stakeholders involved in the implementation of VR were identified. Besides, this included the owner, general management, heads of departments, IT or technical support staff, and the teaching staff, who can have different roles as shown in Table 19.6.

Table 19.6 Operationalisation of innovative roles. (Gemünden et al., 2007, p. 412)

Characteristics	Operationalisation
Power promoter	'The key person supports the project above-average from a higher hierarchical level.' Hierarchical rank of the key person.
Expert promoter	'The key person promotes the project by his/her high technological know-how.'
Process promoter	'The key person knows the organisational processes and campaigns above-average for the smooth progress of the project.' 'The key person acts as a link between decision makers and experts.'
Technology-related relation promoter	'The key person has good relationships with important external cooperation partners.' 'The key person supports the search for external cooperation partners, information exchange with cooperation partners and the collaboration with cooperation partners.'
Market-related relationship promoter	'The key person promotes the project by his/her market-related know-how.'
Leadership experience of the project leader	Experience in leading previous projects

As discussed within the group of project partners as well as with the advisory board, the president of a hotel group, the general management, and the department heads can be seen as power promoters, while IT staff and teaching staff share similar roles as expert promoters, but with different tasks and responsibilities. Human resource managers can support the implementation as process promoters. Technology-related promoters who support the innovation process through their networking competence can be identified on the level of top management (general or operations management). Market-related relationship promoters cannot be found in the data. Leadership experiences of project leaders were discussed especially among the members of the advisory board which could be allocated to either the department heads or the staff from operations management.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Social Work Management Education

In the following, conclusions could be drawn from the use and evaluation of VR technologies in the three European higher education institutions. We will start with a few practical recommendations, which specifically focus on technical, material, communication, design, and pedagogical issues, before we conclude with recommendations for the sustainable transfer of the VR roleplay to social work management education. Thus, through the validation of the didactical framework for meaningful integration of VR roleplays in the higher education institutions, cross-institutional blueprints will be recommended based on data of potential usage of the VR environment. These blueprints demonstrate different ideal transferable implementations of VR environments at European universities and other educational institutions.

Practical Recommendation for the Implementation of VR Role Plays

Technical aspects: A preliminary validation of the computers is required (requirement: PC running a current version of the Windows™ operating system), as is their setup and capacity to operate the different apps (e.g., TEEMEW App). Other components of the VR technology (server-client structure, accounts, etc.) must also be arranged in advance: Are the virtual reality headsets available? Have you installed and downloaded all essential apps correctly? A pretest with potential users prior to the role-play is recommended.

Location, hygiene, and sanitation: To avoid distractions such as ambient noise, sound feedback, and a poor Wi-Fi connection, participants must engage in 'isolated' locations. If a high-speed Wi-Fi connection is available, a successful experience should be ensured. This should be scheduled and tested in advance. Thus, it is

suggested planning a room available to student actors and as space for spectators for every roleplay or a projection room fully equipped plus session recording would be a benefit for further analysis for an experience improvement and feedback. Students are asked to test VR for hygienic conditions using customised COVID-19 masks. Under these conditions, instructors must monitor the implementation of all hygienic and sanitation measures.

Communication recommendations: Each VR session requires meticulous upstream preparation: Which scenario should be presented to the students prior to the roleplay in order to promote participation? Is the teacher providing resources to the user prior to, during, and after the role-play? What kind of evaluation is appropriate and how should it be conducted? All debriefing should be tailored to the target group, e.g., HE students and/or professionals, to maximise efficiency. Prior to the roleplay, students should be instructed about how communication occurs between participants and with whom they will interact. Additionally, the experimentations emphasised the instructors' awareness of the role-play management under several assumptions: no preparation vs. with information communicated before the VR session using a variety of media including video, textual materials, and/or spoken information. All experiments allowed for testing the interest of making the students interact without prior conciliation or with prior conciliation. Nonetheless, the length of the roleplay is directly linked to the role-play preparation, especially if the experiments are managed by three partners. Regarding the interaction, students made the following recommendations to be developed in the future in terms of a code of conduct in the VCLE: (1) "The virtual engagement must take place in the same manner as it would in a presential roleplay. Students must behave and think as though they are in a presential situation." (2) Could a specialised classroom be created and designed just for VR testing in the university? "I am not convinced that the atmosphere has altered that much. [...] I could talk whenever I pleased, my coworkers heard me, and engagement was facilitated by our ability to listen to one another without difficulty."

