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Shandor Fedir

Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Associate Professor
Head of Department of Sociology and Social Work
State University «Uzhhorod National University», Uzhhorod, Ukraine
f.shandor@gmail.com

Bartosh Olena

Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Department of Sociology and Social Work
State University «Uzhhorod National University», Uzhhorod, Ukraine
olena.bartosh@uzhnu.edu.ua
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6733-5516>

FUNCTIONS AND CONCEPT-CATEGORY APPARATUS OF SOCIOLOGY OF SOCIAL WORK

Abstract. Sociology of social work as a scientific branch is still quite young and is in the stage of its formation. It undergoes the process of defining and refinement of the content of basic essential features and characteristics of the concept category apparatus describing this branch of sociological knowledge. The separating of sociology of social work into the special sociological theory of the middle level is conditioned by the actualisation of social phenomenon of «social work» and the growth of the role of sociological knowledge in its study and theoretical substantiation. The purpose of the article: to reveal the main functions of sociology of social work. Methods of research: analysis and systematization of scientific and educational-methodical literature in order to determine the state and theoretical substantiation of the problem under research. Each independent science has its own categories, patterns, principles and methods of research. Of course, the categories of social work are those that are used by other sciences: for example, psychosocial work, structural social work, social rehabilitation, social well-being, etc. The main functions of sociology of social work are: cognitive, practical, theoretical, narrative, informational, prognostic, managerial, humanistic, ideological, and socialisation. Sociological categories are the basic and most general concepts of sociology, reflecting the objective social reality in a generalised form, in its formation, development and consolidation, and, moreover, they act as «steps» of sociological science and sociological knowledge. They form the basis of the process of thinking about social reality, about the phenomena and processes occurring in one or another social organism.

Key words: sociology of social work; functions; concept-category apparatus; subject and object of social work.

Introduction. The issue of theoretical substantiation of social work is relevant both in terms of building up the Ukrainian statehood and formation of civil society, and in terms of Ukraine's effective entry into the European Union. Thus, it is necessary in Ukraine to form and coordinate the interaction between a number of social institutions, which have already been functioning in the European environment. The system of social work refers precisely to such entities. At the same time, nowadays social work in Ukraine possesses an underdeveloped morphology and does not function effectively enough within its competence. Under these conditions, the process of building the Ukrainian statehood is slowing down; the state policy is not purposeful and effective in shaping of sociality features, causing social and political conflicts. The country's population suffers the most since its majority is below the poverty line.

Methodology of the Research. V. Bekh, M.Lukashevych & M.Tulenkov, who devoted their scientific research to the development of functions and conceptual-categorical apparatus of sociology of social work put forward the view that the place and role of sociology of social work in the practical activity of people, in the life of society as a whole is realised through the functions that it performs. These functions thus determine its main responsibilities to the society, the most important direction and scope of its activities (Bekh, Lukashevych, & Tulenkov, 2008).

The separating of sociology of social work into a special sociological theory of the middle level is conditioned by the actualisation of the social phenomenon of «social work» and the growth of the role of sociological knowledge in its study and theoretical substantiation. Arguments for the premise on confirming this tendency from social work researchers rest on the

definition of Ukrainian scientists I. Mygovych and T. Semygina, who consider that «social work is obliged to sociology – science of society as an integral system, institutions, processes, groups and communities, the principles of their interaction, relations of an individual and society, existing patterns of behaviour – with its theoretical achievements, methodology of knowledge of social reality, elucidation of the effectiveness of practical efforts» (Semygina & Mygovych, 2005).

Such a position is widely supported in the source scientific base of social work. On the one hand, it is manifested in the allocation in separate scientific and educational publications of separate units and sections devoted to the analysis of the interrelationships of sociology and social work; on the other hand, articles of sociological origin are published in dictionaries and encyclopedic publications. Almost all scholars of social work recognize the existence of a block of sociologically oriented theories in the theoretical foundations of social work, which include systematic, ecological, social-radical and the theory of stigmatisation (Lukashevych & Semygina, 2014).

In our opinion, despite the thorough research of the above mentioned problems, the issue of separation of functions and the conceptual-categorical apparatus of sociology of social work remains relevant.

The **purpose** of the article is to reveal the main functions of sociology of social work. **Methods of research** used: analysis and systematization of scientific and educational-methodical literature in order to determine the state and theoretical substantiation of the research problem.

Results and Discussion. The implementation of radical reforms in the economy and political life, in social and cultural practices shows that today the state

cannot do without realisation of one of the directions of life organisation of individuals and communities – social work. The modern understanding of the foundations of social development comes out from the fact that the social policy of the state should be aimed at creating conditions that ensure a decent life and the free human development.

