

Social street work: An substantiated explanation model of methodic acting

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8th European Conference for Social Work Research **Book of Abstracts**

**8th European Conference
for Social Work Research**
Book of Abstracts

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promote the satisfaction of families undergoing assessments of the wellbeing of the child.

In the oral presentation, we are going to introduce the Swiss child protection system very briefly and contextualise the cases we analysed. The focus is on the results of the study and implications for the improvement of such assessments.

F9 Abstract ID: 752

Listening to Children in Residential Child Care: a Child-Centred and Lifeworld-Oriented Practice

Ingrid Hofer, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano

In this century, research on children in child and youth-welfare remarkably increased on an international level (Ruch, 2014; Munro, 2011). Researchers' interest in children, living in residential child care or in foster families, spread over (Pösö & Eronen, 2015; Winter, 2015; Goodyear, 2011). However, residential child care represents still predominantly a black box in terms of everyday life of children living in there (Thiersch, 2012, Böcker Jakobsen, 2010). Moreover the perspectives of children under eight often are not taken into account, as if there still exists a lack of credence given to young children (Holland, 2009). Especially in Italy research on children living in residential child care and in foster families has not been carried out, yet (Bellotti, 2014). The practice research I am going to present aimed to throw light on the everyday-life of children, on their meaning-making and acting in a residential child care unit in Northern Italy. In this research children were conceptualized as social actors, as Productive Processors of Reality (Hurrelmann, 1998) who engage actively in shaping peer-group-relationships and the intergenerational order. The research study relies on a Children's Rights Perspective and to the concept of lifeworld-orientation (Thiersch, 1986). Research was carried out in a residential child care unit – in a familial analogues residential group – from May to June 2015. An extensive step-in-step-out-ethnography was adopted to explore the perspectives of children aged from 6 to 12. In accordance to children's capacities and interests participative methods were integrated to bring in also the voices of young children and children with cognitive impairment. The researcher took in a least-adult-role (Mayall, 2008). The research process was accompanied by a critical reflexive process. In the analyses of the relational scenes a phenomenological-interpretivist view (Ferguson & Ferguson, 2000) was adopted. The illustrated scenes formulated in thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) in which adults and children co-construct reality, give an insight in their everyday-life-relationship-dynamics. The perspectives of children become visible not only in a variety of observable forms (shouting, protesting, questioning) but also sometimes in subtle interests (observing, playing) and unspoken questions (falling in silence). I argue that, if adults are capable to grasp interests and concerns of children in such subtle moments, these interactional-moments become meaningful moments for children. By entering in a dialogue – which also could mean, by playing with children – they even represent crucial chances for children to enforce self-efficacy and to widen social competences. In comparing different micro-scenes – certainly these are embedded in a specific socio-political, economical and organizational context – factors and dynamics that may widen or restrict self-efficacy of children, reveal. Focusing on perspectives of children leads to enrich adult-professional-perspectives on children, to widen knowledge about children, to reflect in which way professionalization of social workers could be developed further and – last but not least – to enforce social workers' competences in co-creating meaningful experiential spaces with and for children.

Keywords: residential child care, lifeworld-orientation, child-centred residential care

F10 Researching communities

Chair: Mark Smith

Room: 50 George Square, G.02

F10 Abstract ID: 613

Social street work: An substantiated explanation model of methodic acting

Evelien Rauwerdink-Nijland, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences

Background and purpose

Within Northwest European Welfare states, there is a growing need for all social work professions to substantiate their work with research. The earliest notions of social street work origins from the end of the 18th century by the British Salvation Army (Mikkonen et al., 2007). In the Netherlands it's introduced from the United States (1960s), as a response to individuals and groups hanging around. Social street work is a low threshold and professional form of being there, performed in surroundings and situations where the target group is. It focusses on contact-making and staying in contact with individuals and marginalised groups, who otherwise are hard to reach, have lost their connection with society and have multiple problems. It's a high appreciated practice, but it lacks a method that is substantiated with research (Morse et al., 1996; Kirkpatrick, 2000). In this paper we will present conceptual model of the method of social street work, that's substantiated with experiences from professionals and the target group.

