GUIDEBOOK I

INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE PROCESS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PRACTICE OF THE SECOND CYCLE STUDY PROGRAMME OF SOCIAL WORK

Textbook

GUIDEBOOK I

INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE PROCESS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PRACTICE OF THE SECOND CYCLE STUDY PROGRAMME OF SOCIAL WORK

Textbook

Reviewers:
Kateryna Kolchenko, Liudmyla Serdiuk

Editor
Ingrida Baranauskienė

English language editor
Nikita Kobrin

Contents

Preface

The present textbook as a guidebook for teachers has been prepared according to the aim and objectives "Improving the Quality of Lifelong Learning" of the priority "Lifelong Learning" of the Operational Programme for the Development of Human Resources for 2007–2013, implementing the project "Creation and Realization of the Second Cycle Joint Study Programme Social Work in the Collaboration with the University of Ukraine (SOCNET)" No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-069, prepared and released by Šiauliai University.

Students who study according to social work study programmes in other higher education institutions and who are going to study according to international joint study programmes will also find useful advice in the publication. This study book will help students from different countries to estimate differences and similarities of the requirements in preparing master degree theses, the essence of which is to reveal master student's scientific maturity.

Scientific research and degree thesis is one of the most important parts of the second cycle studies. Already in the first year of studies master students choose the topic of the thesis and plan its realization during all 3 semesters according to the content of the subjects *Master Thesis 1* (6 credits), *Master Thesis 2* (6 credits), *Master Degree Thesis* (18 credits) that is determined in every semester following the principle of consistency. The subject *Methodology and Organization of Scientific Research* (6 credits) delivered in the first semester is not just a theoretical course. It is directly related to the objectives of the subject *Master Thesis 1* of the first semester; testing of the research work is based on constructive scientific collaboration between a subject teacher, student and research adviser. Master students should learn not only to conduct research themselves but also be able to initiate regional, national and international researches and participate in them. It creates a solid basis for successful development of research work during the following semesters. In joint master study programme 7 credits are given for *Scientific Research Practice of Social Work* that is meant for comparative reflection of theory and (empirical) scientific research, in realizing the tasks of master degree thesis according to the joint study programme both in Lithuania and Ukraine, which consolidates internationality.

Scientific research practice is a transition to the last stage of the preparation of master thesis, where working hypotheses are already verified, theoretical interpretation of the data of the empirical research is performed, comparative aspect of the thesis is highlighted. Therefore, this study book is meant to reveal the interrelations between theory and practice in the process of scientific research practice of the second cycle study programme of social work. This practice in the process of preparing master's research work is considered as the expression of scientific collaboration between a teacher (research adviser), student and practician (supervisor). The aim of this publication is to help students organize and manage the process of the preparation of master degree thesis gaining knowledge in scientific research work that is deeper than in bachelor studies both in methodological and practical context striving to turn hypothetical approaches into new scientific knowledge and practical models of the activity of social work.

In the first part E. Acienė reveals the concept and methodological approaches of research work in the second cycle study programme of social work. O. Šapelytė analyzes theories that respond to the greatest extent to the strategy and aim of the realization of

the intended programme. D. Gerulaitis presents the methods of scientific research and the strategy of the creation of research design. V. Rimkus substantiates the essence of scientific research practice in the contexts of the interrelations between theory and practice.

Master student's writing of a research work is a creative act, therefore even the most perfect methodological material can only be an auxiliary aid in the realization of the ideas of the research work. Student must consider research work not only as an obligatory part of the contents of the study programme but also as the formation of personal lifelong learning strategy. Teachers' role in this process is important as much as it empowers a student to strive for positive result from the aspects of both the quality of the degree thesis and modelling of his/her professional career. Student must understand that a research adviser is not a co-author of the research. The development of the skills of the preparation of master degree thesis (in this case the organization of scientific research practice in the intercultural space) is a very important part of social work study process in consolidating social work as a field of science and academic discipline, getting ready for the third study cycle (PhD studies) in Lithuania and Ukraine. This methodological book should inspire students for the search of creative discourse in the process of writing research works based on scientific research practice.

Prof. Dr. Ingrida Baranauskienė
Editor of the publication

1. Concept of scientific research practice and methodological approaches of empirical research

Elvyra Acienė

In Lithuania social worker training has been realized for only two decades. After declaring the Independence in a complicated socio-economic situation Lithuania has chosen a strategy – to use the ways of solving social problems that have been used in recent decades in many modern welfare states, i.e. create a stable system of social security (social welfare) and professionalize rendering social services, "amortizing" the impact of social problems and creating the models of the prevention of social problems. According to Vareikytė (2010, p. 32), social functioning among people and social institutions is ensured only having coordinated social services, resources, structures and opportunities.
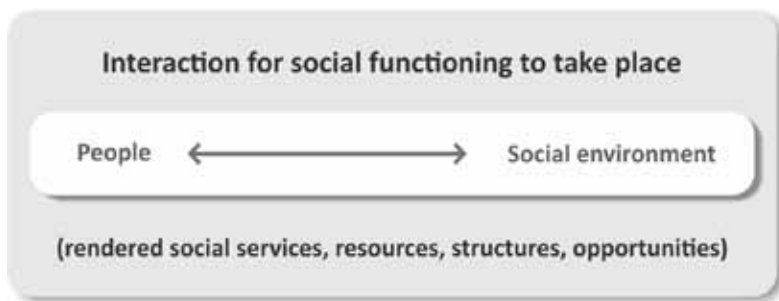
Figure 1. Scheme of the interaction between people and their environment (Vareikytė, 2010).

Estimating the fact that professional social work in other countries could perform such important functions as reconstruction of weakened powers, provision of individual and social resources, prevention of people's social dysfunctionality, the need of new specialists – social workers – in Lithuania has become clear. According to Vareikytė (2010, p. 33-34), professional social workers are the specialists who can change the relation between a person and his/her environment through social work interventions because social work in the context of the structures of the interaction between people and social institutions ensures people's rights.

Figure 2. Possible interactions of a social worker (Vareikytė, 2010).

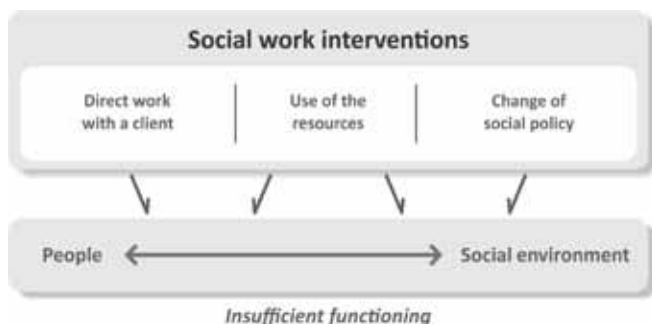Thus the system of higher education institution has faced the challenge – to search for the model how to train qualified social workers who would meet the demands of changing society oriented towards citizens' activity. Therefore, during the first decade the concept of social work was most often related to the perception of social work as a profession and was treated rather as a professional activity than science. Only in 2009, according to the resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania No. 1749 social work became an independent study field. However, social work is still not treated as a study field. Scientific definition of social work has not been consolidated yet either. According to Bagdonas (2001), every trend of social work, theoretical paradigm, perspective has its concept and definition. General social work theory still is in the stage of formation, because what we call *social work theory* at the moment is the application of the knowledge of related sciences (psychology, sociology, philosophy, etc.) to analyze social work objects. Social work researchers more often speak about the methods of social work science emphasizing the opportunity to reveal social reality and intervention into positive change of social reality. However, an increasing number of social work masters strive for PhD in social work abroad (at the moment in Lithuania there are already 10 doctors in social work who have prepared theses in foreign universities). In recent years it is becoming more and more important to search for the scientific substantiation of social problems, interpreting the opportunities of problem solving in the context of the achievements of modern science. Scientifically interpreting social reality, social work becomes not only a practical activity but also science. Social work research is more and more often perceived as a process that reveals scientific-applied space of social work. In many countries scientific research practice finds its place in master studies of both scientific and applied character. ŠU and UU universities in joint master's programme innovatively solve this problem. Scientific research practice in the second cycle studies will help to turn the results of empirical research into real social products because in Lithuania applied and scientific master studies are not purified. Figure 3 that can help to understand how scientific research practice in social work research design finds an opportunity to make the results of the cognition of social reality closer to real solutions and construction of new knowledge has been presented below.

Figure 3. Relations of social work reality to scientific research practice (according to Vaičekauskaitė, Acienė (2007, p.7))

As we see from the figure presented above social work reality in the process of scientific research practice is based on reflectivity, and the results of empirical research may cover a wide range of social phenomena that is being converted into the construction of new knowledge, opportunities of the change of social reality in the context of solving particular social problems. At the same time lifelong learning skills that are very important for a social worker because his/her activity every time takes place in new and undefined situations are being formed.

Methodological approaches of the research of social problems

The common declaration of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) states that social work methodology refers to the system of knowledge based on evidence obtained by the research of practical activity and evaluation also including narrower knowledge characteristic to certain contexts. Social work theory takes the complexity of people's interaction with their environment into account and acknowledges people's ability both to surrender to the influence and change the influence of various factors, including biopsychosocial, on them. Professional social work in analyzing complex situations and encouraging individual, organizational, social and cultural changes apply the theories of the development of human behaviour and social systems (Kozlovas, 2004, p. 72)

According to Vaičekauskaitė and Acienė (2005) "theory and methods are the tools of the discipline, therefore, in study process it is important for students to master the basics and methods of certain science, in this case of social work. The research methods should respond to the opportunities to consistently solve set objectives. Students choose research methods that they have mastered the best in the study process. The application of the method is inseparable from student's research object (i.e. social work), therefore the methods (usually sociological) have a creative aspect responding to the peculiarities of social work. The interpretation of scientific research is one of the most difficult stages

of work. Only consistently and systematically preparing the work a student becomes a mature analytical researcher. Namely in this stage the importance of the choice of methodology and methods becomes clear. Social research is a systemic observation of social life in order to understand and evaluate life situations. Writing scientific works as an inseparable part of training social workers guides a student into the space of social work reality and through growing scientific competence strengthens his/her professional competences."

We present the aims of study subjects that are realized in the process of the preparation of the second cycle study programme Social Work that respond to the concept of the choice of methodology.

Master thesis I: To gain new knowledge and perform complex evaluation of the activity of institutions rendering social services, especially those that work with people with disability, elder people and seniors, and abilities to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity of institutions rendering social services with regard to clients' needs; to organize and render social assistance, perform comparative analysis; to deepen the abilities to synthesize theoretical and practical experience; to initiate innovations and prepare the plan of the improvement of social work services using various strategies and methods; to develop skills of a reflecting and constantly learning practician

Master thesis II: To acquire and develop knowledge about human behaviour and social context, methodologies of scientific research in the comparative aspect; to develop the ability to discuss using the terminology of social work in professional and interdisciplinary environment substantiating the decisions related to the elimination of social problems; to gain the skills of independent decision taking in new undefined situations of rendering social assistance theoretically and empirically modelling the process of social assistance.

Master degree thesis: To deepen knowledge and gain the skills in scientific research work, system evaluation of client's needs and strengths, the resources of the environment, practical application of scientific concepts and theories; to develop the principles of social responsibility learning in the union of serving the community and academic studies; to develop the skills in collecting, processing and generalization of empirical data critically evaluating national and international sources of information that are the most suitable for use, following the values of social work, confidentiality and ethics.

Scientific research practice: To develop skills to independently perform social work practice and research investigating social changes, to develop skills in search for various national and international sources of information and data, analysis, systematization, comparison and interpretation of the data of quantitative and qualitative research solving social problems and modelling their changes; to prepare master degree thesis, following methical and methodological requirements suitable for social work, revealing the relevance of the research for practice and theory of social work demonstrating knowledge and skills developed and newly gained during the studies in solving social problems and modelling or interpreting innovations in social work practice.

Methodological consistency and integrity must ensure the quality of the graduation work and reveal the purposefulness of scientific research practice in study process. We present the theoretical approaches of choosing methodology that reveal the preconditions of the purposefulness of methodology in social work.

Social work can be treated as a social construct in the interaction with clients "by social processes, through its formation as an occupation among a network of related occupations, and through the social forces which define it through its organisational, agency and social context" (Payne, 2005, p. 22). According to the author, social work theories are also constructed under the influence of the aforementioned social powers. It has been

noticed that social work as if does not have its own theories. They are also constructed in the interaction with other sciences, most often sociology and psychology.

According to Payne (2005) theories in social work cover three opportunities:

- Models – that describe what happens in practice in general way and *help to structure and organize actions in complicated situations of social work* (*e.g. crisis intervention; empowerment, etc.*)
- Perspectives – values and attitudes, with the help of which we manage or direct ourselves in practice in the right direction are expressed; i.e. *help to consider what is happening in organized way, to see situations in the context of different approaches (e.g. anti-oppressive, system, etc.)*;
- Explanatory theory – estimates causal relations, i.e. why certain actions have respective consequences; i.e. it is as if answered to "what influences" (e.g. *construction, cognitive-behavioural, etc.*)

In the search for the idea uniting social work theories and methods the reference is made to the classification suggested by Payne (2005, 2000), presented through the discourse of three social work approaches. Discourse is treated as what has been said – the consequence of situation[1]; conversation or discussion on philosophical, political, religious, literary or similar topic, and in the broader sense the sum total of statements characteristic to any social activity is called a discourse (legal discourse, political discourse, etc.)[2]. In this case the relevance becomes clear in the contradiction between social work approaches and different political views towards the realization of social welfare (Payne, 2005):

- **Reflective-therapeutic approach** – social work is perceived as activity striving for the best for a person, group and community, enhancing growth and satisfaction, and constant interaction between a client and a social worker provides a double effect: social worker as a constantly reflecting worker, sensitive to a social situation and learning from practice, interaction with a client, meanwhile, a client as an equal participant of the process gains certain powers to overcome difficulties, responsible for one's own life (*constructivist theories and crisis intervention model in social work will be discussed in more detail*);
- **Socialist-collectivist approach –** social work is perceived as a way to search for co-operation and mutual assistance in society so that people who are in social exclusion and feel oppression gain powers to manage their own lives. Social work is perceived as oriented towards empowering assistance. Dominelli (2002, cited in Payne, 2005) considers this approach through emancipatory prism because social work is perceived as liberating individuals and groups from oppression (*anti-oppression perspective, feminist theory and empowerment model will be discussed in more detail);*
- **Individual-reformist approach –** social work is perceived as activity focused on the individual in society. The attention is focused on meeting person's social needs as the main precondition of making social work better and more effective. Social work is perceived as activity maintaining social order (Dominelli, 2002, cited by Payne, 2005) (*system approach in social work will be discussed in more detail*).