In these conditions, as never before, the importance of social work as a social mechanism for supporting the human vital forces, which is understood as the *subject of social work* at different levels, increases. In this regard, it is important to define the subject of social work. The subject of social work as an independent social science is the laws of promoting the formation and implementation of vital forces of an individual and social subjectivity of an individual, as well as improving the mechanisms of conjugation of life forces and means of ensuring their implementation.

Thus, the *object of the study of social work* is the process of relationships, interactions, interactions of mechanisms, methods and means of regulating the behaviour of social groups and individuals, contributing to the realisation of their vitality and social subjectivity, as well as the nature of interaction of an individual's vital forces and groups and means of ensuring their implementation in different social situations.

Each independent science has its own categories, patterns, principles and methods of research. Of course, the categories of social work are those that are used by other sciences: for example, psychosocial work, structural social work, social rehabilitation, social well-being, etc.

The main functions of the sociology of social work are (Bekh, Lukashevych, & Thulenkov, 2016):

Cognitive function – is related to the study of the laws of social development, the tendencies of changing of various social phenomena and processes in the field of social work. A special place here belongs to sociological theories, which on the basis of sociological studies reveal the laws and prospects of the development of this sphere of society, give scientific answers to the actual problems of the present, indicate ways and methods of social work improving;

Practical function – is determined by the degree of participation of sociology of social work in the development of practical recommendations and proposals for improving of efficiency of management of various social processes in the field of social work and the field as a whole;

Theoretical function – concentration, explaining, replenishing and enriching of existing sociological knowledge on social work field; developing of laws, categories and methods of this science on the basis of the study of social activity in the field;

Descriptive function – provides systematisation, description, accumulation of the research material obtained in the form of analytical researches, various kinds of scientific reports, articles, books. These materials are the source of measurement, counting, comparison for future generations;

Information function – collection, systematisation and accumulation of sociological information on social work field, obtained as a result of research. Sociological information is the most active form of social information. It is used by sociologists, heads of state and other institutions to manage the social sector, social processes and phenomena, social activities and behaviour of people involved in the social work field;

Prognostic function – preparing social forecasts in the field of social work. Sociological researches end with the substantiation of the short-term, medium-term

or long-term forecast of the object researched. The short-term analysis is based on the revealed tendency, as well as on the regularity and discovery of a factor that has a decisive influence on social work. The discovery of such a factor is a complex type of scientific work. Therefore, sociological practice often uses short-term and medium-term forecasts for the development of the field;

Function of management – is primarily associated with the use of knowledge to develop and establish effective models of management of various social systems and institutes, social processes and objects of social work;

Humanistic function – development of goals of social development of the field, formation of social ideals and values, programmes of scientific-technical and social-cultural development of social work;

Ideological function – originates from the objective participation of sociology of social work in the spiritual life of society, the development of prospects for its development, the spread of scientific ideology among the population, the training of highly skilled management personnel and competent social work specialists;

Function of socialisation – by contributing to the improvement of effectiveness of the field management, this function expands the opportunities for the positive influence of social work on the socialisation of people involved in the provision and receipt of social assistance.

Considering the content of conceptual-categorical apparatus, it should be noted that the concepts and categories of sociology of social work form a mental apparatus of understanding and description of social processes and phenomena in the field under consideration, a kind of sociological language of research, analysis and interpretation of its results.

The term «concept» itself is understood as:

– the form of thinking, which reflects the essential properties, connections and relations of objects and phenomena in their contradictions and development;

– thought or system of thoughts generalisation that distinguishes objects of a certain class in certain general and specific characteristics.

Concepts are distinguish in:

– broad sense – formally distinguish common (similar) features of objects and phenomena and fix them in words;

– scientific sense – reflect the essential and necessary features, words and signs (formulas) expressing them, they are the scientific terms.

Sociological categories are the basic and most general concepts of sociology, reflecting the objective social reality in a generalised form, in its formation, development and consolidation, and, moreover, they act as «steps» of sociological science and sociological knowledge. They form the basis of the process of thinking about social reality, about the phenomena and processes occurring in one or another social organism (Surmin, 2006, p.296).

Considering the concept and categories of sociology of social work, we should distinguish among them two main groups.

(I) main categories of science of sociology, which are generic for all levels of sociological knowledge. For the science of sociology, the category «social» is very wide and central category.

The content of the category «social» is disclosed in the following explanations.