Didactical recommendation: It is crucial for the VR roleplay's success to provide a highly immersive and sensory experience. The immersive experiences will be amplified even more when other human senses are incorporated, such as touch, sight, and scent. Virtual reality technology will become much more accessible, and avatars will be able to physically interact with users in onsite situations, such as touching furniture at the front desk or shaking hands. Meanwhile, the only method to perform that kind of VR scenario is via speech. Furthermore, VR experiments uncover new perspectives: Instructors and teaching staff who have not planned or participated in the roleplay should be included, and/or experiments with different user groups, such as teachers in vocational education, would be beneficial. Additionally, there is a need for enterprises in all business sectors and also in the social economy and health services owing to the industry's 7-day/24-hour operations and different shifts.

Recommendations for Instructors: Instructors should be convinced of using VR technology for designing learning experiences. In this sense, the following questions emerge as critical to the user experiences: How can skills and knowledge be

transferred to future instructors? Should it be part of their academic development managed by the head of the department? How can teaching staff become a volunteer in roleplay in the organisation? Last, but not least, the stress caused by the use of new technology is the most important factor for the users and might prevent them from actively participating in the roleplay.

Cross-Institutional Blueprints for the Implementation into Higher Education Institutions

Based on the validation of the didactical framework, options for action can be identified to link the corresponding dimensions of the didactical framework and to achieve a more sustainable and didactically coherent connection between digital teaching and higher education teaching and learning. As far as possible, all relevant teaching staff within the participating universities as well as representatives of the administration and the users themselves are involved in the process of implementation. The result of such processes examined in this report supports the development of empirically grounded and practically verified blueprints, which can be transferred to other universities as a possible ‘transformation path’ for the planning, design, and management of sustainably digitised teaching and learning environments. In particular, the criteria, framework, and initial conditions for such a successful transfer are reflected and provided alongside the following blueprints (see Fig. 19.7).

Blueprints describe and analyse the relationships between different components (cf. Villarroel et al., 2018). In terms of the Hotel Academy project, the blueprints were developed based on the dimensions of the didactical framework: Didactics, Organisation, Technology, Economy, and Culture. Furthermore, the requirements from the different education systems, institutions, and individual needs were taken into consideration. The blueprints emerged from the following four consecutive steps (see Fig. 19.6).

As shown in Fig. 19.7, the three blueprints recommended for the implementation and adoption into other European higher education institutions are as follows:

- *Prototyper*: This approach uses an experimental setting to include new technologies into the institution. At an early stage of the development of new models for teaching and organisational change, products were designed and tested during their introduction into the educational environments. An ideal prototyping procedure includes at least the following steps: (a) identifying the problem, challenges, and barriers that need to be solved or changed; (b) ideation helps to brainstorm possible ideas for the implementation of the new technologies; (c) prototypes will ensure the development and adoption of new concepts and approaches; (d) regular evaluation and assessment of the pros and cons of the newly developed prototypes will help to optimise it over time and support an early integration into the existing infrastructure.

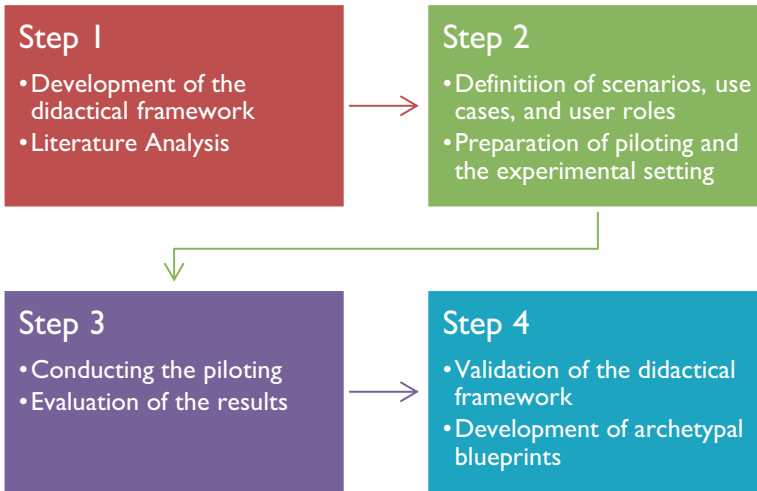


Fig. 19.6 Steps for the development of the blueprints. (Adopted from Villarrol et al., 2018, p. 847)