Consequently, according to Payne (2005), every approach, every theory and perspective contributes certain knowledge about social work practice and aims ensuring social welfare in all societies.

---

1   http://lietuviukalbairliteratura.lt/magiskasis-diskurso-terminas/
2   http://ualgiman.dtiltas.lt/literaturos_terminai_d.html

2. Discourse of the applicability of theories

Odeta Šapelytė, Asta Rimeikytė

2.1. Social constructivist theories in social work research

When presenting the review of social work theories we aim to distinguish the methodological approaches that respond to the greatest extent to the realization strategy and aim of the planned programme:

Strategy of the preparation of the programme – to train specialists able to assess social needs and problems of a person, family, group or community in the context of applied scientific activity, rendering assistance to a target group (people in the situation of disability) in various cases of difficulties in adaptive functioning and from the aspects of prevention and health promotion; able to assess current social policy and able to provide suggestions on its improvement. The contents of the programme are oriented towards solving everyday problems in the community when a person is in the situation of disability, accentuating the assurance of health and welfare of people with disability, estimating the possibilities of the process of social integration of these groups and strengthening of the stability of their life quality substantiating problem solving strategies with applied scientific research and the EU strategy priorities until 2020 on decreasing social exclusion.

Aim of the study programme – to train high qualified professional social workers able to assess multifunctional character of social work as applied activity, study field and field of science on the theoretical and practical level in the context of the assurance of health and life welfare of changing society; ready for professional practical activity and scientific research on community, national and international levels, able to act under undefined and complex circumstances, rendering assistance to people in the life process (cycle) in the situation of congenital, acquired and senior age disability.

The strategy of the preparation of the study programme and the aim of the study programme is to create the opportunity for complex intercultural investigations using the approaches of various related sciences, which ensures the quality of graduation work and scientific research practice in the context of knowing and modelling social reality and also influences the development of social work theory.

2.2. Social constructivist theories in social work research

The idea of social constructivism has originated from the works by the sociologists Berger and Luckmann (Payne, 2005). They stated that in social matters, as opposed to natural world, "reality" is social knowledge that conditions our behaviour, however we have a different approach towards it. People share their knowledge through various social processes. Social activity conditions the fact that when sharing our presuppositions about things we objectivise them. Thus behaviour is conditioned by social conventions created when sharing knowledge. Understanding is legitimized adding meanings and integrating these ideas about reality into an organized and reliable system. Due to the fact that such knowledge is widely spread in society, individuals tend to think that it is objective. It is a constantly continuing spiral process when societies through people's participation in their various structures create conventions and behave according

to them. Every individual has an opportunity to contribute to changes and become a personality.

According to Lee, Greene, et al (1999), constructivism is an epistemological perspective based on the statement that every person actively creates realities to which he/she reacts. According to Gergen (1994), through social interactions individuals in different ways construct and categorize reality. In this process of reality that is socially constructed individuals interpret, attribute meaning and create the idea about themselves, other people and their environment, which creates the basis of the knowledge about the world (Greene, Jones, Frappier, et al., 1996).

Many study subjects of social work and cultural variety and students' preparation for practice, work with clients from different cultures are based on the perspective of social constructivism (Dean, Fleck-Henderson, 1992).

In modern science analyzing various schools of constructivism it is agreed that one principle is common to them that states that there is no objective reality existing independently from individual knowing (Carpenter, 1996). According to Lyddon (1995), people do not learn about the world through passive interactions stimulus-reaction with environment but rather actively construct their own perception of the world through interaction. Reality is not discovered but created by individuals.

Constructivism rejects so-called "objective" explanation and definition (representations) of reality. Reality is considered as interactive where the observer and the object under observation are mutually and structurally related (Schön, 2004). Constructivism emphasizes the ways how individuals learn to construct and deconstruct their experience and meanings (Brookfield, 2005). The theory of constructivism rejects the concept of universal and generalized truth, focuses on how people create various interpretations of their experience. The proponents of the theory of constructivism postulate the statement that in action people create meaning, meanwhile making a commitment or avoiding it they create reality. Thus, people are not passive receivers of information but active organizers of their own perception (Herr, Cramer, 1996). In the perspective of constructivism the process of social support and assistance is treated as an active process when people create (construct) knowledge relating it to complex and real life situations with previous possessed experience (Westbrook, 1993). In practical social life people confront unique unpredictable situations, the problem character of which is not evident in advance.

The development of social constructivism was conditioned by the ideas of social psychology, the essential postulate of which is that knowledge is gained not in people's heads but when people are acting and doing something together (Gergen, 1994). Consequently, reality is the product of social construction influenced by cultural, historical, political and economical conditions. It means that person's knowledge may change and vary depending on his/her belonging to a cultural group, period, etc. Social construction of knowledge also changes depending on the perception of different values, attitudes, traditions, norms of people from different social and cultural groups. Language is a typical example – it at the same time constructs the reality and is the product of social construction. Use of language, social dialogue and discourse are the main concepts of social constructivism.

In the light of social constructivism it is also important to mention the relations between therapy and education. According to Efran and Clarfield (1992) both therapy and education processes emphasize the importance of changes and the expansion of current

worldview. Personal growth and maturity is influenced by person's inner (psychological, cognitive and emotional) structure reacting to the stimuli from environment. Consequently, in the process of education, when a teacher explains a concept, students because of different skills, values and attitudes can understand and interpret the presented material in a different way. Teacher as well as therapist must know how to present new ideas to the group so that everyone learns, gets knowledge and develops professionally. The dialogue when students express their opinions and explain their perception is helpful. It means that instead of the aim of education to achieve the "truth" the position of curiosity is employed because there are many possible explanations of the phenomenon under investigation in discussion. Constructivist teaching is not restricted with conversations and discussions. From the prospect of social constructivism teachers can use various methods such as role-plays, analysis of sound and video recordings, tasks in small groups, etc. Such methods stimulate students' discussions, even provoke and create new ideas. The interaction between a teacher and students based on dialogue creates the preconditions of reflectivity.

Another important aspect is that people creating reality often have empty spaces about the self and reality (Wiley, 1994). In order to develop one's own worldview people should find "metaposition" or the model of "metacognition" about the presuppositions of their reality. The aforementioned dialogue-based interactions help to achieve this aim when in communication with other people one's own personal experience, relationships and social context are stimulated and reflected (Steier, 1991).

When reflecting students as if withdraw from their beliefs, presuppositions (belief, schemes, categories, rules) about the world and reality, and communication with the others help to perceive the variety. Working with the members of another culture or minority group the following questions help to reflect: "How did you decide to react to this situation in this particular way?", "What are the other ways to see the situation under discussion?" or "If you perceive the situation in a different way what would you behave (feel) like?" The answers to such questions help to change and expand the presuppositions about the world in particular aspects especially related to the experience of another culture.

The approach of social constructivism in social work begins with the perspective of a receiver of social services of himself/herself and his/her situation that is acknowledged as equal in estimating the needs and participating in the creation of action plan (Cooper, 2001). As it has already been mentioned, the theories of social constructivism that analyze the formation of knowledge among the participants of social relationships state that reality is the result of social construction. One of the main ideas of this theory is that nonstop experimentation takes place (Cherryholmes, 1999), and in democratic society people act, change and discover their own and others' mistakes. Thus, in the light of constructivism a person that finds himself/herself in a social risk group is seen as able to overcome the difficulties caused by the situation, reorganize his/her resources with the help from society and specialists.

One of the main postulates of constructivism is creating knowledge in participants' close interaction and equal participation. New knowledge about seniors and people or families in the situation of disability, etc. is created in common interactions with specialists (social workers, doctors, etc.). Knowledge is being created permanently, this process is endless. The participants of the situation create the situation themselves and contribute to the creation of a new situation.

2.2. Crisis theory and intervention in social work practice

Crisis in psychological literature is defined as a certain "danger", facing a complicated situation (Kočiūnas, 1998, Pluzek, 1996). The origin of crisis and crisis intervention have been described in the works of Lindemann (in the 1950s), and Caplan (1964, cited in Encyclopaedia of Social Work, 2012).

Nevertheless, crisis is a polysemic concept, to which a so-called "phenomenon of change" is characteristic. It means that a person having found himself/herself in a complicated situation must look for different and new ways of solution because the old methods and ways become inefficient and ineffective in a critical situation. Crisis is often treated as the loss of equilibrium when help from the outside is necessary so that the equilibrium is changed.

Crisis theory refers to the development of social and medical sciences (Social Work Encyclopaedia, 1994, cit. from Vitkauskaitė, 2001):
- Psychologists treat crises as the difficulties in personality's ontogenesis.
- Sociologists – analyse the influence of external stressors on person's integrity.
- Psychiatrists – perceive crises as consequences after painful traumatizing events.

Generalizing the treatments of crises in different sources the key words have been distinguished, such as: *danger, complicated situation, losing equilibrium, change that* are used in order to understand the meaning of crisis and intervention (see Table 1):

Table 1

Concepts of crisis in the works by different authors and essential features of crises (*compiled by the authors*)

Author	Concept of crisis	Main feature
Lindeman, Caplan (cit. from Liobikienė, 2006)	It is a reaction of a healthy person to a complicated situation where it is not possible to use possessed skills of problem solving	Possessed skills are not suitable for solution
Pluzek, 1996	It is a situation when urgent assistance from others and intervention into a person's environment is obligatory	Need for assistance and intervention
Polukordienė, 2003	Emergency existential experience, during which strong spiritual shock or overturn is going on in a person, that either breaks down or makes stronger, opening new view on life or opportunities; It is the time of change when a person changes in one or another way	Shock, overturn Changes

Rapopport (1970, cited in Coulshed &Orme, 2006)	An upset in a steady state.	Losing equilibrium
	Coulshed & Orme (2006), steady state, synonyms homeostasis, equilibrium.	
Roberts, 2005 (cited in Encyclopaedia of Social Work, 2012)	An acute disruption of psychological homeostasis in which one's usual coping mechanisms fail and there exists evidence of distress and functional impairment.	Disruption of homeostasis Distress and functional impairment
Encyclopaedia of Social Work, 2012	Main features defining the essence of crisis: • the individual's perception of the event as the cause of considerable upset or disruption; • the individual's inability to resolve the disruption by previously used coping methods.	Perception of a critical situation "not functioning" usual coping methods

Four development stages are characteristic to crisis (Marino, 1995, cit. from Liobikienė, 2006, p. 11):
- Stage 1 – Facing a critical situation compensatory mechanisms switch on.
- Stage 2 – When tension lasts too long compensatory mechanisms begin to exhaust.
- Stage 3 – The need for external assistance appears. When appropriate assistance is received, equilibrium is possibly restored.
- Stage 4 – When there are no assistance resources or the crisis is very strong the disorganization of personality is possible. In such situation a person cannot cope with problems independently, external assistance is necessary.

Many authors emphasize that all persons at one or another moment find themselves in critical situations. In a critical situation, according to Liobikienė (2006) there is no clear linear relation of cause-consequence because crisis is often conditioned by various interacting factors. Therefore, it is very important having adequately estimated the situation together to summon both internal and external assistance resources in order to overcome crisis.

Crisis intervention in social work

Crisis intervention programmes were started to be implemented only in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the first crisis clinics was opened in the USA (Encyclopaedia of Social Work, 2012). Caplan (1964, cited in Encyclopaedia of Social Work, 2012) noted that in a "typical crisis state, equilibrium is usually restored in 4–6 weeks and the person usually grows from the crisis experience by discovering new coping skills and resources". As it has already been mentioned, persons in a critical situation mostly need qualified assistance from psychologists, social workers or other specialists, because if a crisis lasts too long its consequences for a person might be very serious.

According to Liobikienė (2006), there is no single theory that explains the origin of crisis and defines the directions of assistance in case of crisis; and they can be divided

into the theories defining the phenomenon and origin of crises and the theories substantiating crisis intervention. Liobikienė (2006) citing James & Gilliand (2001) presents three models of crisis intervention and one generalizing theory (see Table 2):

Crisis intervention models (according to Liobikienė, 2006)

Theory	Contents of crisis intervention
Equilibrium model	• Individual remains in equilibrium between a traumatizing event and compensatory mechanisms. • During crisis compensatory mechanisms are not sufficient, equilibrium is disordered; intervention – restoring of equilibrium (strengthening compensatory mechanisms).
Cognitive model	• Inadequate thinking (hypertrophied evaluation of the event) about the traumatizing event and consequences has deciding importance in the development of crisis. • In changing thinking behaviour also changes. • It is not suitable in an acute period when equilibrium is being restored.
Model of psychosocial changes	• Individual as biopsychosocial being (human behaviour, thinking, ability to overcome crises depends not only on biological features but also on social environment) • During intervention the influence is made through environment (interaction between a person and environment), cultural elements.
Eclectic theory of crisis intervention	• Purposefully chosen and integrated elements of several theories

Several practical system crisis intervention models have been implemented in practice, referring to Caplan (1964), Golan (1978), Parad (1965), Parad and Caplan (1960), Roberts (1990, 1991, 2000), Roberts and Dziegielewski (1995) (cited in Encyclopaedia of Social Work, 2012). Roberts (2005, cited in Encyclopaedia of Social Work, 2012) presents the model of 7 stages of crisis intervention:
• Plan and conduct a rapid crisis assessment (including lethality, dangerousness to self or others, and immediate psychosocial needs).
• Make psychological contact, establish rapport and rapidly establish the relationship (conveying respect for the client, acceptance, reassurance, and nonjudgmental attitude).
• Examine the dimensions of the problem in order to define it (including the last straw or precipitating event).
• Encourage an exploration of feelings and emotions.
• Generate, explore and assess past coping attempts.
• Restore cognitive functioning through implementation of an action plan.

- Follow-up and leave the door open for booster sessions 3 or 6 months later.

Crisis intervention is one of the most necessary and commonly applied methods of social work (O'Hagan, 1993).

2.3. Anti-oppressive practice and research in social work

Anti-oppressive practice began in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but the theory was not prominent in academic social work until the late 1980s (Dominelli, 2002; cited in Peter, 2012). Within Canadian social work, anti-oppressive practice is generally understood as an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of practice approaches including, but not limited to, radical, structural, feminist, anti-racist, critical, and liberatory frameworks. Suppression, exclusion, the dominating and the oppressed, power relations, social injustice – notions related to the definition of the concept of anti-oppressive practice. Anti-oppressive practice is often identified with anti-racist social work approach referring to enhancing powers of people, groups and communities from the aspect of race. Meanwhile, anti-oppressive social work practice also includes other than race social differences, i.e. gender and sex, age differences, disability. The extent of migration, especially relating to one-way migration from economically weaker countries to stable countries (as Norway, United Kingdom, etc.), created the basis for the formation of huge emigrant communities characterized by strong cultural identification that in its turn has created and still maintains certain barriers for the integration of successfully emigrated people in another country. It increases exclusion and creates unequal relations in the sense of power contribution. Therefore, anti-oppressive practice also focuses on these groups of people experiencing social exclusion. According to McLoughlin (2012), we should pay attention to different forms of oppression on different levels instead of actualizing oppressive relations on the basis of one dimension.

