

Coordinators: Jorge Ferreira and Helena Belchior Rocha

SYMPOSIUM THEME

"Mediterranean knowledge-potentialities in social work education"

This symposium seeks to reflect and promote the academic, knowledge and scientific development of social work professional practice utkising a critical and sustainable approach to social work practice. Recognition of in socio-economic, cultural and political domains, which are characterized by cultural, ethnic and environmental diversity, is critical within society context which are committed to the values of solidarity and human rights.

We intend to provide contributions for the reconfiguration of an educational model in social work development. The approach promotes greater integration and utilisation of the social matrix and the social and human development model, where PEOPLE count. It therefore seeks to deconstruct the bi-conceptual Francophone or Anglosaxon models which historically have been influential in educational practices and social policies.

Additionally we aim to explore the potential of Mediterranean knowledge for the Education in Social Work focusing in the new definition of Social Work (2014) and integrating theoretical, scientific and indigenous knowledge. From a holistic approach to an interdisciplinary approach gathering knowledge and life experiences, reconfiguring the Social Work pedagogical teaching frame into a paradigmatic basis: systemic, structuralist and ecological.

Participants:

1. Jorge Ferreira and Helena Rocha – ISCTE-IUL Portugal

Social Work principles, humanitarian and ethical values of Mediterranean influence

The current society proposes the reconstruction of the social model and of the social cohesion in the practice domain and not just in the realm of ideas, which are a challenge and a commitment for social work education and training.

After reflecting on the Humanist values, which focus their attention on the Man and on the respect for himself; the democratic values that develop the necessary conditions for the development of their personality and their social and civic participation in society; the political, economic and cultural values that promote the principle of subsidiarity, equality of opportunities, social and human rights and educational values, sustained in scientific knowledge and that give support to an informed practice in social work.

We approach the relationship of "knowledge" with the market (Empowering or Conditioning), with the Public Policy (Application and Evaluation) and with the access of people mobility and specialized human resources and also the free movement in the European space of people and workers. Social work in the field of knowledge production, Human Rights, Social and Cultural

Rights; new technologies; information society; globalization; network and partnership and Social Citizenship.

We advocate an approach that seeks to demystify the classical oppositions Europe / Mediterranean, North / South; West / East, and facilitate new sustainability configurations of social space and daily life, based on the Mediterranean major social issues.

2. Antonio López Peláez (UNED), Raquel Pérez García (UPNA) and Victoria Aguilar-Tablada Massó (UNED) - Spain

Digital natives and Social Work Education in the Southern European Countries

In this symposium, our paper will focus on the key role of digital networks in the field of Social Work Education. We analyse the knowledge produced by the practice of Social Work in the Internet. Our discipline, Social Work, has to be at the forefront of technology. We must develop new research lines, working with the big data and the internet. In this sense, we are working on a new methodological approach: the E-Social Work. E-Social Work can be defined as the use of new information and communications technologies in the field of social work and social services. E-Social Work includes online research, patient treatment (individual therapy, group and community dynamics), the training and teaching of social workers, and the monitoring of social service programs. In the sphere of online research, e-Social Work uses different approaches, particularly netnography. And in the field of social intervention, social workers resort to intervention methodologies based on new technologies.

As The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development has pointed out, to strengthen the link between research and teaching, we need to build collaborative networks. We need research-oriented projects, to disseminate good practices and develop quality teaching materials. In this sense, we discuss several online educational programs that are now developing in different countries of Southern Europe.

3. Antonia Picornell-Lucas y Cristina Herrero Villoria – Univ Salamanca - Spain

Child rights: a key driver to manage social cohesion. A review under the Spanish curriculum postgraduate of social work.

The citizenship increasingly demands political, social and economic entities equality of opportunity among its members. Assume this balance represents growth and prosperity. A reflection of this development is the situation of children and adolescents, who since the in passing of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) are considered social fellows of right.

However, there are still inequities in the world, and also in Spain, where even children do not have full and real capacity to participate in their own development and in matters that concern them, as is detailed in several documents which ensure rights. The child as a social actor, main character in his own life, is a scantily studied stage, continuing/proceeding with its consideration of benefit recipients.