Fig. 19.7 Cross-institutional Blueprints for European Adoption. (Arnold, 2022b, CC BY 4.0)

- *Synergist*: This approach highlights the case that more advanced higher education institutions will be able to integrate new technological and didactical concepts into already existing labs and specialised departments, programmes, and projects. For example, an already existing mixed reality lab can provide necessary basic IT support, and has expertise gained in other projects to support the integration of new didactical steps. Additionally, it needs also to be considered that analogue and digital approaches, methods, and technologies, such as new work design, new learning paradigms, future of work, Open Educational Resources, and peer-coaching must be taught together and ‘synthesised’ and ‘integrated’ within the organisation. Finding synergies involves cooperation between different actors and departments and working on integral goals.
- *Multiplier*: This approach can be best described by the effect that experienced experts, teams, and organisations can amplify ideas, concepts, methods to a wide-ranging audience that can adopt new technologies in their institutions. In other words, a multiplier is an institution that distributes the solutions to others

to let them perform better in the future. For example, the VR roleplay developed in this project may also be applied into other educational institutions such as in vocational education and any other education programme that follows similar learning outcomes (e.g., where students are equipped with communicative skills, teamwork approaches, and social skills).

The three mentioned blueprints are no simple representations of the universities involved in this project, but they emerged from our data analysis as part of the recommendations from the involved stakeholder and experts. They demonstrate empirically grounded archetypes of different states at which a higher education institution can locate themselves. Nevertheless, each institution should evaluate their own current situation according to the following developmental questions:

- What previous experiences exist in higher education institutions that are relevant to planning?
- How can these experiences and pre-knowledge be adapted for planning and be integrated into institutional implementation strategies?
- How can digitalisation in the organisation support the implementation and adoption of new technologies?
- How can organisations adapt to the specific interdisciplinary, (inter-)national, and socio-cultural criteria at home?
- How can blueprints of such processes contribute to sustainable higher education development?

These questions show that the implementation of new technologies based on a didactical framework just raises awareness of other kinds of relevant contexts in the different institutions. Overall, the findings point to the fact that there is a positive relationship between the use of VR and its learning effects of presence, immersion, or collaboration. In contrast, the dimensions of economy, organisation, and culture are not yet sufficiently understood – reports from practical projects predominate the discussion, but validated scientific concepts are rare. With the spread of VR in formal education, the data situation will hopefully be expanded in the near future. The present framework provides a conceptual and theoretical basis to integrate experiences from VR-Education in a uniform concept and to draw conclusions and derive actions for educational institutions.

Future Research Directions and Practical Implications for Social Work Management Education

Although previous research has almost only focused on the domain-specific development and application of VR technologies in social work education, a transfer to social work management education is rather rare, if not existent. Nevertheless, the following overview about future research directions and practical implications should highlight the importance of further experimentation and indicate the

necessity of future development of discipline-specific scenarios adapted from or similar to the VR/desktop application TEEMEW as described above.

Recent academic research has delivered further proof of VR-based approaches in social work education which helps “to stimulate new ways to think about social issues and to provide a safe practice arena for skill development” (Huttar & Brintzenhofe Szoc, 2020, p. 120; see also Olson-Morrison, 2021): Compared to the integrated computer simulations identified by Smokowski and Hartung (2003), recent studies applied VR technologies within simulations that helped to simulate houses and living conditions of clients created by 3D models, e.g. in “Becoming Homeless” (Virtual Human Interaction Lab, 2017) and in “Virtual Reality Simulations for Social Workers” (VRoom, 2021). Other immersive experiences, such as in the 360-degree video-based Accenture Virtual Experience Solution (2020), assist caseworkers in improving their abilities and increasing their awareness of the many signs and safety indications. In the Cornerstone VR programme (2019), students are exposed to scenarios from the viewpoint of children in foster care and adoption services in order to aid social workers in detecting, analysing, and intervening in real-world situations. A recent example for using a 360 VR simulation within social work education is the “Virtual Training Simulation” at the New York University (2018) Silver School of Social Work that shows how students can learn in a typical urban neighbourhood and become familiar with its historical and social context and clients’ communities, demographics, and the physical space (Lanzieri et al., 2021). The pilot research demonstrates that considerable changes occurred in students’ views and knowledge acquisition between pre and post-survey: What students found most useful in their learning about the community “were the guided reflective questions combined with immersion in this authentic community context” (ibid., p. 214). As this study demonstrates, cognitive activity and the feeling of immersion during the VR experience triggered not only positive emotional responses but also provided a firm ground for the thesis that such kinds of instructions should align cognitive activities with authentic situations in the respective field of social work practice. In another study, Recover et al. (2021) combined mobile learning methodology (iSWAPP™) with virtual reality in social work university teaching and learning to train sophisticated skills such as “observation, active listening, and interviewing during a home visit” (ibid., p. 56). Especially, combining mobile learning technology helped not only “to teleport to other spaces, both real and virtual” but also “to support students in familiarising themselves with social contexts” (ibid., p. 68) that is not easy to observe as a process in the real world professional practice.