Anti-oppressive practice according to Dominelli (1996) is rooted in the living experiences of oppressed people and research which explores these and can be defined as (p. 170-171):

- a form of social work practice which addresses social divisions and structural inequalities in the work that is done with people whether they be users ('clients') or workers;
- aims to provide more appropriate and sensitive services by responding to people's needs regardless of their social status;
- embodies a person centred philosophy, an egalitarian value system concerned with reducing the deleterious effects of structural inequalities upon people's lives;
- a methodology focusing on both process and outcomes;
- a way of structuring relationships between individuals that aims to empower users by reducing the negative effects of hierarchy in their immediate interaction and the work they do together.

Dominelli (2002) defining the essence of anti-oppressive practice notices that it concerns all aspects of social work, social policy to eradicate social injustice.

Anti-oppressive practice according to McLaughlin (2012), should not be perceived straightforwardly, i.e. emphasizing only the principle of impartiality in the relation to individuals or groups but it is also related to conflict and changes in the sense of distribution of powers. It means that the position of the "superior" and the "inferior" changes in the plane of relations. As McLaughlin (2012) emphasizes the essential thing is the

equalization of powers on different sides, focuses on challenging and addressing institutionalised discrimination representing the interests of powerful groups within society.

According to Hogewoning (2012) in social work, the anti-oppressive model aims to function and promote equal, nonoppressive social relations between various identities. Also she emphasizes social justice against oppressive practice at the micro level through analyzing the sociological and psychological components of oppression and that fundamental aspect of this analysis is through the discipline of critical consciousness (Hogewoning, 2012, p. 9). The concept *conscientização* met in the works of the Brazilian pedagogue Freire (2000) is understood as learning to perceive social, political and other contradictions that exist in society and take up actions against oppression, i.e. it is stimulated to switch on critical conscience. Newman et al. (2008, cited in Hogewoning, 2012) explain critical consciousness as the reflective and critical process of "challenging domination" on a personal, interpersonal, and structural level. AOP symbolises the fight against powerful forces.

Anti-oppressive Research Practice

Anti-oppressive practice, as research, is driven by moral and ethical value codes which explicitly challenge sources of privilege or power that are based on unjustifiable differences (McLaughlin, 2012). In conducting the research it should be noted that the essence of anti-oppressive practice itself is related to the development of critical conscience. It is an opposition to dominating practice of assistentialism defined by Freire (2000) that is based on the principle of "giving-receiving" when social worker's "client" is not the subject of this interaction. The position of the latter is to receive support and assistance but not to look for the way out of a complicated situation together with a social worker. The relationship object-subject already presupposes unequal relations, does not encourage the liberation from an oppressive situation. Anti-oppressive social work practice is nevertheless based on the principles of equality and empowerment. Consequently, it is aimed to reach another Subject-Subject relation when both participants become together learning and searching for the most different ways out of the established complicated situation of exclusion. Such dialogical practice based on the principle of equality presupposes reflective and critical thinking of both sides. Not incidentally, McLaughlin (2012) before starting performing the research suggests the researchers reflectively evaluating the situation themselves answering the questions that seem to be uncomplicated from the first sight: *Is it an oppressive situation? Is it oppression? Who am I – subject or object of oppression? Am I the part of problem solving or maintaining oppression? Is anti-oppressive practice contradictory? Is it rather related to social work values, its ideology? Is such social work practice possible? etc*.

Hammersley (1995, cited in McLaughlin, 2012) suggests adapting 5 rules in conducting the research:

- The overriding concern of researchers is the truth of claims, not their political implications or practical consequences.
- Arguments are not judged on the basis of the personal and/or social characteristics of the person advancing them, but solely in terms of their plausibility and credibility.
- Researchers are willing to change their views if arguments from the common ground suggest that those views are false.
- Where agreement does not result, all parties must recognise that there remains some reasonable doubt about the validity of their own positions.
- The research community is open to participation by anyone able and willing to operate on the basis of the first four rules.

With regard to McLaughlin's (2012) remarks, it is very important for the researcher to consider research questions, what their content is: whether it focuses on the empowerment of the group of the oppressed or a person who experiences oppression or still rather reflects the contents of oppression, which is in fact related to "supporting" oppression. The author notices that instead of focusing on what experiences are expressed by the informants on rendering services, the focus should be made on what the actual research object is. The focal moment in research is not to victimize a person who has experienced oppression for the second or more times, not to stigmatize him/her ("problematic", etc.). For example, in asking questions it is important to avoid the following questions that directly show the vices and problems of the oppressed. Instead of asking why a woman who is beaten stays with an oppressive husband, one should ask what factors and conditions create the basis of the violence in family and its justification (McLaughlin, 2012); instead of asking why a person with disability has difficulty in finding a job one should ask *what factors condition the unemployment of people with disability*.

As it has been noticed, the research should be based on the essential principles of Anti- oppressive social work practice. It is not only that a researcher should not have xenophobic, homophobic or other discriminatory attitudes. During the research as well as in social work practice equal relationship of subjects is important (McLaughlin, 2012), i.e. the respondent is the research subject not the object. According to McLaughlin (2012), such research may require a collaborative, participatory or emancipatory research approach.

Clifford (1994, p. 104, cited in McLaughlin, 2006, p. 131) summarises what he sees as the key features of an anti-oppressive research:

- Anti-reductionist and historically specific – placing any explanation within a historically specific context and avoiding explanations based on biology, psychology and economics;
- Materialist – relating any explanation to the divisions of material wealth and power in society;
- Combining the personal and political;
- Thoroughly analysing 'difference' – placing individual and groups within all the social divisions;
- Internationalist – being aware of the wider contexts which affects us all either indirectly or directly;
- Reflexive – the researcher or observer is accountable for the methods used and the knowledge claimed which does not exist outside the framework at some value-free point, but is part of the social action and thus part of the research.

Generalizing it is important to notice that in conducting the research the specifics of Anti-oppressive social work practice is taken into account. The proceedings of the research, the process itself that creates a challenge to the researcher by itself is important: it is not possible to espouse an anti-oppressive research affiliation whilst behaving in an oppressive way (McLaughlin, 2012).

2.4. Application of feminist theories in social work practice and research

Feminist social work

Feminist movement created the basis of various theories that explain gender inequalities in society in different ways. Giddens (2005) emphasizes that competing feminist schools try to explain these inequalities referring to various social processes: discrimination, patriarchalism, capitalism, racism, etc. Giddens (2005) also notices that feminism is treated as a dynamic international phenomenon related to chronic problems of gender inequality, with constant challenges that a woman faces in global world.

Payne (2005) distinguishes 5 different feminist perspectives (see Table 3):

Table 3

Feminist perspectives: compiled referring to Payne, 2005; Jančaitytė, 2010

Feminist perspective	Concept	Essential features
Liberal feminism	Seeks equality between men and women, especially in work situations, family relationships: promoting equal opportunities by legislation, changing social conventions and modifying the socialisation processes (so that children do not gain discriminatory attitudes related to sexuality).	*Ensuring equal opportunities*
Radical feminism	Emphasizes patriarchalism relatable to rather strong man's domination both in public and private life. Seeks to promote separate women's structure within organizations.	*Redistribution of man's and woman's role structures*
Socialist and Marxist feminism	Woman's discrimination is the outcome of class society. Social inequality is maintained both by entrenched patriarchalism and capitalist system. Woman's role is perceived through the prism of labour force in capitalism, child's care and housekeeping. Such oppression should be analyzed together with other forms of oppression and class based structures so that different interests are relevantly noticed.	*Stratification of society (in particular class society) and sexuality*
Black feminism	Certain reaction to feminism of white women who accentuate woman's discrimination, her status in society only in the aspect of gender. Meanwhile, black women firstly emphasize racial and only then gender aspect as a basis for discrimination.	*Relation between race and gender in social relationships*
Postmodern feminism	The complexities of social relations identifying how discourses help to shape social assumptions about the role and expectations of women are emphasized.	*Discourse about woman's roles and expectations concerning a woman*

Feminist epistemology and philosophy of science criticize traditional masculine subject of cognition and traditional science based on positivist tradition (Mažeikienė,

2001). One of the more distinct manifestations of critical theory in social work is feminist social work that is defined as the integration of knowledge, values and skills of feminist direction in order to help women and society overcome social and emotional problems that are caused by sexism (Mažeikienė, Juodeškaitė, 2012).

Consequently, it is possible to define feminist social work through integrative relations of values, skills and knowledge of social work and feminist approach in order to meet person's social needs occurring because of sexism. Seymour (2012) in citing Dominelli (2002, cited in Seymour, 2012) notices that in social work feminist approach is related to "the assumption of a gender-sensitive stance"; meanwhile, the essential feature of feminist social work is egalitarian social relations, feminist practice encompasses more than just a client focus, importantly, seeking to deconstruct the notion of the "expert worker".

Haynes and Holmes (1994, cit. from Rose & Hanssen, 2010, p. 2) present the main features of feminist social work:
- power as empowerment of action;
- holistic, nondichotomous thinking;
- the importance of mutual, reciprocal, empathic relationships as the medium for human growth;
- the process of renaming and reclaiming;
- the personal as political.

Orme (2009) in feminist social work emphasizes the focus on women's conscience that covers not only political perception but also the assistance of psychotherapy character from the aspects of identity, sexuality and abuse. Interpersonal relations and raising person's consciousness are in the focus of one of the main methods of feminist social work (Mažeikienė, Juodeškaitė, 2012). The aforementioned authors, in citing Dominelli (2002) notice, that the most important tasks of the professional is to provide the opportunity to clients to explain their situation in the way that seems the most convenient to them, to give meanings to their experience and perceive how dominating discourses affect their current story.

According to Jančaitytė (2010), applying the principles of feminist social work it is referred to the presupposition that it is not possible to achieve individual's long-term changes without social changes, i.e. one should act both on micro level and macro level. The model of ecosystems is considered as a suitable way to understand beliefs, norms and social roles that define women as subordinate or secondary social group (Mažeikienė, Juodeškaitė, 2012).

Feminist social work research

When conducting feminist research the researchers often face the choice of relevant methods in the process of research. As Mclaughlin (2012) notices, research methods can be defined as "male stream" and they rather help to reflect masculine world, are rather meant to reveal masculine attitude. According to Mažeikienė (2001), the method of feminist/woman/gender research can be treated as a marginal perspective or "strategic heresy", "hermeneutics of suspicion", "contradictory reading", "feminist mistrust" or "feminist belief to give voice to the voiceless". The aim of such research is to turn a woman and her previously unnoticed world, place of existence and activity into the unit and source of analysis, therefore, it is aimed to analyze local social spheres where women act (family, private life, everyday life), meanwhile, the story of everyday and life, maternity and sexuality become the research object (Mažeikienė, 2001).

In feminist social research specific methods are used or specific problem fields are chosen to deny research methodology used by male researchers and present "feminine" position instead of it (Payne & Payne, 2004, cit. from Mclaughlin, 2012; Dudley, 2011). According to Mclaughlin (2012) earlier women were poorly included into the world of research because woman's world was rather perceived through the prism of maternity, housekeeping and it is as if presented as a universally accepted given fact but not a masculine position. Meanwhile feminists focused on it in order to find out namely woman's individual experiences concerning "this given fact". Thus, it is necessary to integrate a different approach to research and gave the impulse to such approaches like ethnometodology, autoethnografy and narratives (McLaughlin, 2012). For the feminist social work practice in the empowerment process of women or other oppressed groups biographic story and biographic research is often used that becomes for the representatives of critical theory while investigating uneven distribution of authority and powers, experiences of women and other discriminated groups, a means to reveal their suffering, changes and liberation of the oppressed (Mažeikienė, Juodeškaitė, 2012). Feelings, others' interests or even hopes and beliefs that are not made conscious start to play an important role (Payne & Payne, 2004, cit. from Mclaughlin, 2012), construction of new knowledge at deeper levels of meaning (Dudley, 2011). Consequently, an important step in critical theory – empowering the oppressed groups through enhancing consciousness, create new forms of social life, while biographic method can help to implement the aspiration to liberalize individuals and groups from social relations (Mažeikienė, Juodeškaitė, 2012).

Feminist theories, their application in research have developed the methodology of qualitative research emphasising dialogue, mutuality, egalitarian relationship between researches and those being researched (Mclaughlin, 2012). Dudley (2011) notices that in feminist research qualitative approaches are mostly used because both in feminism theories and qualitative research the attention is focused on the aspect that the participants (informants) should gain something from the research themselves instead of just being the research object. As well as in using anti-oppressive approach the issue of distribution of powers is important in the research. It should be noted that research covers only the relations between egalitarian subjects. Both researcher and respondent should accept responsibility towards the wider part of the community or even society (Dudley, 2011). According to this author the aforementioned principles are characteristic to participatory action research and that is why in feminist studies this type of research is often used.

2.5. Empowerment theories in social work

There is no common definition of empowerment because various levels of empowerment exist and empowerment is a contextual phenomenon. Different types of empowerment are distinguished. The theories of enhancing individual powers speak about self-assistance. This perspective emphasizes the enhancement of self-esteem, participation and fight for one's own rights while being a receiver of services (Ruškus, Mažeikis, 2007). Another, postmodern, approach states that power is not a finite and localized unit, power manifests itself as a relation between different discourses, interests, cultures, motives. Empowerment can be seen from the following perspectives: first, empowerment as an attempt to increase individual's self-confidence providing him/her with necessary

information, resources, knowledge, second, empowerment as a creation of suitable environment that encourages an individual to develop his/her knowledge and competence creating conditions to express autonomy, freedom and responsibility. Empowerment (Thorlakson, Murray, 1996) includes delegation, individual responsibility, independent decision making and the sense of belief in the ability to effectively act.

A social worker has a professional task and commitment to reduce a communication barrier between a client and various social institutions, e.g. specialists working in healthcare system (Cagle, Kovacas, 2009). It creates preconditions for client's (and his/her family's) empowerment and self-determination. In other words it ensures client's autonomous decision making when presented information and possible alternatives, the plan of intervention, etc. are clear for all the participants of the process of social assistance.

Lord (1991) distinguishes personal empowerment that is treated as a four-stage process:

1. The first stage is understanding, making conscious (clients in mediation of a social worker receive new information, find themselves in a new context whether after other living conditions have changed or it is achieved by applying certain ways and methods of work).

2. The second stage is the stage of relationships and learning, when an individual having become conscious with the needs strives for relationships with other people or groups and resources, thus receives new information and learns new skills. The consequence of this stage is that the individual expands his/her opportunities and the range of choices.

