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SCHOOL SOCIAL EDUCATORS' GROUP WORK IN GERMANY

The statement of the problem. In Germany the second half of the XX century was marked out the switch of the state social policy and educational reforms. The permanent increase of socio-economic problems required from social specialists of the country to find the new ways of the decision of these questions, especially it concerned the most unprotected sections of the population such as children and the youth. That's why in Germany school social work has been developing actively since the end of the 1970s. The special role in the social educators' work plays the group work.

Analysis of basic researches and publications. A lot of German scholars devoted their researches to problems of using the group work both as the form and the method of school social work in different types of secondary educational establishments. They are M. Behnisch, J. Kalcher, W. Lotz, G. Meirhof, K. Mueller, H. Schiller, M. Schmidt-Grunert, K.-V. Schuetz, E. Stahl and others.

The aim of the article is to analyse the group work at German schools both as the form and as the method of social educators' work with children and the youth. Tasks of the research are: on the basis of learning of pedagogical and methodological publications to light up the features of the use of group forms and basic methods of social specialists' work in different types of secondary educational establishments in the FRG, to describe in details the usage of the project method in school social educator's group work.

The basic material of the research. Exposing the question of forms and methods of work of German school social educators it is necessary to emphasize that in most cases it is difficult to delimit them. So, the social work with a group or the group social work as well as the individual work in Germany is determined as the method of social work and as the form of social work, if the amount of objects takes up as a criterion. The group of clients is the object of social work [6].

Examining the group work as the form of social work at school, we are marked out that in Germany in July-August a school social teacher folds the curriculum of these forms of work on the school year. Usually he/she forms the list of different types of the group work. After that the social educator discusses it on the pedagogical conference with teachers and leaders of the school. We should pay attention, that among the offered forms and methods of the group work schoolchildren and their parents can also choose in most cases. After analysis and discussion the social specialists fold the adjusted plan of the group work with students. Analysing

practical experience of social teachers in the different types of schools in Germany, we point out, that social specialists during their work combine groups in different way. A group can be:

- a separate class;
- a part of the class;
- a few girls or guys from one class or from a parallel;
- some small classes consisting of peers.

At primary school a school social educator often works with a certain class, having the aim to introduce children with each other, to unite the class, to acquaint pupils with standards of behaviour at school, to form unflinching rules of discipline during the lessons and breaks and others.

In order to reach the aim social specialists use in German schools continual trainings (from 2 days till 3 weeks). During this time pupils are free of lessons and they are occupied only with their school social educator.

During the whole school year the school social educator is using actively at primary school a lot of social games, elements of stage adaptation, excursions with pupils from different classes, he/she is taking part also in the preparation for school parties („Merry Christmas”, „Mother's Day”, „Happy Easter!", final summer parties and so on).

Taking into account peculiarities of German educational system it becomes understandable, that social educators in comprehensive, united and real schools at the fifth form come across the same problems as their colleagues at primary school. It means that children, who have just finished primary school, enter the most appropriate for them type of the secondary educational establishment. That's why at the beginning of the fifth form every child gets into the new environment of classmates.

In order to help the children from the fifth form to adapt better to a new school, school social educators are working with every class separately during the whole first week. In this case pupils don't have any lessons the whole week. School social educators hold social trainings, quizzes and different games. At the end of the first social week they organize a concert or a theatrical performance for parents and children because social specialists want to show what their pupils have reached.

The aim of all these forms and methods of the group work is to show children their new school and teachers, to bring the class together and also to pick out such children who are in need of special attention and supporting.

In Germany from the fifth form a lot of different teachers work with pupils, curriculum becomes harder, new subjects appear. That's why social educators in different types of school have no possibilities to hold long-term trainings. In this case school leaders include regular social lessons in the school timetable for those classes, which are in need of the constant work with social specialists. As a rule the supervising teacher of such class appeals with this request to the school head. These social lessons are compulsory for all pupils from this class.

At these social lessons different topics and problems are discussing (e.g. violence, mutual assistance, fighting superstitions and others); empathic skills are developing; social norms of conduct are studying (e.g. politeness, tactfulness, reliability) and also democratic liberties are speaking about (racial and religious tolerance, tolerant approach and so on) [5].

It is typical for social educators to use group work at different secondary educational establishments due to the sex of pupils, because children have reached the age of puberty. Social specialists want that children understand each other better, that's why they use the method "Girls' Day" and "Boys' Day". School social educators fix days in the timetable of group lessons, e.g. every Tuesday is girls' day, every Thursday is boys' day. During these days children change their social roles. Girls are playing football or basketball, discussing cars and models. Boys are embroidering, weaving, discussing fashion news and so on. On these days representatives of the opposite sex mustn't come to school social educators. The aim of such experiment is to show special features of both sexes from within.

Different group forms of social work are used also at vocational schools and gymnasia. School social educators make a tour of the city or in the country (e.g. a trip to Berlin, Stuttgart, Frankfurt-am-Main and others); visit museums, art galleries, exhibitions and so on. Social educators hold preventive trainings with senior pupils (topics are "Early sexual intercourse" or "Drugs and alcohol. Their harm for your health"), preventive programs "Teenagers to teenagers", youth "Internet-cafes".

The age of students, who study at vocational schools, is from 15 till 20 years, that's why the subject matter of preventive trainings and discussions are the same. But as a rule social educators add such topics as rapes, homosexuality, early abortions and so on. They often invite different specialists (doctors, policemen, psychologist) or show special films.

But the most widespread method, which school social educators use with groups of children in different kinds of schools, is the project method. Social educators use different projects. They can last only one lesson (e.g. the project "Friendship and Love" devoting to St. Valentine's Day); one day outside the school (e.g. climbing, canoeing, the project "Cooking" in the café or restaurant); a few days (e.g. the project "Lowering Thresholds" goes on 5 days) and long-term projects, e.g. "School without Violence".