On a broader scale, Huttar and BrintzenhofeSzoc (2020, p. 134) revealed five themes in their systematic review that need to receive attention in future research: “orientation to the technology, professional competencies, population and practice level, benefits of the technology, and effectiveness.” These authors aptly elaborated that none of the articles under their review highlighted the impact of technology on sensory development and that “[n]one of the articles presented the use of virtual reality and simulation in the distance-learning programs that are growing in the field of social work, and only one tested the effectiveness of virtual training compared to

traditional in-class instruction” (Huttar & BrintzenhofeSzoc, 2020, p. 137). The review also emphasises the need to use VR technology and simulations to train postgraduate social workers and also to develop competencies of professionals already in the field of social work. Future research has to put more emphasis on the use of mixed reality to strengthen “macro-level skills such as those used in advocacy, community building, or legislative practices during graduate school and post graduation” (Huttar & BrintzenhofeSzoc, 2020, p. 137).

Furthermore, more efforts are required to reflect current practises in using VR-based applications in social work education. In an initiative, led by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (AASWSW, 2018), “12 Grand Challenges for Social Work” were described to support social work educators and professionals in their decisions to deliberately select and use 3D virtual reality applications and simulations based on both previous research and by ensuring health development and safety of vulnerable populations (Trahan et al., 2019). These so-called ‘grand challenges’ include for example: “Harness Technology for Social Good” which addresses “Practice Innovation through Technology in the Digital Age and Harnessing Big Data for Social Good” (AASWSW, 2018, as cited in Trahan et al., 2019, p. 14). As the authors conclude at the end of their research, “This is just the beginning of our understanding, as creators of virtual reality interventions continue to develop new applications of the technology that may transform the world of social relationships” (Trahan, et al., 2019, p. 25).

Last, but not least, as in any other technology, there are various challenges and barriers related to the use of virtual reality and simulations. Since Smokowski and Hartung’s (2003) review of computer simulations and virtual reality used in social work teaching and learning practises to enhance prevention and treatment of mental health problems, the following conclusions could be applied to the field of social work management education: VR-based applications and simulations are just another useful aid to improve students’ learning about the consequence of one’s own emotions, cognition, and behaviour which may involve ‘learning from doing’, ‘learning from failure’, ‘learning from stories’ in situated learning scenarios, and can improve social learning and communication skills, while mostly “based on interventions or treatment rather than prevention strategies” (Smokowski & Hartung, 2003, p. 25). Based on the findings gathered in our study, we suggest that any VR-based teaching approach can only become effective if students reflect their experiences after the intervention orally or in written assignments (e.g., via journaling).

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the limitations of the research in social work management education as discussed above, our research in this chapter shows that virtual collaborative learning and teaching can benefit from using immersive technologies to develop both key competencies, such as collaboration, virtual communication, and

problem-solving skills, as well as social and digital skills. Based on the evaluation of those skills in the Hotel Academy project, which aimed at the development of a transnational and transcultural desktop/VR-based roleplay, this chapter draws attention to learners' experiences of presence and immersion during its experimentation and the validation of the underlying didactical framework. Just as important, social work management education can only be enhanced through VR-based applications and simulations if the teaching contents and methods are adapted to the context of authentic management problems that can but have not to be related to social issues. The journey to development and implementation of potential virtual reality scenarios and computer simulations in the respective field has only just begun, and in the future the gap between the lack of effectiveness research and a meaningful experimentation and application in social work management programmes has to be bridged.