3. The third stage is mobilization and acting. It means that an individual strives for the relationships with other people who have similar interests (it can be both specialists and other people with similar fate in self-support groups, etc.), learns new skills, and gets ready for actions because he/she can be involved into the activity or other social actions that are meaningful to him/her. Successful performance of new roles can cause the feeling of joy of participation that increases self-esteem, stimulates to express the right for one's choice.

4. The fourth stage is contribution to common activity. It is the last stage of individual empowerment when new resources, skills and knowledge gained in earlier stages are integrated. A mediator or another worker rendering social assistance can help a client and his/her family members achieve and go through all the stages.

It should be noted that empowerment is a lifelong process involving positive changes related to individual's self-respect, self-image and helping to create and develop meaningful social relationship (friendship, formal and informal support). According to Douglas and Zimmerman (1995), empowerment is such a process, during which people, organizations or communities strive for social participation. The aforementioned authors treat empowerment as a construct related to individual powers and competences, natural assistance systems and proactive social behaviour and social changes**.**

According to Perkins and Zimmerman (1995), instead of clinical approach empowerment makes people notice and operate with the concepts of health promotion, recovery, instead of deficit and shortcomings – competences and strengths. When conducting the research referring to the approach of empowerment instead of cataloguing of needs and risk factors it is attempted to identify person's strengths and abilities and investigate

the impact of environment on the genesis of social problems.

Empowerment-focused practice improves and gives opportunities for participants to develop knowledge and skills, to treat specialists as partners but not as authoritarian experts. Empowerment is related to the concept of resources when individuals try to reveal their potential and thus control their social life.

Nachshen (2004) states that in the process of social assistance applying the principles of empowerment people (clients) perceive themselves as active agents interacting with a bigger community. Social work strategies focused on rejecting the practice of oppression and discrimination are also closely related to empowerment theories and techniques (Hugman, 1998).

Analyzing from historical point of view, empowerment was created from motivation theories. Empowerment can be briefly described as a process of personal growth and development, where certain individuals' characteristics such as expectations, attitudes, values, perceptions and relations with environment are the main factors. The variables of environment on the level of individual include race and gender, also roles, status and interests. The concept of empowerment presupposes that a person under complicated life conditions with the mediation of concrete actions develops the sense that he/she can control his/her psychological and social reality.

Consequently in empowerment theories the independence, specificity, powers and abilities of a client and his/her family are emphasized. Empowerment is related to increasing individuals' opportunities of social participation (Myrick, John, Williams, 1994). Empowerment means that individuals strive for controlling their own life and changing dominating power relations (Horkheimer, 1995). Empowerment theory relates individual's welfare to wider social and political environment. It is also a process still continuing in a local community, including mutual respect, critical reflection, care and group participation during which people share resources, gain better access and control over these resources.

Empowerment is defined as a process of development (Thorlakson, Murray, 1996). Three dimensions of empowerment that enhances the experience of empowerment have been identified:
1. positive self-identification,
2. extensive learning and comprehension,
3. personal reflection about environment and ability to realize mutual communication.

Learning, support and information positively correlate with empowerment (McCubbin, McCubbin, et al., 1997). When a person is well informed about aims, more fully realizes personal identification, the motivation and effectiveness increase. Expectations and social roles contradicting to each other negatively correlate with empowerment. Aims have very big importance, they are not as a final point but rather as an intermediate link in formulating the solution.

According to A. Lenz, W. Stark (2002) in the concept of empowerment law and needs should be related. In social work clients are the most important participants having not only their rights but also duties, in individual, group and social structure planes. The aforementioned authors distinguish the following dimensions of empowerment:
• active and positive feeling that I live in my own world,
• creation of skills and strategies in order to achieve aims
• creation of (social) network,
• critical attitude towards every situation,

- self-identification in the process of social changes,
- overcoming demoralization.

Empowerment (Nachshen, 2004) also means interactive and effectively oriented process; responsibility for one's own life; processes of search to achieve compatibility; ability to control oneself in estimating accusations and overcoming life challenges; possibility during conversations to encourage the ability to solve problems by ways and methods that are the least destructive for a personality; empowerment includes participation in community and processes of particular changes. Empowerment theory can be treated in two ways: as a process including actions and activity and as a result including the growth of interpersonal, behaviour competence that causes higher level of empowerment (Perkins, Zimmerman, 1995).

The criticism of the empowerment theory (Wolfensberger, 2002) is directed towards the evaluation of one's own and others' power. It is argued that empowerment theory operates only with opportunities. It is rhetorically asked what is better for a person: to perform roles favourably evaluated by others or still develop one's powers with regard to other people? It means it is doubted whether people who are in social exclusion and have little power can take decisions and make independent resolutions. However, empowerment is not understood only as enhancing powers and competitiveness. Empowerment is understood as giving powers to make decisions about one's aims, living conditions, professional activity, etc. themselves. Thus, not only specialists but all the participants of the process of rendering social assistance including clients themselves become responsible for decisions and their realization.

Generalizing the postulates of the empowerment theory and the arguments of the critics it is possible to state that empowerment is understood as gaining people's support, social skills and resources necessary for self-organization and social participation striving for social changes. Empowerment is both a strategy and particular political activity (Dalley, 1991) gaining the distribution of powers and management in a society.

2.6. System approach in social work

The term "systemic" itself originated from social system studies of Émile Durkheim and the works by Talcott Parsons (Robbins, Chatterjee, Canda, 2006). The latter were influenced by the theories of L. von Bertalanffy and later adaptations by the social psychologist Uri Bronfenbrenner, when human biological systems in ecological environment were analyzed. Consequently system approach originated from Bronfenbrenner's ecological environment and the system theory of Bertalanffy, which reveals different frameworks of system approach made up of different disciplines and meant to analyze people's complex interaction in social environment.

System or ecological approach in social work manifests itself when in the process of social support and assistance not only a separate client but also his/her family and closest environment as interrelated, interacting and interdependent elements are seen (Rubble, 1999; Thomlison, 2002). The essential principle of system approach towards a client in social work states that in creating an individual assistance plan a client and his/her closest environment is considered as one indivisible whole (Corcoran, 2000). It means that the participation of a client himself/herself is obligatory in all the stages of the process of plan creation.

Social assistance is based on system approach which means, according to Thomli-

son (2002), that a client and his/her family are treated as an indivisible integral unit and the whole, and social (also educational and psychological) difficulties that are experienced by one family member affect all other family members too.

Aforementioned Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1901–1972), who is considered as the originator of the system theory in modern social work was a biologist disappointed with linear approach and cause-consequence theories in explaining the peculiarities of growth and life of living organisms. He focused his investigations on the fact that separate parts of the organism interact with each other and thus influence each other. Von Bertalanffy suggested systemic view on organisms and their interaction, not reducing and not separating into parts, moreover investigating not isolated organisms but also their interaction with other systems as the mechanism of changes and the precondition of development. These ideas changed the development of science, such terms as open and closed system, entropy, boundaries, homeostasis, etc. were introduced. The ideas that "the whole is something more than the sum of separate parts" and "separate parts of the whole are interrelated, they interact and influence each other" (Greene, 2000) were later proved by other sciences (sociology, social work, psychology, cybernetics, number theory, etc.).

Later the system theory was developing under the influence of other sciences and interdisciplinary research. The concept of "nonlinear dynamics" has emerged, which means those systems are dynamic and they constantly develop and change (human development can be presented as an analogue – from birth, infancy to old age). According to Warren, Franklin, Streeter (1998), nonlinear dynamics of people's social system and biological variety is perfectly illustrated by the game of billiard: a ball striking the other balls both changes the direction itself and makes the other balls move and changes their position. Dynamics and systemic character in social work emphasize the meaning of investigation and studies of the process of changes. It gives new knowledge to social work practicians about the changes of people's social systems.

Referring to the interpretations by various scientists (Franklin, Jordan, 1999, Morrow, 1999), resulting from system theories it is possible to make the following inferences about social support to a client and his/her family:

1. Individual features of creativity, originality, openness, or on the contrary difficulties and problems are the best perceived in wider context involving the family itself and the closest social environment, i.e. the source of difficulties is rather a result conditioned by the interaction of individuals, family and environment. This inference is also used in the search for resources.
2. With system approach any interactions and processes are related, they affect not one separate member but all family members.

The main principles of the system approach application in a family (Thomlison, 2002) are:

- any events in a family obey not linear causality but circular logic bet: the event A is not a consequence of the event B; the event A influences the event B as well as the event B influences the event A,
- neutrality that means that every family member has equal opportunities to speak and be heard,
- the participation of a client himself/herself and his/her family is obligatory in solving any life problems.

In social work when a family is considered as a system the principal postulates of

this approach are as follows:

1. The experience of the family plays an especially important role in supporting and enhancing the behaviour and competences of any family member (Corcoran, 2000).
2. In creating social assistance plan individual peculiarities, expectations, needs and interests must be taken into account. In social work practice it is quite usual to individualize work, nevertheless often there is a tendency to generalize that possibilities and needs of the clients who have similar social problems are similar as well, therefore the necessity of the individualization of work is underestimated (Turnbull, Turnbull, 1997);
3. Distribution of functions, roles and commitments in rendering social assistance among all the participants is another key component of successful work.
4. Admission that in order to achieve the effectiveness of social support and social changes the complex (many subjective and objective interrelated psychosocial factors) circle of factors exists (Franklin, Jordan, 1999). All the factors are interrelated and they determine the planned changes.

Any model of social work with a client based on a system approach is inseparable from particular values, ethical and methodological principles, however the latter principles emphasize independent character and comprise the following elements (Rubble, 1999; Turnbull, Turnbull, 1997):

- direct work with a client and his/her closest social environment,
- social worker acts as a certain intermediate (mediator) among various social systems and institutions and initiates meaningful and purposeful communication and rendering social assistance,
- various resources of a social work institution and particular community for set common aims are used,
- working together, the activity of various forms and types is used in order not only to render social assistance but also gain common experience and new knowledge,
- often the development of social and practical skills is involved into practice,
- the aim is persons' empowerment or similar aims when having perceived and developed their skills and knowledge people expand their activity in local or wider community and solve various problems they face.

System approach also indicates that in social work different resources are used depending on "geographical location" of a client (where work with a client takes place) (Cohen, Syme, 1985). Resources are treated and prepared to be used as auxiliary aids in case of need. Resources can be given by a client himself/herself or/and his/her family (so-called internal resources) or other people (external resources). In every community there are various resources that can be divided as follows:

- client himself/herself and his/her family, closest relatives, friends;
- client's social network;
- determined by law and voluntary sources available to everyone (e.g. community centres, schools, etc.);
- groups of mutual support, communities and religious groups;
- sources based on membership (e.g. sports clubs);
- specialized sources determined by law or voluntary sources where people are directed (Butler, Roberts, 2004).

3. Methods of social work research: strategy of creation of research design

Darius Gerulaitis

Methods of social work research

Practicians and scientists of social work can obtain knowledge about clients, their social environment and the effectiveness of intervention strategies, etc. in the most different ways. Often it is the experience of practical work and its reflection. Another way to obtain knowledge about social work practice is empirical research.

Any social research is conducted having explicit or implicit theoretical framework, approach to a phenomenon under investigation. Always before conducting the research theoretical approach is developed for the clarity and exactness of the research. That is, a researcher can refer to already existing theoretical models or, in conducting theoretical analysis, create his/her own models. Theory is a model of reality characteristic to a particular discipline, four interrelated concepts are considered as focal in defining a particular theory, i.e. concepts, facts, hypotheses and principles (Turner, 2000; 2011), the author notices that facts put in a certain logical sequence create the basis for the development of theory.

Research paradigms address the philosophical dimensions of social sciences. A *research paradigm* is a set of fundamental assumptions and beliefs as to how the world is perceived which then serves as a thinking framework that guides the behaviour of the researcher (Wahyuni, 2012).

The two main philosophical dimensions to distinguish existing research paradigms are *ontology* and *epistemology*. They relate to the nature of knowledge and the development of that knowledge, respectively. The latter refers to a model for undertaking a research process in the context of particular paradigm (Wahyuni, 2012) (see Table 4).

Table 4

Fundamental Beliefs of Research Paradigms in Social Sciences
(according to Wahyuni, 2012, p. 70)

Fundamental Beliefs	RESEARCH PARADIGMS			
	Positivism	*Postpositivism*	*Interpretivism (Constructivism)*	*Pragmatism*
Ontology: the position on the nature of reality	External, objective and independent of social actors	Objective. Exists independently of human thoughts and beliefs or knowledge of their existence, but is interpreted through social conditioning (critical realist)	Socially constructed, subjective, may change, multiple	External, multiple, view chosen to best achieve an answer to the research question

Epistemology: the view on what constitutes acceptable knowledge	Only observable phenomena can provide credible data, facts. Focus on causality and law-like generalisations, reducing phenomena to simplest elements	Only observable phenomena can provide credible data, facts. Focus on explaining within a context or contexts	Subjective meanings and social phenomena. Focus on the details of situation, the reality behind these details, subjective meanings and motivating actions	Either or both observable phenomena and subjective meanings can provide acceptable knowledge dependent upon the research question. Focus on practical applied research, integrating different perspectives to help interpret the data
Axiology: the role of values in research and the researcher's stance	Value-free and emic Research is undertaken in a value-free way, the researcher is independent of the data and maintains an objective stance	Value-laden and etic Research is value laden; the researcher is biased by world views, cultural experiences and upbringing	Value-bond and emic Research is value bond, the researcher is part of what is being researched, cannot be separated and so will be subjective	Value-bond and etic Values play a large role in interpreting the results, the researcher adopting both objective and subjective points of view
Research methodology: the model behind the research process	Quantitative	Quantitative or qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative and qualitative (mixed or multi-method design)

Creation of research design (plan)

In social work before conducting any scientific research a researcher at first considers and decides what variables is of interest to him/her and how to measure them, then the questions of research design become relevant: how to conduct the research? Where? Who are the participants of the research?, etc. Research design (plan) is a logical performance structure that permits to consistently collect data and perform the study (Grinnell, et al., 2004).

All the process of scientific research can be divided into three main stages:

1. Preparation for and organization of the research.
To distinguish in this stage:
a) definition of the aims and objectives of the research;
b) creation of research strategy or research plan;
c) organization of the research process.

2. Collecting facts (accumulation of empirical data).

3. Processing empirical data:
a) statistical processing of the obtained data;
b) theoretical processing of the obtained data;
c) practical application of the obtained results.