1) social – is a property inherent in individuals and communities, which is formed as a result of the processes of socialisation and integration of man into society, in social relations;

2) social – reflects the meaning and nature of

interactions between actors (individuals, groups, communities) as the result of certain human social roles assumes when becoming a member of a particular social community;

3) social – is a result of interaction and can be expressed in culture, assessments, orientations, behaviour, spiritual activity, way of life of people, etc. Consequently, modern society can be represented as a kind of system, which consists of separate levels of social groups and their relationships, and is considered from the following positions:

- the fundamental level of formation of society organization is humanity as a whole, which represents its interests as a single civilisation;

- social institutions – stable, organised forms of joint activity of people;

- social classes, groups, communities, layers, layers, circles;

- the level of an individual, since for the sociology an individual is the subject of study – as the subject and object of social relations.

Finally, social can have non-personal form of existence. For example, the spiritual and material values of society, groups, personality, works of art and literature, and much more, where the social idea of human as their spiritual creator is reflected.

As we see, the category «social» serves, first of all, to reveal the:

- reflection of the essence of social life of people (the problems of interaction between nature and society);

- specifics of the social form of the movement of matter, that is, the differences of society from animal associations;

- contradictory unity of man as a social being and, at the same time, a biological organism;

- structures of social systems in terms of optimising their functioning and development.

Consequently, the category «social» reflects and expresses the specificity of the existence of society as the subject of the life process in general, and accordingly – the specifics of all social processes and social subjects.

The complexity of the actual implementation of the social process, the diversity of its social subjects, each of which represents the social integrity, is reflected by the relevant category (individual, collective, family, social group, community, society, etc.), and also has its essential characteristics, which are identified through the social category.

Sociological categories are divided into two types:

- *Methodological categories* – include: the essence of social relations (social systems, institution organisation, control, action, relations, sphere); content of social communities (society, community, class, layer, group, personality); the essence of social processes (social adaptation, mobility, integration, conflict, disorganisation, socialisation); the essence of social development (social progress, action, movement, activity, development, innovation); the nature of the use of sociological knowledge in the practice of social life (social design, forecasting, planning, technology);

- *Procedural categories* – reflect the peculiarities of collection, analysis and processing of social information, organisation of sociological research and the processing of their results (sociological research, methodology, methods and technique of research, sociological dimension and its methods, empirical interpretation of concepts, programme and research technology, etc.).

All these categories of the first group retain their significance at all levels of sociological knowledge (Lukashevich & Tulenkov, 2008), in the sociology of social work including.

At that time, sociological categories and concepts are filled with real social content through their system-forming elements – the practical activity of particular individuals in specific spheres of society, including social work field.

(II) specific sociological concepts and categories that are inherent in the sociological vision and the description of the subject of sociology of social work. Here certain borrowing of a large part of social work as a system of knowledge is observed to provide it with sociological content.

Let's consider the main ones (Kozubovska, & Mygovych, 2001; Social Work, 2002).

- Social work – is a professional activity aimed at helping people to overcome serious social problems, which uses a wide range of specialised approaches and techniques.

- Social protection – is a system of principles, methods, legally established by the state social guarantees and measures that ensure optimal living conditions, meeting the needs of the population. It is multifunctional and corresponds to the main risks that any citizen may experience during lifetime: illness, disability, injuries, old age, unemployment, migration, etc. It includes social security, social insurance and social assistance (support).

- Social assistance – is a system of social measures in the form of promotion, support and services provided by the social service to individuals or groups of the population to overcome or mitigate life difficulties, support their social status and full-fledged life, and adapt in society. Its main types and forms are established at the regional level, taking into account the property status and the factor of needs. These include: social allowance, social security, humanitarian assistance, services and benefits.

- Social worker – is an intermediary in various spheres of social assistance provided to a family, its individual members, groups of people, including children, the youth, the elderly, the disabled and the sick, as well as in all types of general social support of the population. A social worker carries out counseling, works in shelters, on the street, with migrants and emigrants, provides health care and psychiatric social work, helps socially disadvantaged or neglected children, adolescents and young people. The scope of social worker's activity covers state institutions, public and private organisations, various centers and social welfare services, hospitals, enterprises, and self-help organisations and groups.

- Client – in a social work under the client we understand an individual, and a group (family), who need help, support, social protection. Clients of social services include families with many children, single-parent families, orphans, people with limited physical and mental capabilities, people with alcohol and drug dependence, homeless people, the refugees, and those who returned from prisons.

- Risk groups – are the categories of people whose social situation is unstable due to some criteria, who practically are not able to overcome their own difficulties independently, which can lead to loss of social significance and spirituality, if not to biological death. Any category of people who, under the laws of social services, has the right to protection, is in fact already at risk. These are people with disabilities, orphans, single mothers, single-parent families, juvenile offenders, the elderly. Particular attention is paid to those categories of risk groups whose problems are known only to a narrow circle of specialists – refugees, settlers, homeless people, people with alcohol and drug addiction, and people who have suffered from violence.