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Part IV
Concluding Remarks

Chapter 20

Conclusions: Social Work Management Education – Implications, Limitations and Directions for Future Research



Maik Arnold 

Abstract The objective of the *Handbook of Applied Teaching and Learning in Social Work Management Education* is to present state-of-the-art concepts, methods, and best practices of applied teaching and learning to face current challenges in social work management programmes: It aims at (i) providing an overview of the theoretical principles underlying social work management didactics; (ii) analysing the socio-economic conditions and institutional contexts surrounding social work management education in higher education institutions; and (iii) gaining a better understanding of the various teaching methods, approaches, and learning strategies used in social work and management programmes in higher education that contribute to the development of students' capabilities. The volume contains contributions from researchers and educators from a variety of multidisciplinary backgrounds and from a variety of countries throughout the world, who share their expertise, experiences, and perspectives on advancements in social work management education. Another feature of this book is that it includes also non-Western-centric approaches and contributions from countries on four continents. Expertise from specific regional and country-specific contexts helps to reflect that social work management education across the globe is facing numerous challenges. Conclusions can be drawn regarding the implications of the research presented in the respective field of education. Furthermore, there are a few limitations that need to be reflected in order to derive promising directions for future research.

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Implications for the Development of the Field of Social Work Management Education

Many authors in the book were critical of the current developments in the field of social work and management education and bring forth interesting new perspectives to be considered in its development. Kirwan and O'Driscoll (Chap. 2 in this volume) argued that there is a constant need for the definition of so-called 'threshold concepts' (Meyer & Land, 2003) to be considered in the planning and design of social work management programmes. As discussed in recent literature, threshold concepts necessitate deconstructing current bottlenecks to allow successful students' learning (see for example the multidimensional concept of 'sustainability' in Levintova and Mueller (2014) or the 'critical reflection in social work education' in Foote (2013)). In the domain of management education, Donovan (2017, p. 835) highlighted that a better understanding of "managing as *accomplishing results through other people*" can help learners in an introductory management course to easier differentiate between "doing work" and "managing work" in organizations. Additionally, professional capabilities to produce creative ideas, promote social innovations, critically analyse current management practices, and find alternative ways that go beyond the economies of growth and neoliberal policies, are of paramount importance. Additionally, Lucca Fazzi (Chap. 6 in this volume) suggests truly considering the aspect of creativity in instructional designs, curriculum development, and the accreditation of social work management programmes. Nevertheless, future research should put more effort into identifying a greater variety of such threshold concepts specific for the field of social work management education.

Social work management as the management of and in the social economy should maintain a link to its origins. The social economy arose from individuals organizing themselves for their own survival. Wendt (Chap. 5 in this volume) stresses that such transformation should be reflected in the learning design in the fields of social work management and social economy also at the meso- and macro-level. He pledges to think about new institutional arrangements in which officially organised professional services are paired with individual efforts and collaboration in the form of local communities of care. Moreover, the development of professional leadership capabilities of future managers in social work organizations may only benefit from competence-based approaches such as provided by Rofurth and Piepenbring (2019) if the individual perspectives (micro-level) are also included in the debate about professionalism, the development of professional standards, the curriculum development, and the development of teacher training programmes in higher education in general. This also has implications for the development of international competencies of future social work managers in the social economy and in non-profit organizations (see Zierer, Chap. 8 in this volume).

Like social work, social work management must address the ethics and values underlying its practices. As argued by Andrä (Chap. 7 in this volume), 'ethical reasoning' could be understood as a useful tool to help students navigate between interdisciplinary dilemmas and to support a theory-practice transfer from the management

of ethics to ethical management. Making ethical decisions by applying professional standards, using self-reflection to manage personal values, demonstrating demeanour in behaviour, using technology ethically and appropriately, using supervision and consultation to reach balanced judgement are just a few skills and abilities for what students need to be prepared in their prospective professional practice (Barsky, 2019, p. IX). In this regard, valued-based education in the field of social work that includes person-centred services as well as management tasks has a great potential for the value development in social work students (Glumbikova & Petrucijova, Chap. 14 in this volume).

Many authors in this volume have focused on the theoretical foundations and applications of teaching and learning theories to the field of social work management education, either based on a systematic approach to various types of didactic orders (Köhler, Chap. 3 in this volume) or via the lens of gamification and neurophysiological theory that support social workers' active learning strategies (Carey, Chap. 4 in this volume).