Apart from social and scientific relevance of the research a researcher must consider other issues related to collecting data, etc. Is the topic researchable? Is it possible to conduct a chosen research? Other questions related to ethics are (according to Žydžiūnaitė, 2006):
- Does the researcher himself/herself behave ethically in "giving" and "taking"?
- Do the research participants know why their participation in the research is important?
- Are they informed?
- Are the research participants protected not only from direct negative impact but also from negative psychological impact?
- Does the researcher ensure the confidentiality of their information?
- Should the researcher feel guilty and hide the fact if the respondents in their answers have revealed not only positive but also negative aspects of particular activity?
- And others.

The researcher must follow the main principles of ethics, however every situation is specific and unique, therefore contextuality is also related to following the principles of ethics in the research.

According to Creswell (2008) the whole cycle of the research and its structure can be presented schematically (see Figure 4).
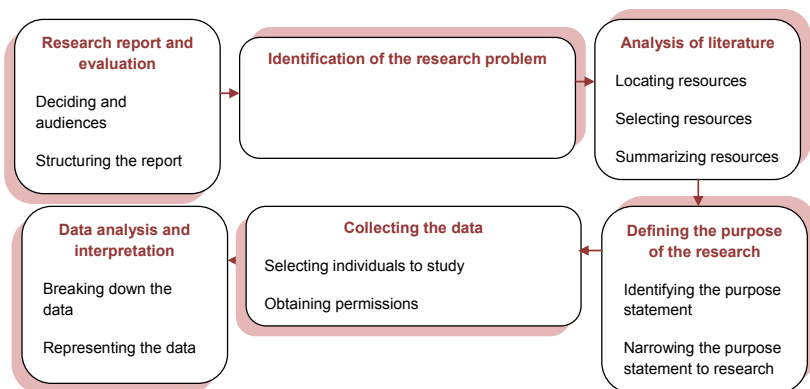

Figure 4. Research cycle and structure according to Creswell (2008)

According to Creswell (2008) in *quantitative* research, describing a trend means that the research problem can be answered best by a study in which the researcher seeks to establish the overall tendency of responses from individuals and to note how this tendency varies among people. For example, you might seek to learn how voters describe their attitudes toward a bond issue. Results from this study can inform a large population views and the diversity of these views. However, some quantitative research problems require that you explain how one variable affects another. Variables are an attribute (e.g. attitude toward the school bond issue) or characteristics of individuals (e.g. gender) that researchers study. By explaining a relation among variables, you are interested in determining whether one or more variables might influence another variable. For example, quantitative researchers may seek to know why certain voters voted against the school bond issue. The variables, gender and attitude toward the quality of the schools, may influence individual votes on the bond issue.

Qualitative research, however, is best suited for research problems in which you do not know the variables and need to explore. The literature might yield little information about the phenomenon of study, and you need to learn more from participants through exploration. For example, the literature may not adequately address the use of sign language in distance education courses. A qualitative research study is needed to explore this phenomenon from the perspective of distance education students. Unquestionably, using sign language in such courses is complex and may have not been examined in the prior literature. A *central phenomenon* is the key concept, idea, or process studied in qualitative research. Thus the research problem of the difficulty in teaching children who are deaf requires both an exploration (because we do not know how to teach these children) as well as an understanding (because of its complexity) of the process of teaching and learning.

The research is aimed to reveal the relations (Bryman, 2004) between the variables of the researcher's interest (e.g. social worker's communication style with a client and the result of intervention). The research is conducted a) in order to reveal a phenomenon (problem, etc.), b) in prognostication and c) in the verification of theories.

In scientific literature (Thyer, 2010) the following general aims and types of research have been distinguished:
- Descriptive type (descriptive research)
- Predictive type (predictive research)
- Exploratory type (explanation)
- Evaluative (expert) research.

Analyzing in more detail, in social work research is also divided into the types of needs assessment, secondary data analysis, quasi-experimental, meta-analysis and systematic review, etc.

Research designs (plans) can also be classified according two fundamental types (Rubin, Babbie, 2005): experimental and non-experimental designs.

Experimental research designs foresee active researcher's intervention, for example, applying therapy to one group of clients, etc. The main aims of such research are the identification of the impact of external factors, meanwhile, in non-experimental research it is revealing personal features and variables.

It is characteristic to non-experimental research design (plan) that it aims 1) to describe a phenomenon and 2) find correlative relations among different variables. The research of descriptive type is often met in mass media, in opinion polls, for example,

for what party people would vote if election took place in the following week, etc. The research on clients' satisfaction with social work services are also attributed to the type of non-experimental design of descriptive research.

Briefly analyzing the distinction of quantitative and qualitative research it should be noted that the aim of qualitative research is not to measure, but to understand (the meanings that are attributed by people to social phenomena). The main difference of qualitative and quantitative research is the character of the obtained data. If the results of quantitative research are obtained in numbers, percentage, concerned statistical relations, etc., the results of qualitative research are obtained in the text and it is analyzed. Qualitative methods are of universal character, therefore they require erudition and practical life experience from the researcher. Managing and effective use of qualitative methods is not only science but also art.

In social work practice it is accepted to apply the principle of the triangulation of research methods (also theories and sample). The majority of the methodologists of social research are for the integration of qualitative and quantitative research. Triangulation, according to Babbie (2011), is understood as using various combinations of methods or (sometimes) theories and techniques of data collection. It is the combination of various methods (both qualitative and quantitative). Triangulation also means looking at the research object from various angles, the way of investigation that analyzes the phenomenon from several positions. For example, any application of one method in social research is one-sided and not all covering. Therefore in order to perceive a phenomenon under investigation more thoroughly and widely it is expedient to apply several research methods. It is called the principle of triangulation.

Various data collection methods in the research, for example, questionnaire survey, observation and interview, are used in order to ensure the validity of the obtained data.

In combining qualitative and quantitative research (Silverman, 2004) the following must be taken into account:

- Aim of the integration of methods: by qualitative methods it is aimed to look at the depth of the problem, meanwhile by quantitative methods – to the breadth.
- Ways of the integration of methods: the researches should complement each other, not to contradict in technical sense.
- To foresee the basis of future generalizations: referring to what the conclusions of the research will be made, because qualitative and quantitative data require different analysis and generalization.
- It is necessary to find the explanation of a more complicated phenomenon.
- It is aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of different methods.
- It is necessary to investigate certain contradictory aspects of a social problem.
- By usual research ways and methods reliable results are not obtained.
- Striving for the integration of the research it is important to take into account its preconditions and the differences between these methods characteristic to one or another stage of the process of scientific research.

The essential elements of qualitative research in social work (Flick, 2006) are:

1. Trajectories of social problems that is evolution and dynamics.
2. Relating a person to social context and social problems.
3. Conditions and consequences of change. It is maturation – did it happen? How did the conditions change? What were their consequences?
4. Change of decisions. The participants of the research made new decisions.

From the methodological aspect the following (very interrelated) types of research have been distinguished:
- Biographical research
- Phenomenological research
- Grounded theory
- Ethnographic research
- Case study

Biographical research aims to learn about various aspects of person's life. For this purpose open interview, analysis of documents and other methods are suitable. The main aim is to present a wide picture of an individual.

Phenomenological research is applied in order to understand the essence of the experience of a person who has faced certain social problems (or another phenomenon). It is used applying knowledge and theories of sociology, philosophy, psychology. It is aimed to find out about various events and how they are interpreted by a research participant or participants themselves.

Grounded theory is related to researcher's practical experience, it is as if deduced from practice, not referring to any scientific sources. For this case field research is applied. However when interpreting the research data, applying categorization it is checked how much and how the categories obtained during the research are (not) compatible with the research on the phenomenon by other scientists.

Ethnographic research is meant to investigate, analyze, and reveal organizational culture (but not separate persons or their experiences).

 Case study, according to Yin (2003), is meant to analyze an interesting non-standard phenomenon or thing (e.g. conditions, peculiarities of rendering social support, etc.). The case must be unique, specific, but at the same time it must be a part of the system as well. It is aimed to find the model of the system and boundedness of the case. In methodological literature (Hughes, 1998) 3 case studies have been distinguished:
1. Intrinsic case study. It is conducted in order to learn more about the case under investigation.
2. Instrumental case study. It is mostly applied in order to verify a certain hypothesis about an existing phenomenon or event, etc. or to specify a theoretical aspect.
3. Collective case study. Applying this method several cases are analyzed and joined together.

Generalized methods of data collection and processing of qualitative and quantitative research (and their combination) most often applied in social work studies have been presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Methods of data collection and processing of qualitative and quantitative research (and their combination)

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH		QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH
Phenomenological Non-standardized	Observation Survey Analysis of documents Interview Content analysis	Standardized
Case study Ethnographic research Grounded theory Participant observation Action research Participatory action research Biographic method and narratives		Statistical methods of data grouping (factor, cluster, multidimensional scaling) Statistical verification of hypotheses Correlation analysis Statistical prognostication Experimental research
Triangulation of research methods		

Detailed descriptions of research methods for the students of the joint master study programme *Social Work* are presented in Moodle environment (in the descriptions of the study subjects Methodology and Organization of Scientific Research, Master Thesis I and Master Thesis II).

Students should perceive the affinities and differences between methodology and methods. Methodology and methods in scientific work are only the instruments for solving the problem. However there can be "purified" theoretical and methodical works, in which the solution of a chosen problem responds to modern expression of theories or methods. It is very important in the search for own concepts for the methodology of social work under formation. Therefore social cognition covering a wide space of social phenomena should not be identified with sociological cognition that is often reduced to numbers, facts and data. The representatives of other sciences also make an elementary mistake when they call various questionnaire surveys sociological research. Surveys provide only data, and they are interpreted referring to the theories of sociology, although they can be explained referring to the theories of other sciences (Leonavičius, 2005).

Therefore, in scientific research works in the field of social work it should be aimed to interdisciplinarity because neither one nor two or three modern social theories are not capable anymore – because of schematic character of traditional concepts – to analyze new problems (Valantiejus, 2004, p. 420).

4. Scientific research practice as the space for the preparation of master degree thesis

Valdas Rimkus

Having analyzed methodological (theories and methods) approaches, we present the realization model of scientific research practice that can be applied in this joint programme.

In joint master study programme of Social Work of Šiauliai University (ŠU) and Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine" of Kiev (UU) 7 credits are given for Scientific Research Practice of Social Work. Practice is closely related to master's graduation work and is meant for comparative reflection of theory and scientific research. The practice takes place in parallel with the last stage of the preparation of master thesis – conducting empirical research, theoretical interpretation of the research data, highlighting of international comparative aspect. The most important principles defining philosophical-value basis of the practice are the aspirations to involve students into complicated environment of social work characterized by cultural and social variety, ensuring the collaboration student – practice institution – university and permanent relation and emphasis on critical and reflective thinking. As it has been indicated in the description of a study subject of "Scientific Research Practice of Social Work" (presented in Supplement 1), the aim of this practice is to gain new knowledge and perform complex evaluation of the activity of institutions rendering social services, especially those that work with people with disabilities, elder people and seniors, and abilities to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity of institutions rendering social services with regard to clients' needs; to organize and render social assistance on national and international level, perform comparative analysis; to deepen the abilities to synthesize theoretical and practical experience; to initiate innovations and prepare the plan of the improvement of social work services using various strategies and methods; to develop skills of a reflecting and constantly learning practician. It is expected that after the practice students will achieve learning outcomes presented in Table 6 and gain foreseen skills.

Table 6

Relations between general learning outcomes of the social work programme and the study subject of scientific research practice of social work

Learning outcomes foreseen in the programme	Study subject (module) results
1. Is able to initiate, organize, independently perform scientific research, and interpret the results in the interdisciplinary approach from national and international perspective.	After the course student will gain and develop knowledge and will be able to perform complex evaluation of the activity of institutions rendering social services, that work with people in the situation of disability.

2. Is able to apply the research results that permit to model the solution of social problems of people in the situation of disability, improving professional activity, implementing innovative social services, thus influencing the process of social integration of people with disability through the improvement of the laws of social policy in the context of the results of scientific research.	Student will develop the abilities to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity of institutions rendering social services with regard to clients' needs, will be able to organize and render social assistance, perform comparative analysis of social services on national and international level.
3. Is able to create innovations in his/her activity, act in undefined and complex situations, which is very important working with people in the situation of disability, paying special attention to old age disability.	Student will be able to create and initiate innovations in his/her practical activity referring to scientific research and prepare the plan of the improvement of social work services using various strategies and methods.

Consequently the most important aspects of this practice is learning about and assessment of the activity of social work institutions, formation of the skills of rendering social assistance, synthesis of theory and practice in interpreting the data of scientific research and the reflection of one's activity and experience.

During the practice the students should:
- be actively involved in practical activity of the institution, accumulate new knowledge using all opportunities given by the institution;
- behave according to the code of ethics of social workers and internal rules of the practice institution;
- responsibly prepare for and actively participate in the classes of supervision and practice reflection;
- collect the data for the conducted scientific research, get ready for the interpretation of the collected data with the help of a practice supervisor and a teacher;
- prepare practice report according to set requirements (see Supplement 1).

The material for practice report can be collected directly observing the specialists' activity, meetings, individual or group work with clients, reading documents, files and other written material, participating in supervisions. It is also recommended for students to have notes where their experiences and useful information would be recorded and strive for the closest possible feedback from the staff of the practice institution, other specialists and colleagues.

Now we will review the most important components of the practice report in more detail, firstly, about social work institutions. It is planned to perform Scientific Research Practice of Social Work according to the principle of academic mobility: students of joint study programme go to the partner country, to the institution rendering social work services. Every student has already performed the research in his/her country on a chosen institution, therefore he/she chooses an analogous target group of the research in the partner country and the institution rendering the same or similar social services. In a chosen institution of the partner country a student performs another research in order to prepare for the comparative analysis. The expected duration of the practice is 2.5 months. In the receiving institution and partner university the supervisor of the practice organizes practical activity, consults the students and renders other methodological or organizational assistance. ŠU and UU have collaboration agreements with social insti-

tutions of Lithuania and Ukraine for the performance of social work practice. Faculty of Social Welfare and Disability Studies has 28 collaboration agreements, and the partner university in Ukraine has over 50 collaboration agreements, consequently students will be able to choose from a wide spectrum of institutions.

After the practice a student in the report should present a complex analysis and evaluation of the activity of the institution rendering social services, the range of social problems and the client's needs. In the textbook prepared by I. Dirgėlienė and A. Kiaunytė, the teachers of the Department of Social Work, the Faculty of Health Sciences, Klaipėda University "Praktika rengiant socialinius darbuotojus: Klaipėdos universiteto patirtis" (2008), the examples of the analysis of the activity of the institution are presented and will also be used in this publication.