Method

This paper is based on a combination of literature review, document analysis, Delphi Method and an online questionnaire among the target group. The research is conducted at Streetcornerwork in Amsterdam. Streetcornerwork is the only organization in the Netherlands that provides social street work, since WWII. They employ 175 professional social street workers and has 43 years of experience in social street work.

First, a theoretical model of social street work is developed based on literature review, analyses of documents of the establishment (1970-1990) of social street work (Netherlands) and different attempts to describe the method (1991-2017). Second, the explanation model is strengthened with data from the online questionnaire among 1600 clients of Streetcornerwork. Third, the Delphi Method is used to validate the model with the tacit knowledge of 24 professionals.

Results

The result is a conceptual model of the method of social street work that is substantiated with experiences from professionals and the target group. Characteristic is that it's an open approach in contact with the target group which is highly dependent on context and has unpredictable character (Metz, 2016, Andersson, 2011). The method social street work consists of 14 methodic principles. Social street work contributes to the development of self-insight and general life skills, the restoration of the social network and the improvement of living conditions and the well-being of the target group. We also gain insight in the experienced contribution of social street work from persons in the environment of the target group (client system, neighborhood and institutional environment). This experienced contribution of social street work at the environment is divided into the direct contribution and the implicated contribution through the target group.

Conclusions and implications

This conceptual model of the method of social street work contributes to a body of knowledge. We made tacit knowledge explicit and we can legitimize the profession of social street work. Because research is done in close collaboration with street workers, it also contributes to the development of their work.

F10 Abstract ID: 627

Natural resource extraction as a social work issue

Satu Ranta-Tyrkkö, University of Jyväskylä

The world is in the midst of a broad systemic crisis, or alternatively state shift, which the ongoing ecological transformations manifest. Noting on one hand the severity of the current and evolving ecological/ environmental risks and on the other hand the importance of energy and raw materials for the functioning and the material basis of societies, one of the major challenges at stake is how to solve humanity's resource (raw material) dependency in a sustainable manner. The standpoint of this presentation, along with the lines of ecosocial (/ecological, environmental or green) social work is that the situation calls for a rapid, broad based ecosocial sustainability transition. Furthermore, the assumption is that in the transition, social work can have a significant role to play, but this requires an ecological paradigm shift in social work itself.

The presentation focuses on the resources question by discussing metal mining and its social work ramifications in the context of Northern Finland. Empirically, the presentation is based on thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews (n20), added with insights generated through participant observation and casual conversations in one mining region in Northern Finland during altogether 3 weeks (September 2015, October 2016, May 2017). The interviewees, who were various social welfare professionals and other people well positioned to reflect upon the changes that had occurred during and after the intensification of mineral extraction in the region, were asked about their perceptions about mining-related changes in the social and economic life and circumstances in the region. The interviews also dealt with mining related social work needs and responses, as well as the interviewees' assumptions regarding the future.

In the mining region in question, connections between mining industry and social work are mostly indirect. For the time being, mining jobs have solved the problems of those whose only problem was joblessness, improving the employment situation but requiring also the service infrastructure to adjust to the rhythms of mining work. On the other hand, while many fear the ecological aftermath awaiting, concerns regarding intergenerational equity (as the resources are depleted) and long-term sustainability of mineral extraction remain largely unanswered. Would social work want to seriously work with mining related social and environmental justice issues, a step ahead could be addressing and working on the affective aspects of environmental woes and guilt, and what kind of mechanisms hinder people from more environmentally friendly and sustainable choices.

F10 Abstract ID: 778

Urban Social Work and Migrant Integration in Urban Settings

Ilse Julkunen, University of Helsinki; Maria Tapola-Haapala, University of Helsinki; Anna Nurmi, University of Helsinki; Päivi Heino, University of Helsinki

The increased number of migrants and asylum-seekers in Europe bring out the issue of permission to entrance and settle in a country but also the settling itself. The process is conditioned by legal frameworks and policies that have both great impact on the everyday lives of migrants. From a social work perspective the issue actualises the questions of integration and the role of welfare service in becoming, be it public or non-governmental. The pressure of the increased number of migrants has to a great extent concerned urban settings. The urban perspective of

migrant integration is mostly lacking and so are studies that build on both migrant experiences as well as professional experiences. This study aims at contributing with in-depth knowledge about the inter-play between welfare services, social networks and paths of integration. It has a special focus on urban social work practices and working methods that support the integration and participation of people with immigrant background in Finland. The focus is on first generation migrants who have lived in Finland a couple of years and have experience with public and/or third sector services that aim to support and facilitate integration. The research project is carried out in co-operation with University of Helsinki, department of Social Work and Diaconia University of Applied Sciences. The project is funded through the Helsinki Metropolitan Region Urban Research Program.