In this process, the practice of social work is particularly important to build a sustainable and quality system, making visible the childhood as a social structure itself. Besides promote

reforms that impact positively on the development of all children and adolescents. These reasons clarify the need to provide learning opportunities on the rights of children in university education. Along the same lines, according to the OCDE "Sustainable development and social cohesion depend critically on the competencies of all of our population – with competencies understood to cover knowledge, skills, attitudes and values". This study aims to have an overview of the conditions of the rights of children in the postgraduate social work programs in Spain.

4. Christian Van Kerckhove - University College Ghent - Belgium

Cultural symbolism and rites of passage as a stepping stone to more tolerance

The project Rites of Passage was initiated in 2009 by MixIt – An expertise center for research, documentation and education in living/together. It wishes to contribute to the creation of tools for social workers in their action for a more harmonious society by bringing attention to the value of both the diversity and similarities between different people and peoples. Through the recognition of the "same" in the otherness of the other, we tend to be more open to this same otherness and the alterity of other cultures. Rites of passage are for a social worker a unique lever to stimulate mutual tolerance between people(s). Recognition and acknowledgment come into being by referring to the universality of these rites of passage while at the same time offering a possibility to share what is particular to our own culture.

This contribution 'Cultural symbolism and rites of passage as a stepping stone to more tolerance' contributes to the creation of tools for educators and social workers in their action for a more harmonious society by bringing attention to the value of both the diversity and the similarities between different people and peoples. Rites of passage are a unique lever to stimulate mutual tolerance between people. Recognition and acknowledgment arise by referring to the universality of these rites of passage (birth, adolescence, marriage, death) while at the same time offering a possibility to share what is particular to our own identity.

In my contribution I have chosen for an exemplary and qualitative approach in addressing the question "Can tolerance be promoted by referring to the universality of the symbolism in human behaviour?".

5. Gary Spolander – Coventry University, UK

Rediscovering the importance of structure in social work

Neoliberalism has become a dominant and influential discourse in social policy and consequently has impacted on communities, families, individuals as well as professions such as social work. These impacts have often had negative outcomes and resulted in challenges for social work in how it should address their consequences. The importance of understanding how structure, interacts with socio-political, cultural, political and organisational contexts is critical in being able to understand neoliberalism impact on society, care services and social work. Neoliberalism's influence and governmentality has conditioned and shaped social work's practice through the shaping of education, organisational structures, risk systems and the practice of social workers. This has meant an increasing focus on efficiency and effectiveness in services, a focus on viewing problems through individual responsibility and pathology and without critically analysing and addressing the structural causes of individual and group distress, social work will be unable to lead and support collective and individual responses.

This presentation seeks to explore this context and the educational and practice challenges for the profession and why change is necessary. I thus provide a context for the exploration of Mediterranean knowledge and its potential for social work knowledge and practice.

6. Pablo Álvarez-Pérez and Isabel Santana – ISCTE/IUL and Lisbon City Hall – Portugal

Territories and Public Housing practice in southern European countries: potentialities for a Social Work education

Territories are one of the best resources to analyse society in all its forms. The dynamics and processes expressed therein are a significant source of information that contributes to the global understanding of peoples. Within this context, housing is recognized worldwide as one of the most important means of the socio-spatial distribution of territories, having a huge influence on processes like social inclusion/exclusion, and in other kinds of distributions, namely, wealth and poverty.

As a consequence of the economic crisis and the social alarm caused by evictions, a growing concern has risen about good housing practices (Arredondo & Palma, 2013; Hernández, 2013). This has led to reflection and analysis about the practices that a social worker should serve in this field and how this should also be integrated in education.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states housing as one of its undeniable rights (art. 25), and it is developed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights too (art. 11). There are numerous Constitutions of the States where the right to decent and adequate housing is expanded and detailed, among which some of the Mediterranean countries as Spain (art. 47) and Portugal (art. 65).

Social Work as a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people, has as principles social justice and human rights (IFSW, 2014), so it must be committed to the right of housing.

This paper will discuss the potential contributions to the Mediterranean knowledge for the social work education of social work practice in the field of Public Housing in Spain and Portugal. Results show that Public Housing environments are characterized by socio-cultural diversity; therefore they must be taken into consideration as a potentiality for the social work curricula.