In presenting a nongovernmental organization it is important to notice the activity and status of the organization, projects performed by the organization, its financial resources and voluntary work and its relations to the activity performed by specialists. The analysis of a nongovernmental organization can be performed following this scheme:

NGO

STRUCTURE, FIELDS OF ACTIVITY:

NGO title, directors, number of members, fulltime staff, volunteers, premises

NGO activity field, rendered services, role in the system of social assistance

NGO network in community, mutual collaboration, NGO status in society

PERFORMED PROJECTS:

Title of the project, aims, objectives, manager

Target group of the project, number of participants, performers, stages, teamwork

Expected results of the project, continuity, methods of activity, informing society

Budget of the project, financing sources, search for financial resources

VOLUNTARY WORK:

Legal acts regulating voluntary work, volunteer's rights and responsibilities

Volunteer training, their status on the local and international level

Collaboration of a specialist and a volunteer, mutual assistance, differences and similarities

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT'S ACTIVITY:

Performed activity, roles, their relevance
Used, developed or gained competences
Successes and difficulties in collecting the material for research
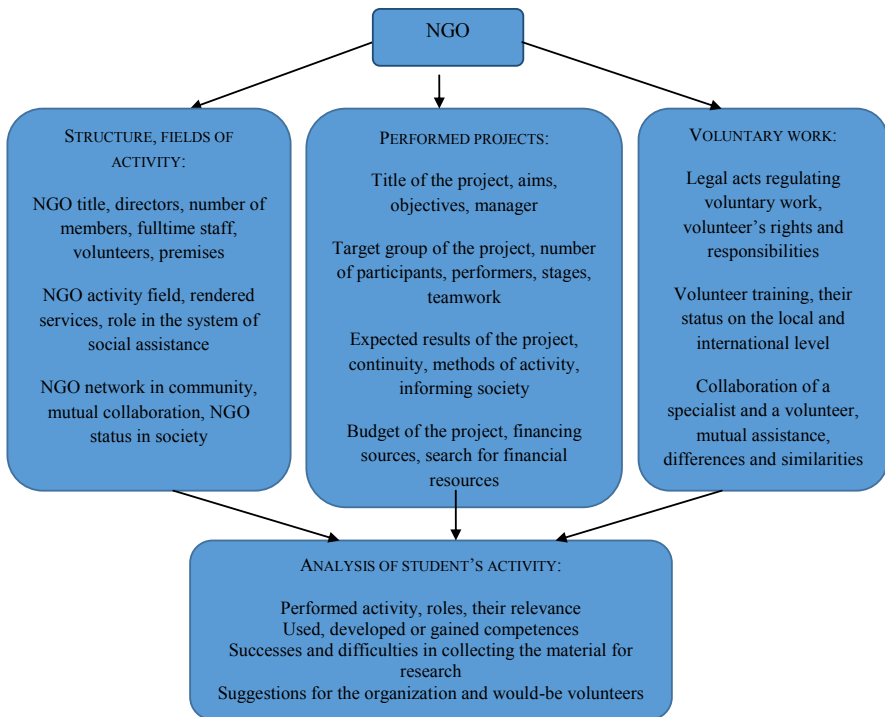Suggestions for the organization and would-be volunteers

Figure 5. Plan of the analysis of the activity of a nongovernmental organization (according to Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė, 2008, p. 33-34)

To analyze governmental social work services a slightly different scheme reflecting the activity of these institutions to a greater extent is recommended. You can see it in Figure 6.
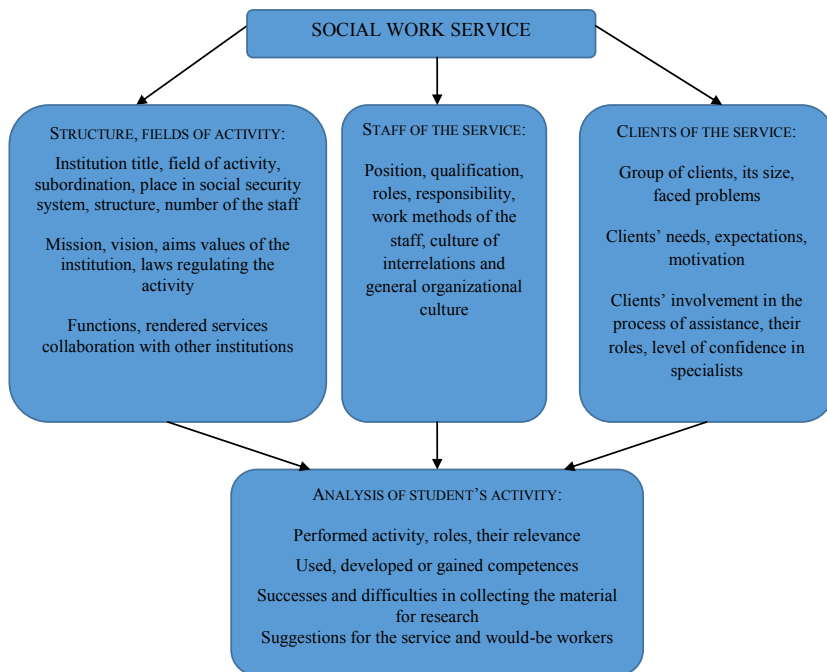

Figure 6. Plan of the analysis of the activity of social work service (according to Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė, 2008, p. 37-38)

The presented schemes of the analysis of the activity of practice institutions are considered as an example that can be used and that can be freely interpreted and modified with regard to the peculiarities of the activity of a particular institution and the aims set by a student and his/her practice supervisor.

Another expected result of scientific research practice is students' ability to render and organize social assistance. It often happens to hear from students that during practice they did not think at all about theoretical knowledge they learned in lectures, but took spontaneous decisions on how to help a client. Although this approach is understandable and many times experienced by many of us, it is not completely right. A person tends to evaluate the phenomena that take place around him/her from a certain position, following particular values or attitude. Probably we do not think about it and take decisions unconsciously, however attitudes and values in this case perform the same role as complicated theories and most likely are formed or conditioned by them. Consequently theory and practice cannot be separated from each other, they spin in a constant closed circle, constantly influencing and creating each other. Therefore when planning the organization of social assistance to a client it is important to refer not only to intuition but also theoretical knowledge, and it is especially important to identify the

reasons of client's difficulties and possible consequences, because intervention will not be effective if it is focused on incorrectly understood reasons. One of the possible ways of using theory in practice is presented by H. P. Trader (1977, cit. Compton, Galaway, Cournoyer, 2005, p. 61). He suggests social workers to consider several things and ask oneself some questions before taking up concrete actions of social assistance to a client:

1. Balance of pathology-health. Do the used concepts emphasize the problem and shortcomings or positive sides and strengths? Does the formulation of the problem reflect the expectations of the major part of society? Does the evaluation of positive sides take different possibilities of the groups of society into account?
2. Balance of social worker-client power. Is the attitude that a social worker takes more responsibility in changing client's situation followed? Are clients treated as less important than a social worker in the process of assistance? Is a social worker considered as committed to use his/her knowledge and skills to strengthen client's potential of self-care?
3. Balance of the impact of a person-society. When identifying the causes of the problem are they searched in a person's shortcomings or social relations? Are historical and societal factors taken into account? Is attention focused on political-economical factors of behaviour? Is personal behaviour related to social and environmental aspects?
4. Balance of internal-external changes. Are internal, psychological changes considered more significant than changes in society? Is it admitted that society is more punishing than supporting? Does the perception of changes refer to dominating attitudes in society or is the variety of attitudes admitted? To what extent is change identified with adaptation?
5. Balance of rigidity-flexibility. Is the opportunity to adjust concepts to the needs of a particular group acknowledged? Are abstract principles creatively applied in practice? Is class structure of society taken into account? Are the statements of the theory accepted and applied uncritically?

These considerations can become the point of departure in performing and organizing the process of social assistance. However it is important not to forget that social worker's knowledge will never be all-covering and complete. Social workers of today must learn how to act in undefined situations that require constant updating of knowledge and critical evaluation. Therefore it is important to make a relevant action plan of social assistance that would bring clarity and structure into the space of the social worker's activity. In Table 7 a logical model of the creation of a social assistance plan has been presented.

Table 7

Model of the creation of a social assistance plan

Analysis of situation	Setting aim and objectives	Theoretical substantiation	Action plan	Evaluation
Problem is defined

Facts are collected, available resources are identified

Client's strengths and weaknesses are assessed

Circle of specialists necessary for problem solving is previewed

Issues relevant to particular specialists are identified | The aim that is relevant for a client, acceptable for a client and a social worker and achievable, is set

Objectives: related to aims; corresponding to needs, resources, strengths and problems; measurable and achievable

Responsibilities are distributed

Written plan or agreement is made | It is estimated whether chosen methods of assistance correspond to needs and resources, whether they are based on research or other scientific knowledge, whether they correspond to the criteria of culture, age and gender

The place of the chosen methods in the system of the aforementioned dichotomies is considered | Planned actions should cover: concrete actions of a social worker and other specialists; accumulation of resources; development of skills and competences; clients' involvement and motivation; performers' accountability; control of the performance of the plan | Reliable and precise evaluation criteria are set

Ways of ensuring quality of the methods are applied

It is estimated whether the activity corresponds to the plan

It is estimated whether the results correspond to the

set objectives

It is measured whether the final aim is achieved

Successes and failures are analyzed |

By this model it is aimed to relate the steps of the preparation and implementation of the plan of rendering assistance into a consistent logical succession that would help to learn about client's situation from all its aspects and with theoretical basis and choose the most suitable decisions. Various social services can use different forms of the agreement or plan of the work with a client. This model is at first meant for the systematization of the process of assistance and its graphical expression can be adapted to the form chosen by each particular institution.

The third important aspect of scientific research practice of social work is the synthesis of theory and practice in the interpretation of the data of scientific research. Theoretical interpretation of empirical data is the ability to explain social phenomena, reasons and ways of their existence, the ability to think analytically and conceptually identifying the relations between the phenomena and the forms of their expression, fluent transition from concrete things to abstract, general ideas.

Practice in a social work institution is an excellent opportunity for a student to enrich and integrate practical and theoretical knowledge, at the same time performing

social work. Practice often is the only place where a student can get acquainted with and try the relation between theory and practice. On the one hand, a student gains practical experience from the professionals who work in the institution, on the other hand, he/she regularly participates in supervisions with social work teachers, constantly creating new knowledge throughout this process. In order to explain the process of the creation of theoretical knowledge in the context of the performed empirical research we will refer to the concept of Layder's adaptive theory (Layder, 1998). The basis of the adaptive theory is the use of the extant theories and the obtained research data to create new theoretical knowledge. Namely new theoretical knowledge adapted in the process of the synthesis of the research data and extant theories is called adaptive theory. According to the author, the adaptive theory forms and is formed itself by the empirical data. The most important sources of this theory, according to D. Layder, are twofold, as it is presented in Figure 7.

Theoretical
  General theory (general explanations of social life and phenomena covering various fields of social reality)
  Particular theory (explaining a particular field of social life relevant to the research)

Empirical
  Existing empirical data (results of previous researches, databases, other sources of knowledge)
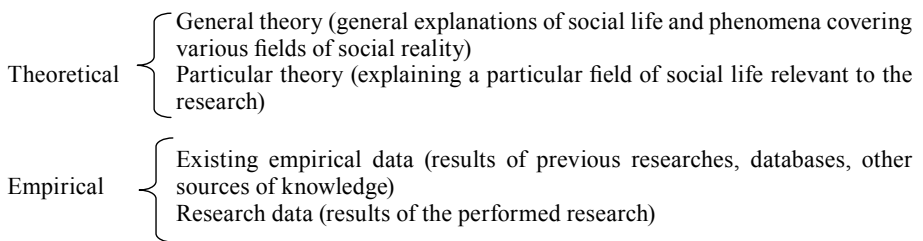 Research data (results of the performed research)

Figure 7. Sources of the adaptive theory (Layder, 1998, p. 163).

The adaptive theory emphasizes and acknowledges many-sided interaction of persons, social activity and social institutes in a complicated multifaceted social world. This theory is relevant for social work because it rather focuses on the fields of social system and interpersonal relations than on more abstract and wider social phenomena. In Figure 8 the relations between extant theory, empirical data and the adaptive theory have been graphically presented.
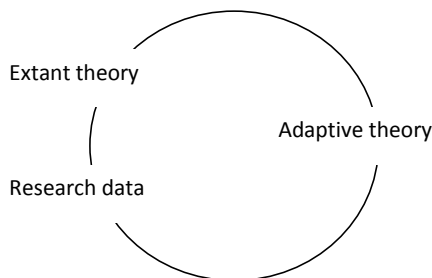
Extant theory

Adaptive theory

Research data

Figure 8. Relations between extant theory, empirical data and the adaptive theory
(Layder, 1988, p. 167)

Layder's model shows that there is not one single way of the formation of adaptive theory. It is a permanent closed circle of theory, empirical data and created knowledge. Chosen theories and knowledge possessed by the researcher influence the process and

contents of the interpretation of the research data, however the obtained research data in their turn influence theoretical knowledge of the researcher. Namely this interaction and merging of both processes become the origin of the formation of the adaptive theory. In this context it is very relevant for a student to suitably choose the place of performing scientific research practice. The harmony between the research object chosen by a student and the place of practice becomes an important stimulus of the formation of adaptive theory because a suitable choice of a place ensures more precise research data and permits to relate them more precisely to theoretical preconditions and perform deeper interpretation of the obtained results. Moreover specialists working in the place of the practice become an important complementary source of knowledge and theoretical ideas for the researcher that has an inseparable relation of their application in practical activity.

In the first part of this book the most important social work theories that in Layder's model would represent the component of extant theories have been presented. It is social constructivism, empowerment, feminism, system theories, and crisis intervention models. Social constructivism emphasizes the relations of studies to the context of environment, the importance of reflection, the dialogue between students and between students and teachers, system theories reveal the peculiarities of the structure of society, intercultural relations and the place of culture itself in social environment, meanwhile, the theory of empowerment and a social work model that emphasizes the client's strengths give an alternative to dominating models and the perception of social reality. In the second cycle study programme of social work of Šiauliai and Kyiv universities that has been discussed here these theories are applied in creating empowering study environment that would stimulate students' skills of critical and problem thinking, would create the preconditions of evidence-based learning and all this would become the basis of adaptive theory formed by students themselves. For graphical presentation of this process we will use the model of Newcastle University (Australia) (Figure 9)
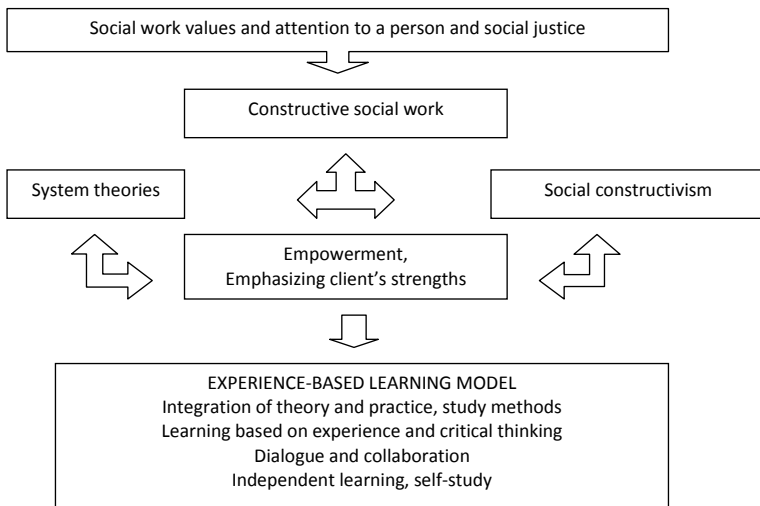

Figure 9. Model of social work studies relating theory and practice
(Gibbons, Gray, 2004, p. 25).