- Difficult life situation – is a situation (an element

of social reality) that objectively disturbs a person's livelihood (or is subjectively perceived as difficult), which an individual cannot overcome independently and needs support and assistance from social services (disability, orphanhood, neglect, low income, unemployment, conflicts and ill-treatment in the family, loneliness, inability to self-serve in connection with age, illness, etc.). Situations that make people demands beyond their usual adaptive potential are described in different terms: life difficulties, critical situations, negative life events, stressful life events, traumatic events, unwanted events, life-threatening crises, economic deprivation, misfortunes, disasters. Each of these situations hides either a challenge or a threat to human life, and sometimes causes irreparable losses. Each of them also limits the activity of an individual, sets demands, often exceeding human ability, moral and material resources. Severe life situations violate the normal rhythm of life and cause physical or psychological pain and suffering.

They are acute, chronic, cumulative.

Conclusions. Sociology of social work as a scientific branch is still quite young and is in the stage of formation. It undergoes the process of defining, design and refinement of the content of the basic essential features and characteristics of the conceptual categorical apparatus describing this branch of sociological knowledge. The substantiation of sociology of social work as a science and discipline, which is available in domestic and foreign sources on social work and sociology, continues. Thus, the sociology of social work is characterised by the important attributes of scientific discipline: it has its object, subject and methods of research, it executes practically all functions of sectoral sociological science. And the system of scientific concepts and categories makes it possible to describe and explore the entire system of social work. The attributive features listed in the article outline the sociology of social work in the system of sociological knowledge.

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Шандор Федор

доктор философских наук доцент
доцент кафедры социологии и социальной работы
заведующий кафедрой социологии и социальной работы
ГВУЗ «Ужгородский национальный университет», г.Ужгород, Украина

Бартош Елена

кандидат педагогических наук, доцент
доцент кафедры социологии и социальной работы
Государственное высшее учебное заведение
«Ужгородский национальный университет», г.Ужгород, Украина

ФУНКЦИИ И ПОНЯТИЙНО-КАТЕГОРИАЛЬНОГО АППАРАТА СОЦИОЛОГИИ СОЦИАЛЬНОЙ РАБОТЫ

Аннотация. Социология социальной работы как научная отрасль еще достаточно молодая и находится на стадии становления. Происходит процесс определения, оформления и уточнения содержания основных существенных признаков и характеристик, понятийно-категориального аппарата, описывающих эту отрасль социологических знаний. Цель статьи: раскрыть основные функции социологии социальной работы. Методы исследования: анализ и систематизация научной и учебно-методической литературы с целью определения состояния и теоретического обоснования проблемы исследования. Каждая самостоятельная наука имеет свои

категории, закономерности, принципы и методы исследования. Конечно, категориями социальной работы есть такие, которые используются и другими науками: например, психосоциальная работа, структурная социальная работа, социальная реабилитация, социальное благополучие и т.д. Главными функциями социологии социальной работы является познавательная, практическая, теоретическая, описательная, информационная, прогностическая, управленческая, гуманистическая, идеологическая, и социализационная.

Ключевые слова: социология социальной работы; функции; понятийно-категориальный аппарат; предмет и объект социальной работы.

Шандор Федір Федорович

доктор філософських наук, доцент
завідувач кафедри соціології та соціальної роботи
ДВНЗ «Ужгородський національний університет», м.Ужгород, Україна

Бартош Олена Павлівна

кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент
доцент кафедри соціології і соціальної роботи
ДВНЗ «Ужгородський національний університет», м.Ужгород, Україна

ФУНКЦІЇ ТА ПОНЯТІЙНО-КАТЕГОРІАЛЬНИЙ АПАРАТ СОЦІОЛОГІЇ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ РОБОТИ

Анотація. Соціологія соціальної роботи як наукова галузь ще досить молода і перебуває на стадії становлення. Відбувається процес визначення, оформлення й уточнення змісту основних сутнісних ознак і характеристик, понятийно-категорійного апарату, що описують цю галузь соціологічних знань. Мета статті: розкрити головні функції соціології соціальної роботи. Методи дослідження: аналіз і систематизація наукової і навчально-методичної літератури з метою визначення стану і теоретичного обґрунтування проблеми дослідження. Кожна самостійна наука має свої категорії, закономірності, принципи і методи дослідження. Звичайно, категоріями соціальної роботи є такі, що використовуються й іншими науками: наприклад, психосоціальна робота, структурна соціальна робота, соціальна реабілітація, соціальне благополуччя і т.д. Головними функціями соціології соціальної роботи є пізнавальна, практична, теоретична, описова, інформаційна, прогностична, управлінська, гуманістична, ідеологічна, й соціалізаційна.

Ключові слова: соціологія соціальної роботи; функції; понятийно-категорійний апарат; предмет та об'єкт соціальної роботи.