This two-year study draws on a multi-sited research paying attention to migrants' and social work professionals' practical knowledge on integration processes. The main data is collected through group interviews (separately for customers and officials) in public institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in Cities of Espoo, Helsinki, Vantaa and Lahti. We also draw on statistics and documents on integration processes within the different research sites. With the collected data we aim to answer the question: What are the critical factors that promote or prevent the settling in and integration in Finland? How can urban social work respond to these challenges? The study has also a collaborative framework with the aim to create local knowledge production teams that will produce knowledge on the emergent and critical elements that are effective in integration processes. These production teams include both professionals as well as customers. These are formed dialogically during the study and the discussions will also be included in the final analysis.

An outline of an urban social work approach based on the interviews and the collaborative seminars will be presented, including a typology of the cases of how problems and focal processes are identified. Our preliminary analysis point out several critical issues: Authority led system centered activities vs Free formed social relations, critics against working on behalf of migrants vs the need for looking at special needs and trauma services, limited options in political-structural issues vs the possibilities via family reunions. We believe that dialogues and negotiations between different actors throughout the research process may enhance knowledge building and changes at the individual and organizational level and may lead to making changes possible.

F10 Abstract ID: 802
Participation in leisure activities and socio-cultural action as a promoter of neighbourhood social cohesion and improvement of the quality of life of citizens.

Miguel Ángel Pulido-Rodríguez, Ramon Llull University; Pilar Muro, Ramon Llull University, Social education and social work Faculty Pere Tarrés; Jordi Sabater, Ramon Llull University, Social education and social work Faculty Pere Tarrés; Francisco Fernandez-moran, Ramon Llull University, Social education and social work Faculty Pere Tarrés

The communication we present is part of the first phase of the research project 'Leisure, socio-cultural action and social cohesion' (2015-2017) funded by the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness of Spain (EDU2014-57212-R). It is an investigation that arises from the need to delve into the correlation between leisure activities and sociocultural action directed to children, teenagers and young people and social cohesion of the territory. It's also important to advance in the knowledge of how these practices promote social cohesion in working-class neighbourhoods. This has led us to prioritize criteria, methodologies and actions that generate a significant impact on the construction of social cohesion of the neighbourhood in which they are developed, as well as the promotion of good practices identified in diverse socio-educational centres.

Methodology used to carry out this study was a mixed design (quantitative-qualitative), of participatory sequential exploratory data analysis (DEXPLIS). The information was collected simultaneously in 4 districts of two autonomous communities of Spain, specifically Catalonia and the Basque country. The quantitative results have guided the subsequent collection of qualitative data and the establishment of dimensions from which we have analysed the in-depth interviews. For the results presented in this paper, the following techniques has been used: 285 questionnaires to residents of the neighbourhoods of Prosperitat (Barcelona) and La Peña and Otxarkuaga (Bilbao), and a total of 38 qualitative techniques, 26 interviews in-depth to significant people of the neighbourhoods (14) and professionals of sociocultural entities of the neighbourhoods (12) and 12 life stories to significant people.

A relevant factor is that working-class people, mostly immigrants from other regions of Spain and from other countries, configure these neighbourhoods. They have a high perception about their social cohesion as a territory, 87% of neighbours consider their neighbourhood to be cohesive (32%) and 55% consider as very cohesive. After analysing the quantitative and qualitative data, the main results of the research refer to the following indicators that we will present in detail in our communication. There is a relationship between the relevance of neighbourhood participation in leisure activities and sociocultural action and the positive perception about the social cohesion of the neighbourhood (a), participation as an starting point for the improvement of social cohesion (b), the perception of the neighbourhood network as a previous step towards the perception of the neighbourhood as a cohesive environment (c), the perception that the social cohesion of the neighbourhood is a previous step towards the commitment and the construction of social cohesion beyond the neighbourhood, throughout the city (d).

Notes