Evidence-based learning includes studies both in classrooms and practice institutions relating practical and theoretical experience and applying innovative integrated study methods. Students' critical thinking, skills of reflection, self-study based on dialogue are encouraged as the means for conscious perception, or, in Layder's (1998) words, the formation of the adaptive theory. The term "constructive social work" is used in Figure 5. The authors of the model use this term in order to reveal the indetermination, many-sidedness, dependence on social or historical circumstances, controversy and relativity of knowledge. In such environment the motivation of social work clients, facilitation of their difficulties is inseparable from the change of social conditions and relations. All this requires collaboration, collective efforts and constant critical approach towards one's activity and its reflection.

Successful and consistent accumulation of data during practice is unimaginable without the process of reflection, as well as the ability to act in undefined changing situations that raise many questions is inseparable from it. Consequently, now it is time to more widely present the fourth aspect of scientific research practice – the reflection of student's activity and experience. Reflection is turning back, looking back to oneself, self-consideration, giving sense to thinking contents and preconditions, the way to analyze one's actions, decisions and results of activity (Psichologijos žodynas, 1993; Jovaiša, 2007). Reflection is an important stage of the development of activity. It helps to look at the process of social work studies from many sides, develop creativity and critical thinking. In literature two types of reflection are most often met: reflection in action and reflection on action. Reflection in action is reflecting on one's own activity when this activity takes place. It is thinking over actions, remembering previous experience, using feelings and emotions and correction of the activity in a particular current situation. R. Clarke, referring to the model by the originator of reflection research D. Schön, presents the following scheme of reflection in action:
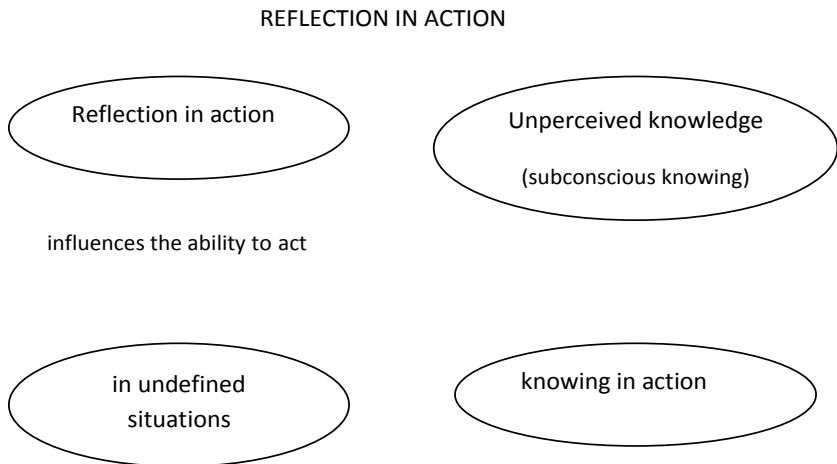
REFLECTION IN ACTION

Figure 10. Model of reflection in action (D. Schön, 1983, cit. R. Clarke)

In the figure it is seen that knowledge unperceived by us is also important for successful process of reflection in action, i.e. the knowledge that we have gained and use unconsciously, without perceiving it. This unperceived knowledge becomes our knowing in action, in other words they condition our concrete decisions and actions. This model confirms the thoughts aforementioned in this chapter about the inseparability of theory and practice.

Reflection on action is as important as reflection in action. Reflection on action is performed after the activity, during which taken decisions are considered, their relevance and effectiveness are evaluated, possible alternative decisions in future are discussed. The most important things to focus on in the reflection of practical activity are as follows:

ambiguous, indefinite situations;

conflicts;

personal features, feelings, attitudes, fears, etc.;

political factors;

support from surrounding people (supervisors, teachers, colleagues);

mistakes and successes.

It is possible to reflectively analyze both the whole period of the practice and particular situations that happened during it. In performing general reflection of the whole practice we recommend the following plan:

- What theories, approaches did you refer to the most often during the practice? Was it happening consciously or did you think about it only preparing the report?
- What other information, apart from scientific knowledge, did you apply during the practice (decisions based on common sense, mass media information, colleagues' advice, etc.)?
- What ideas and values conditioned your actions in particular problem situations? What your personal features helped most/interfered most during the practice?
- How did your value attitudes change? What skills (organizational, communication with people) did you gain?
- What are the boundaries of the application of theoretical knowledge in practice? How much is it conditioned by political, cultural, personal factors, intuition?
- How would you describe practice wisdom? What practice wisdom did you gain during practical placement? (according to Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė, 2008, p. 23-24 p.)

We suggest a slightly different plan for reflective analysis of a particular problem situation:

- Describe the case. What is its context? What made it happen?
- What were your feelings and thoughts when you learned about the event/problem?
- How did you behave in solving the problem? What was your role in this situation? Why did you feel in this but not in another way? What knowledge, information conditioned your actions? What did you try to achieve? What did you feel behaving like that?
- What were the consequences of your actions to you? To a client? What did you know about client's feelings at that moment? Did the applied theoretical knowledge answer the purpose? Did it help to solve the problem? To what extent were your actions conditioned by cultural factors?
- What other choice did you have? What are possible consequences of alternative choices?

- What do you feel about this event now? Was it possible to better cope with the problem? What did you learn in this situation?

Generalizing it should be emphasized that reflection is not only the way of consideration of practical activity. Innovative study methods of problem-based learning, critical thinking applied in the second cycle study programme of social work also require constant reflection of one's actions and taken decisions. Finally, social work as a profession of helping people, where the decisions can have very weighty consequences, requires constant reflective consideration of one's activity. It reveals the polyfunctionality of scientific research practice of social work and confirms the statement by Kozlovas and Malikas (2004, p. 108), that "in the focus of attention of social work theory is the investigation of an individual and social groups attributed to social risk groups characterized by direct interaction with mezzo and macro environment and natural environment of an individual or social group in general, also the mechanisms of adaptation, rehabilitation and individual's social functioning." In the context of the joint second cycle study programme Social Work the content of scientific work and scientific research practice is oriented towards solving everyday problems in the community when a person is in the situation of disability, accentuating the assurance of health and welfare of people with disability, estimating the possibilities of the process of social integration of these groups and strengthening of the stability of their life quality substantiating problem solving strategies with applied scientific research and the EU strategy priorities until 2020 on decreasing social exclusion. It ensures the purposefulness of professional activity on community, national and international levels and social workers' ability to act under undefined and complex circumstances rendering assistance to people in the life process in the situation of congenital, acquired and senior age disability. Consequently, in the process of practice (supervisions) do not be afraid to turn back to yourself, reflect on and evaluate your actions, do not be afraid to speak about your emotions because it will help you become better social workers.

REFERENCES

1. Babbie, E. (2011). *The Practice of Social Research (Sixth Ed.)*. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. Canada: Nelson Education, Ltd.
2. Bagdonas, A. (2001). *Socialinis darbas Lietuvoje: raidos, praktikos ir akademinis aspektai. Socialinė teorija, empirija, politika ir praktika*. Vilnius: VU Specialiosios psichologijos laboratorija.
3. Bryman, A. (2004). *Social research methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
4. Brookfield, S. D. (2005). *The Power of Critical Theory for Adult Learning and Teaching*. Open University Press.
5. Butler, I., Roberts, G. (2004). *Social Work with Children and Families: Getting into Practice* (2nd ed.). London and New York: Jessica Kingsley Pub.
6. Cagle, J. G., Kovacas, P. J. (2009). Education: a complex and empowering social work intervention at the end of life. *Health Social Work, 34(1)*, 17-27.
7. Carpenter, D. (1996). Constructivism and social work treatment. In F. J. Turner (Ed.), *Social work treatment: Interlocking theoretical approaches* (4th ed., pp. 146-167). New York: Free Press.
8. Cherryholmes, C. H. (1999). *Reading pragmatism*. NY: Teachers College Press.
9. Clarke, R. *Reflection in action*. Retrieved from: http://www.robclarke.f2s.com/MA/reviews/ ReflectioninAction.pdf)
10. Cohen, S. Syme, S. L. (1985). *Social support and health*. New York: Academic Press.
11. Compton, B., Galaway, B, Cournoyer, B. (2005). *Social work processes*. USA: Thomson, Brooks, Cole.
12. Cooper, B. (2001). Constructivism in Social Work: Towards A Participative Practice Viability. *British Journal of Social Work, 31*, 721-738.
13. Corcoran, J. (2000). *Evidence-based social work practice with families. A lifespin approach*. New York: Springer Series on Social Work.
14. Coulshed, V., Orme, J. (2006). *Social work practice: 4th edition.* Palgrave Macmillan.
15. Creswell, J. W. (2008) *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
16. Dalley, G. (1991). *Disability and Social Policy*. London: Policy Studies Institute.
17. Dean, R. G., Fleck-Henderson, A. (1992). Teaching clinical theory and practice through a constructivist lens. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 6,* 3-20.
18. Dirgėlienė, I., Kiaunytė, A. (2008). *Praktika rengiant socialinius darbuotojus*. Klaipėdos universiteto patirtis. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla.
19. Dominelli, L (2002). *Anti-Oppressive Social Work Theory and Practice*. Basingstoke, Palgrave.
20. Dominelli, L. (1996). Deprofessionalizing Social Work: Anti-Oppressive Practice, Competencies and Postmodernism. *British Journal of Social Work, 26, (2)*, 153-176.
21. Dominelli, L. (2002), *Feminist Social Work: Theory and Practice*, Palgrave, Basingstoke.
22. Douglas, P. D., Zimmerman, M. A. (1995). Empowerment theory, research, and application. *Journal of Community Psychology, 23, 5*, 569-580.
23. Dudley, J. R. (2011). *Research Methods for Social Work: Being Producers and consumers of research:* 2ed Edition. Allyn&Bacon:Pearson

24. Efran, J. S., Clarfield, L. E. (1992). Constructionist therapy: Sense and nonsense. In S. McNamee K. J. Gergen (Eds.), *Therapy as social construction* (pp. 200-217). Newbury Park: CA: Sage.

25. *Encyclopedia of Social Work (20 ed.)* (2012). T. Mizrahi L. E. Davis (Eds.). Oxford University Pres. Retrieved from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195306613.001.0001/acref-9780195306613-e-93?rskey=G4wufG&result=93

26. Flick, U. (2006). *An introduction to qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

27. Franklin, C., Jordan, C. (Eds.). (1999). *Family practice: Brief systems methods for social work.* Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

28. Franklin, C., Jordan, C. (Eds.). (1999). *Family practice: Brief systems methods for social work*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

29. Freire, P. (2000). *Kritinės sąmonės ugdymas.* Tyto Alba.

30. Gergen, K. J. (1994). *Realities and relationship*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

31. Giddens, A. (2005). *Sociologija.* Poligrafija ir informatika.

32. Greene, G. J., Jones, D. H., Frappier, C., Klein, M., Culton, B. (1996). School social workers as family therapists: A dialectical-system-constructivist model. *Social Work in Education, 18*, 222-236.

33. Greene, R. R. (2000). *Human behavior theory and social work practice* (2nd ed.). Edison, NJ: Aldine Transactions.

34. Grinnell, R. M. Jr., Unrau, Y. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Social work research and evaluation: Quantitative and qualitative approaches.* New York: Oxford University Press.

35. Herr, E. L., Cramer, S. H. (1996).*Career guidance and counselling through the lifespan: Systemic approaches.* NY: Harper Collins.

36. Hogewoning, L. (2012). Anti-Oppressive Practice and Social Trinitarianism: An Interconnection of Faith and Social Work Principles.. *NACSW Convention proceedings,* 1-26. Retrieved from: http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=10&sid=0fe8920c-7d8f-46f1-8e3f-9b3bf672be35%40sessionmgr4001&hid=4112&bdata=jnnpdgu9zwhvc3qtbgl2zq%3d%3d#db=sih&an=83717267

37. Horkheimer, M. (1995). *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*. NY: Continuum.

38. http://aosw.socialwork.dal.ca/whatisaosw.html

39. http://lietuviukalbairliteratura.lt/magiskasis-diskurso-terminas/

40. http://ualgiman.dtiltas.lt/literaturos_terminai_d.html

41. Hughes, G. (1998). A Suitable Case for Treatment? Constructions of Disability. In Saraga, E. (ed.). *Embodying the Social: Constructions of Difference*. London: Routledge.

42. Hugman, R. (1998). *Social Welfare and Social Value: The Role of Caring Professions*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

43. Yin, R.K. (2003). *Case study research: design and methods (3rd ed)*. Thousand Oaks.

44. Jančaitytė, R. (2010). Požiūriai į problemų sprendimą socialiniame darbe. In *Socialinis darbas: Profesinė veikla, metodai ir klientai* (p. 72-104). Mykolo Riomerio universitetas.

45. Jovaiša L. (2007). *Enciklopedinis edukologijos žodynas*. Vilnius: Gimtasis žodis.

46. Kočiūnas, R. (1998). *Psichologinis konsultavimas.* Vilnius.

47. Kozlovas, A., Malikas, L. (2007). Socialinio darbo metodologija ir metodai. Iš kn.:

Socialinis darbas. Profesinės veiklos įvadas(tarptautinis projektas) Red. A. Bagdonas. Vilnius: VU Specialiosios psichologijos laboratorija.

48. Kozlovas, A., Malikas, L. (2007). Socialinio darbo profesinė veikla: kompetencijos ir socialinės atsakomybės ribos. Iš kn.: *Socialinis darbas. Profesinės veiklos įvadas (tarptautinis projektas)* Red. A. Bagdonas. Vilnius: VU Specialiosios psichologijos laboratorija.

49. Layder, D. (1998). *Sociological practice: linking theory and social research*. London: SAGE publications.

50. Lee, M.-Y., Greene, G. J. (1999). A social constructivist framework for integrating cross-cultural issues in teaching clinical social work. *Journal of Social Work Education, 35, . Retrieved from:* http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?sid=a4b74b9f-ead2-48d0-a59c-10c54c28e219%40sessionmgr114&vid=1&hid=103&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=1538186

51. Lenz, A., Stark, W. (Eds.) (2002). *Empowerment. Neue Perspektiven für psychosoziale Praxis und Organisation.* Tübingen: Dgvt-Verlag.