When school social educators plan their new project first of all they point out a target group and the aim of this project. We can consider main features of projects in the project "Lowering Thresholds". It was worked out in 1997 and now school social educators from Friedrich Ebert School (Frankfurt-am-Main) use this project every year.

So, this project is for the 8-th formers. In 2012-2013 school year it was from 10/06/2013 till 14/06/2013. Students were from Friedrich Ebert School and United School Nordent (Frankfurt-am-Main). They cooperated with youth organizations in their district. These organizations have been united in the district committee for 25 years. There are 30 different establishments, agencies and centres. They work with pupils and the youth (e.g. the youth centre KUSS41, the centre for girls Mafald, the central children's library, the sixth police department, German organization for children's protection and so on).

The aim of this project is on the base of information about different youth organizations to give every child the feeling of protection and to prevent his/her isolation and moral failure [4].

The main tasks of the project are:

- to familiarize children with peculiarities of every organization;
- to show pupils forms and methods of work with the youth in practice;
- to give the opportunity for children to work with representatives of a certain centre on the spot;
- to extend the list of prepositions for social work with the youth;
- to improve the structure of organizations from the children's point of view;
- to set the teamwork of committees and children.

For realization of these tasks are assigned 5 days.

On the first day school social educators work with children at school. They give some information about suggestions and main tasks of all institutions in this part of the city. After that children analyze and discuss acute problems and interests of the youth.

Next day representatives of establishments and organizations come to school and hold so called "The Fair of Possibilities". They show short films or presentations about principles and methods of their work with children and the youth. After that pupils unite in groups of 3-4 people and choose 2-3 centres or establishments about which they want to know more. Among present organizations they can choose not only those, which give consultations, but also those centres, which are a nice place for spending their free time. When children have chosen the organization, work groups must coordinate with a hand-picked committee time and duration of their teamwork and prepare their list of questions.

On the 3d and 4th days of the project pupils attend their establishments. They can discuss their own problems, learn the idea, forms and methods of work of this organization, give their remarks or suggestions and so on. They must also prepare the presentation of their ex-

perience. Children may make their report as a presentation on computer, create a poster or prepare photos. Some schoolchildren represent their report as a role-playing game or verbal communication.

On the 5th day pupils show their projects for classmates. They can also invite their parents, relatives or friends. Children often invite the member of their organization. As a rule the presentations are bright and informative. The atmosphere is so friendly. Usually this project is realized very successfully.

Describing different forms of the group work and some methods of school social educators' work with children, we should remind, that the group work in Germany is carried out also as the method of social work. The main point of the group work is in the communication with other children, who have some general features or the same problems. In such group work the main way of influence is the group (2-10 people).

Doctor, professor of methodology of social work Michael Behnisch emphasizes in his researches that the group is used for solving problems, emotional supporting and developing of self-confident. At the same time in such groups can exist frustration and stress because of individual features of pupils (e.g. unsociability, needlessness, reticence) or casting, which is typical for every group [1].

We point out, that in Germany the method of group work has a long history. In the middle of 1950s in special social higher educational establishments in Western Germany were included the courses of studying this method. Gisela Konopka was the founder of group pedagogics.

Till the 1980s social group work with children inside and outside the school was topical. A lot of German famous scholars developed this problem. They were Karl Wolfgang Mueller, Heinrich Schiller, Klaus-Volker Schuetz and others. But then the method of social group work lost their popularity due to spreading the idea among German scholars, that children were not able to social work in groups [2].

But contemporary German scholars in the field of social group work (Juergen Kalcher, Walter Lotz, Gudrun Maierhof, Marianne Schmidt-Grunert, Eberhard Stahl) insist on the introduction of the method of social group work into functions of social specialists. They mark out that this method of school social work promotes individual and social maturing of a child, helps to develop pupils' skills of communication in society and build so called training ground for cooperation and socialization of schoolchildren outside their family [3].

Conclusions of this research and prospects of the further research in this direction. In conclusion we can say, that in the modern period of the development of school social work social educators often use group work both as the form and as the method of their work. It helps them to give more qualitative help and support for children and the youth.

To further researches it is necessary to take the analysis of main features of school social educators' work with parents and network.

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Ковальова О. В., Гавриш О. Г. Групова робота соціальних педагогів у школах Німеччини

У статті проаналізовано групову роботу у школах Німеччини як форму та як метод діяльності соціальних педагогів з дітьми та учнівською молоддю. Автори також описують особливості використання групових форм та основних методів роботи фахівців соціальної сфери у різних типах середніх освітніх закладах ФРН. Особливу увагу у статті приділено розкриттю методу проектів.

Ключові слова: групова форма, груповий метод, метод проектів, шкільний соціальний педагог, діти.

Ковалева О. В., Гавриш Е. Г. Групповая работа социальных педагогов в школах Германии

В статье проанализирована групповая работа в школах Германии как форма и как метод деятельности социальных педагогов с детьми и молодежью. Авторы так же описывают особенности использования групповых форм и основных методов работы специалистов социальной сферы в разных типах средних образовательных учреждений ФРГ. Особенное внимание в статье уделено раскрытию метода проектов.

Ключевые слова: групповая форма, групповой метод, метод проектов, школьный социальный педагог, дети.

Kovalova O., Gavrysh O. School Social Educators' Group Work in Germany

In the article the group work at German schools as a form and as a method is carried out. The authors also marks out the peculiarities of using of group forms and main methods of social specialists' work at different kinds of middle schools in Germany. Special attention is paid in the article to the describing of project method.

Keywords: a group form, a group method, a project method, a school social educator, children.

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