Various contributions in this handbook present country-specific teaching concepts, approaches, and methods, case studies, as well as best practices in social work management education that can be considered in relation to their current and potential application to training social work managers at undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral level, e.g.:

- *universal design* as holistic, student-centred, inclusive learning framework (Kirwan & López Paláez, Chap. 9 in this volume);
- *fieldwork and supervision* in social work as a useful teaching method and learning strategy (Calderón-Orellana, Díaz Borquez & Paz Martínez, Chap. 10 in this volume);
- *SALT model* – Strengths, Area of Focus, Limitations, and Theories to Redress – a method for teaching testable explanations and to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Gentle-Genitty, Chap. 11 in this volume; Gentle-Genitty et al., 2014);
- *service learning* to enhance students' practical abilities (Sadzaglishvili, Chap. 12; Arnold, Chap. 17, both in this volume);
- development of *critical digital literacy skills* in a hybrid social work research methodology module (Rennstich, Chap. 13 in this volume);
- *value-based education* (Glumbikova & Petrucijova, Chap. 14 in this volume);
- *analysis of mission statements* of social service organizations in an introductory anthropology module (Görl-Rottstädt, Andrä & Arnold, Chap. 15 in this volume);
- *promoting self-determination and motivation for the development of leadership skills* (Unger & Sann, Chap. 16 in this volume);
- *reflection on cross-cultural and cross-institutional teaching practices* as lectures in management education in Brazil and Germany (Klafke, Picinin & Arnold, Chap. 18 in this volume);
- *VR-based collaborative learning and teaching in a cross-institutional project* (Arnold, et al., Chap. 19 in this volume).

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This volume presents state-of-the-art pedagogical theories, empirical findings, and methods applied teaching and learning in the field of social work management. Like all research, this book project is also not free of a set of limitations inherent to its composition that finally need to be reflected. Additionally, directions for the future research and development of the social work management discipline will be assessed.

Despite all efforts to increase the number of contributions to enhance the academic, research, and practice dialogue between Global South and Global North (cf. Sajid, Baikady, Sheng-Li & Sakaguchi, 2020, p. 1061f.), the book predominantly presents research and innovative approaches from Western perspectives. Despite an open call to contributions from across the globe, few studies from e.g., India, New Zealand, Nigeria, and Thailand were – due to the COVID-19 restrictions and various other constraints – not able to either deliver or finalise their research. Hopefully, this inspiring research will be included in future edited volumes. Nevertheless, the book contributes to the debate on enhancing the professional status of social work management education and practices in an international context. The handbook provides an important attempt to engage educators, students, and practitioners in a dialogue about the theories, methods, and practices of social work management in the respective field of higher education.

Directions for future research in this specific field of higher education didactics can be seen in the subsequent three areas: (1) To question the mainstream thinking and practice of management, it would be beneficial if social work sciences will be confronted with concepts and approaches from *Critical Management Studies* (CMS). Critical theoretical perspectives can challenge prevailing social practices and institutional arrangements such as “patriarchal, neo-imperialist as well as capitalist - and anticipates the development of alternatives to them” (Alvesson, Bridgman & Willmott, 2009, p. 1). As one of the most prominent philosophical foundations of CMS, critical theory provides a valid basis for the development of teaching and research about a respective discipline (Dryzek, 1995). (2) For a long time, the *theory-practice transfer* in social work management education has been the subject of extensive research (Arnold, 2020, p. 102f.). In the light of a threefold relationship, a science-practice transfer can be promoted in students’ research- and practice-oriented training by considering the following aspects: (i) management as an object of social work education, (ii) social work management as a resource for the theory-practice transfer, and (iii) professional competence as an integral component of the mindset of competent social workers working with a multitude of individuals, groups, and communities. Against the backdrop of future research, this does not only emphasise the need to go beyond Schön’s (1983) ‘reflective practitioner’ but also to enhance the “understanding of the processes of power and conflict in research collaborations with practitioners” (McCabe et al., 2021, p. 625). (3) Future research should also consider a discussion and further development of the *transdisciplinary framework for higher education didactics* in the field of social work management as

presented in Chap. 1 in this volume. This can be achieved through a discussion of good teaching practices, social work management didactics in higher education, the achievement of teaching and learning goals for training future social workers at the level of the learner, instructional methods, the study program, and institutional structures and education policies at multiple levels.

Despite the mentioned limitations, it is hoped that this rich resource of information provided in this volume is beneficial for not only educators, students, and researchers in social work management programmes in a wider international context but also for practitioners in social and human service organisations in general.

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