52. Leonavičius,V., et al. (2004). *Sociologijos teorijos: vadovėlis*. Kaunas: VDU

53. Liobikienė, T. N. (2006). *Krizių intervencija.* Kaunas.

54. Lipinskienė, D. (2002). Edukacinė studentą įgalinanti studijuoti aplinka.: daktaro disertacija. Kaunas: KTU.

55. Lyddon, W. J. (1995). Forms and facets of constructivist psychology. In R. A. Neimeyer & M. J. Mahoney (Eds.), Constructivism in psychotherapy (p. 69-92). Washington, DC: APA.

56. Lord, J. (1991). Lives in transition: The process of personal empowerment. Kitchener, ON: Centre for Research and Education in Human Services.

57. Mažeikienė N. (2001). Moters/lyties tyrinėjimai: nauja socialinių tyrimų kryptis ir metodologinė perspektyva. Lytiškumas ir švietimas: pažiūrų, stereotipų ir ugdymo turinio tyrimai. Vilnius: Moterų informacijos centras, 2001, p. 8-16.

58. Mažeikienė, N., Juodeikaitė, L. (2012). Vienišų motinų įgalinimas taikant biografinį pasakojimą feministiniame socialiniame darbe. *Socialinis darbas: patirtis ir metodai, 10 (2),* 163-191.

59. McCubbin, H., McCubbin; M., Thompson, A., Han, S., & Allen, C. (1997). Families under stress: What makes them resilient. Internet access: http://www.cyfernet.org/research/resilient.html

60. McLaughlin, H. (2012). *Understanding Social work research*. 2ed Edition. Sage Publications

61. Myrick, S. P., John, T. G., Williams, M. M. (1994). Creating empowered schools: Lessons in change. *Journal of Educational Administration, Vol. 32, Iss. 4*, p. 38-53.

62. Morrow, V. (1999). Conceptualising social capital in relation to the well-being of children and young people: A critical review. *The Sociological Review, Vol. 47, Iss. 4*, p. 744-765.

63. Nachshen, J. S. (2004). Empowerment and Families: Building Bridges between Parents and Professionals, Theory and Research. Internet access: http://www.ie.ul.pt/pls/portal/docs/1/447409.PDF

64. O'Hagan, K. (1993). Crisis intervention: changing perspectives. In *Practicing Social Work* (pp. 134-145). Taylor&Francis Ltd.

65. Orme, J. (2009). Feminist Social Work. In M. Gray, A. W. Stephen. *Social Work Theories and Methods* (pp.65–85). Los Angeles: Sage

66. Payne, M. (2005). Modern Social Work Theory. NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
67. Perkins, D. D., Zimmerman , M. A. (1995). Empowerment theory, research, and application. American Journal of Community Psychology; Oct 1995; p. 23-5. Internet access: https://my.vanderbilt.edu/perkins/files/2011/09/empintro.proquest.pdf
68. *Perspective for social work* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
69. Peter, H.J. (2012). *Exploring the spaces between theory and practice: a framework to integrate a structural approach and social work activities* PhD thesis, the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Retrieved from: https://circle.ubc.ca/bitstream/handle/2429/42072/ubc_2012_spring_peters_heather.pdf?sequence=1
70. Pluzek, Z. (1996). *Pastoracinė psichologija*. Vilnius.
71. Polukordienė, O. K. (2003). Psichologinės krizės ir jų įveikimas. Vilnius.
72. Psichologijos žodynas (1993). Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla.
73. Rienecker, L. Jorgensen P. S. (2003).Kaip rašyti mokslinį darbą (vert. iš danų k.). Vilnius: Aidai.
74. Robbins, S. P., Chatterjee, P., & Canda, E. R. (2006). *Contemporary human behavior theory: A critical*
75. Rose, I. M. & Hanssen, D. V. (2010). The Feminist Perspective and Social Work Education. *The Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work, 15, 1,* 1-13.
76. Rubble, N. (1999). The voices of therapists and children regarding the inclusion of children in family therapy: A systemic research synthesis. *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal*, *Vol. 21(4),* p. 485-504.
77. Rubin, A., Babbie, E. (2005). *Research methods for social work.* Belmont, Calif.: Thomson/Brooks/Cole
78. Ruškus, J., Mažeikis, G. (2007). Neįgalumas ir socialinis dalyvavimas. Kritinė patirties ir galimybių Lietuvoje refleksija. Monografija. Šiauliai: ŠUL.
79. Schön, D. A. (2004). *The Reflective Practitioner. How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books.
80. Seymour, K. (2012). Feminist Practice: Who I am or What I do? *Australian Social Work, 65, 1,* 21-38.
81. Silverman D. (2004). Qualitative research: theory, method and practice. London: Sage.
82. Steier, F. (1991). Introduction: Research as self-reflexivity, self-reflexivity as social process. In F. Steier (Ed.), Research and reflexivity (pp. 1-11). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
83. Studijų sričių ir krypčių, pagal kurias vyksta studijos aukštosiose mokyklose, sąrašas, (LR vyriausybės nutarimas Nr. 1749, 2009.12.23).
84. Thyer, B. (2010). The handbook of social Work research Methods. 2nd ed. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE.
85. Thomlison, B. (2002). Family assessment handbook: An Introductory Practice Guide to Family Assessment and Intervention. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.
86. Thorlakson, A. J., Murray, R. P. (1996). An Empirical Study of Empowerment in the Workplace. *Group & Organisation Management*, *1 (21)*, p. 67-83.
87. Turnbull, A. P., Turnbull, H. R., Ervin, E. L., Soodak, L. C. (1997). Families, professionals, and exceptionality: A special partnership. NY: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
88. Turner, F., J. (Ed.) (2011). *Social work treatment: Interlocking theoretical approaches*. 5th ediion. Oxford.

89. Vaičekauskaitė R., Acienė E. (2007). Mokslinių darbų rengimo metodinės rekomendacijos socialinio darbo bakalauro ir magistro programų studentams. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla.
90. Valantiejus, A. Kritinis sociologijos diskursas. Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla.
91. Vareikytė, A. (2010). Socialinio darbo raida Lietuvoje. Iš kn. *Socialinis darbas. Profesinė veikla, metodai ir klientai.* Sud. J. R. Šinkūnienė.Vilnius: Mykolo Riomerio universitetas.
92.
93. Vitkauskaitė, D. (2001). *Teoriniai socialinio darbo modeliai.* Šiauliai.
94. Wahyuni, D. (2012). The Research Design Maze: Understanding Paradigms, Cases, Methods and Methodologies. *JAMAR*, 10 (1), p. 69–80.
95. Warren, K., Franklin C., Streeter, C., L. (1998). New Directions in Systems Theory: Chaos and Complexity. National Association of Social Workers. Inc. Internet access: http://sw.oxfordjournals.org/content/43/4/357.full.pdf
96. Westbrook, R. B. (1993). John Dewey and American Democracy. Cornell University Press.
97. Wiley, N. (1994). The semiotic self. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
98. Wolfensberger, W. (2002). Social Role Valorization and, or Versus, "Empowerment". *Mental Retardation, Vol. 40 (3)*, p. 252-258.
99. Žydžiūnaitė, V. (2006). Taikomųjų tyrimų metodologijos charakteristikos. Vilnius: LR Švietimo ir mokslo ministerija, Pedagogų profesinės raidos centras.

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1. Subject programme of scientific research practice of social work
STUDY SUBJECT (MODULE) PROGRAMME (SMP)

Module code	S		B		Accredited until				Updated		
	Branch of science		Progr.	Registr. No.							

Entitlement

MOKSLINĖ-TIRIAMOJI SOCIALINIO DARBO PRAKTIKA *SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK*

Prerequisites

Master Thesis 1, Master Thesis 2

Main aim

Scientific Research Practice is oriented towards writing a master degree thesis. Its aim is to gain new knowledge and perform complex evaluation of the activity of institutions rendering social services, especially those that work with people with disability, elder people and seniors, and abilities to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity of institutions rendering social services with regard to clients' needs; to organize and render social assistance, perform comparative analysis; to deepen the abilities to synthesize theoretical and practical experience; to initiate innovations and prepare the plan of the improvement of social work services using various strategies and methods; to develop skills of a reflecting and constantly learning practician.

Relations of learning outcomes and study subject (module) results and the methods of evaluation of studies and students' achievements

Learning outcomes foreseen in the programme	Study subject (module) results	Study methods	Methods of evaluation of student's achievements
1. Is able to initiate, organize, independently perform scientific research, interpret the results in the interdisciplinary approach from national and international perspective.	After the course student will gain and develop knowledge and will be able to perform complex evaluation of the activity of institutions rendering social services, that work with people in the situation of disability.	Individual work, project, analysis of documents and scientific literature, consultations, Moodle environment for self-study	Practice report

2. Is able to apply the research results that permit to model the solution of social problems of people in the situation of disability, improving professional activity implementing innovative social services, thus influencing the process of social integration of people with disability through the improvement of the laws of social policy in the context of the results of scientific research.	Student will develop the abilities to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity of institutions rendering social services with regard to clients' needs, will be able to organize and render social assistance, perform comparative analysis of social services on national and international level.	Individual work, field research, project, analysis of documents and scientific literature, consultations, Moodle environment for self-study	Practice report
3. Is able to create innovations in his/her activity, act in undefined and complex situations, which is very important working with people in the situation of disability, paying special attention to old age disability.	Student will be able to create and initiate innovations in his/her practical activity referring to scientific research and prepare the plan of the improvement of social work services using various strategies and methods.	Project, field research, analysis of documents and scientific literature, consultations, Moodle environment for self-study	Practice report

Abstract

After Scientific Research Practice of Social Work student will gain and develop knowledge and will be able to perform complex evaluation of the activity of institutions rendering social services, especially those that work with people with disability, elder people and seniors, and evaluate the effectiveness of the activity of institutions rendering social services with regard to clients' needs; to organize and render social assistance on national and international level, perform comparative analysis; will deepen the abilities to synthesize theoretical and practical experience; to initiate innovations and prepare the plan of the improvement of social work services using various strategies and methods; will develop skills of a reflecting and constantly learning practitioner.

Content of laboratory and practical work

Scientific Research Practice of Social Work takes place according to the principle of academic mobility: students of joint study programme go to the partner country, to the institution rendering social work services. Every student has already performed the research in his/her country on a chosen institution, therefore, he/she chooses analogous target group of the research in the partner country and the institution (rendering the same social services) and performs there another research in order to make the comparative analysis. The duration of the practice is 2.5 months. In the receiving institution and partner university the supervisor of the practice organizes practical activity, consults the students and renders other methodological or organizational assistance. After scientific research practice of social work every student presents the practice report.

In the Moodle environment practice instruction, task descriptions, references and the description of service learning are presented.

Purpose of the module

Subject group (according the regulation of the field)		Level of university studies		Area or field of studies under financial classification
No.	Entitlement	Cycle	Type	
1		Second	Master's	3. Studies of social sciences (except sports and studies indicated in Section 6)

Sections (chapters) and topics (content)

No.	Title
1.	Practice instruction: aims, objectives, proceedings of the practice, research and project criteria
2.	Individual consultations and self-study
3.	Discussion on scientific research practice of social work

Evaluation criteria:

Ten-point grading system and cumulative evaluation scheme are applied.

Method of evaluation/ Task for evaluation	Weight, per cent	Evaluation criteria (relations to learning outcomes)
Practice report	100	*Practice report consists of the following structural parts (evaluated according to these criteria 10 per cent of the final mark each):* 1. complex analysis and evaluation of regulating documents of the institution rendering social work services and clients' situations, spectrum of social problems and needs; 2. critical analysis of the demand and possibilities of services; 3. presentation of the plan of rendering services (solving social problems); 4. analysis of personal and professional values; 5. reflective self-evaluation of the activity; 6. presentation of the effectiveness of the activity of the institution working with people with disability, elderly people and seniors (with regard to the analysis of clients' needs and the plan of rendering social assistance) and the suggestions of innovations; 7. presentation of the system of ensuring the feedback with the client in the institution rendering social services; 8. principles of the improvement of the quality of the services of the institution; 9. suggestions on the changes of social policy with regard to the prospects of decreasing of social exclusion, harmonious development of society and social justice; 10. presentation of the data of social work research

Main literature

No.	Title of literary source	Publication at ŠU library		Availability at ŠU bookshop	Number of copies at faculty methods room
		Code	Number of copies		
1.	Banks, S. (2006). Ethics and values in social work. Basingstoke: Palgrave	36 Ba-385	1		
2.	Butin, D. W. (2010). Service-learning in theory and practice: the future of community engagement in higher education. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan	378 Bu-389	1		1

No.	Title of literary source	Publication at ŠU library		Availability at ŠU bookshop	Number of copies at faculty methods room
		Code	Number of copies		
3.	Judith, A. Lee (1996). The empowerment approach to social work practice. London: Jessica Kingsley	36 Le-67	1		1
4.	McDonald, C. (2006). Challenging social work: the institutional context of practice. Houndmills: Palgrave macmilan.	36 Mc-01	1		
5.	Coulshed, V. (2006). Social work practice. Basingstoke : Palgrave	36 Co-263	1		1

Additional literature

No.	Title of literary source
1.	Anastas, J. W. (2010). Teaching in social work: an educators' guide to theory and practice. New York, N.Y. : Columbia University Press
2.	Doel, M. (Доэл, М.) (1995). Практика социальной работы: упражнения и методические разработки для обучения и повышения квалификации социальных работников. Москва: Аспект Пресс
3.	Kirst Ashman, Karen K.(1998). Generalist practice with organizations and communities. Chicago.

Coordinating lecturer

Position	Research degree, surname, name	Table No.
	All teachers teaching in the programme	

Subdivision

Entitlement	Code
Department of Social Education and Psychology	0203

Study subject (module) delivery form No. | 1 |

Semester	Form of studies	Structure					Hours total	Credits
		T	P	L	K	S		
Spring		0	0	0	25	235	266	10

Language of teaching

Lithuanian	L	English	A	Russian	R	French	P	German	V	Other	Kt.

Plan of contact lectures

Topic No.	Academic hours			Topic No.	Academic hours		
	T	P	L		T	P	L
1.	2						
2.	-						
3.	4						
				Total:	6	-	-

Timetable of self-study assignments and their influence on the final mark

As-sign-ment type	Topic(s) No.	Hours total	Influ-ence on the mark, %	Week of task presentment (*) and report (o)																
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17-20
Prac-tice re-port	1-3	235	100	*								0								
Total:		235	100																	