



# Theoretical Study on a Pilot Implementation of a Working Model of the Process of Social Adaptation Former Military Personnel and Their Families in Bulgaria

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**Abstract** This article discusses theoretical aspects associated with the systematic approach application to the implementation of a working model of the process of social adaptation of former military personnel and their families. This approach includes: studying and taking into account individual peculiarities of personality; the influence of different environments and adequate combining of individual and group awareness-raising forms of impact. The overall pattern of social adaptation will be instrumental in: the comprehensive planning of work on the basis of diagnostics and evaluation of social environment; coordination between all the subjects engaged in this process; development of modern technologies aimed at establishing social and pedagogical conditions.

**Index Terms:** social work, social management, social adaptation of the military.

Organizational system of former servicemen and their family members organizational system process grounds in the theoretical rationalization of human adaptation problem, systematic interdisciplinary approach to social and educational activities and social work, in determining the ex-servicemen and their families social adaptation nature, in analyzing the intrinsic characteristics of this process- being sometimes planned, sometimes spontaneous, in summarizing the working practice of those, working with this population.

Systematic approach has been used as a methodological basis of the innovational managerial work, whereby subjects are regarded as systems comprising of specific components aimed at revealing the wholeness, at disclosing communications type variety and their arranging in a single pedagogical system representing a relatively steady set of elements, organized to bring together people, spheres of their activities, functions performance, spatial and temporal networks, relationships, ways of interaction and their operational structure in order to achieve certain educational and rehabilitative goals and results, to fulfill certain planned tasks concerning education and training of an individual.

Systematic approach in elaborating the core components of social and pedagogical work methodology implies primarily an analysis of terms and factors relating to each element and constituting the material, socio-cultural, demographic and socio-psychological basis of the environment providing for the life of former servicemen and their family members. The complex of such deployments-systematically interdependent and reflecting the actual state of particular environment and training opportunities offered by such an environment- represents a comprehensive model of the operating "social space" with a view to its socio-economic and psycho-pedagogical potential, to legal, financial, staff and financial security.

The general framework of the systematic approach as a basis in the development of a comprehensive organizational technology of the social adaptation process as a starting platform for social and educational work development against the background of established conditions of the environment, could have, as an example, the following structure: mapping some set of elements pertaining to a particular environment against the object in a system, analyzing the features of communications and interactions components specific for a social system (subject - environment), determining system-forming connections ensuring subject's social system stability and client's /beneficiary's/ comfortably state analysis of the basic functional parameters of the very subject within a system, studying management activities within the spheres of environment, the degree of stability and optimality of its performance relative to the nature and specifics of methodological approaches and measures used in solving social and pedagogical issues and in developing modern, practice-oriented models of social work applicable to a variety of areas within the society.

Considering the general basis of social work technology as methodological landmarks in setting methodological decisions tendency, strategy and immediate actions in choosing optimal guiding tools and methods tailored to environment-specific features and needs of former servicemen and their families, in the course of development of a comprehensive model for adaptation proved important to redifferentiate "methodological elements" of priority with respect to their specific instrumental means providing interdisciplinary approach opportunities in a variety of areas

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within the social environment ensuring more effective social and pedagogical results.

Such an approach would ensure:

- to theoretically determine socio-pedagogical conditions contributing to the effectiveness of the adaptation of ex-servicemen and their family members within the changed social environment; to identify social and pedagogical work priority areas;
- a comprehensive theory of socio-pedagogical work to be presented and to examine its categories, concepts, laws, principles and methods from the standpoint of integrity;
- the ultimate goal of the process of social adaptation of former servicemen and their family members /adaptability/ to be set, which is regarded as an indicator of the state of integration of an individual;
- abilities to perform certain biosocial functions;
- adequate perception of the environment and self;
- adequate system of interaction with others, working, training, leisure time arrangement opportunities;
- adaptive behavior meeting the role expectations of others.

Cognizance of human nature, society, individual and social development and knowledge has been fundamental to any educational system, every philosophical concept and each model of social activity, at all times.

Different theoretical concepts of the philosophy of life have great influence on the development and formation of personality.

In thinking, the man has always been "a child of his time". He has always perceived and still perceives dominant philosophies of life and moral concepts, the established way of looking of things because one is born "open" with his whole being to the world and very adaptive with respect to facts of life. One apprehends and learns things encountered through the mediation of educational system, family education and other channels. Therefore, personal qualities are to a significant extent socially determined, reflecting the coherent worldview norms and values inherent to one society or another.

Particular role in human activity arrangement, in retaining and passing on all this datum that one considers necessary to remain in nature, in society also in himself plays the culture as a public channel through which society-specific credo resources, the stock of achievements in science, art, morality and religion acquired in the process of training, education, self-improvement, self-fulfillment of man in society, as well as knowledge and modes of thinking, identifying the type and nature human activity transformation and its results in the aggregate are transmitted.

At the same time, along with ideological orientations transmitted to man through the public media, in the course of life each person develops a *Weltanschauung* of his own, individual understanding of its parameters based on past experience in family, school, environment and work, and on the background of the wordy knowledge an own theory is built that determines the understanding of its basic concepts

such as work, love, personal development, relations, communication, society, marriage, education etc.

Man's development, his ability to overcome obstacles, his vital energy, activity, optimistic or pessimistic attitude in general etc. depend on the nature of his philosophy of life that helps or hinders him solve the rubs and worries of life. And where the life runs, at the place of activity of a man with all his diverse needs, there is the field and area of social workers and social pedagogues.

The popular conception of pedagogical anthropology reflects bringing together the science knowledge accumulated on the issued of personality development.

Increased interest on the part of many scientific fields in anthropological problems has been, on the one hand, a natural consequence of the modern scientific thought development logics demanding framing of a comprehensive theory of human personality formation based on data accumulated in all fields of science studying human.

On the other hand, this particular interest in pedagogy is aggravated by the fact that previous formulations and traditional pedagogical approaches to education and the formation of man proved untenable in view of the latest scientific and technical development requirements.

Several European experts realize that not only the era of highly technical automation, aerospace, nuclear physics, the age of discoveries in science has come, but also the time of fundamental rethinking of the nature of man based of anthropology.

These trends are reflected by Bulgarian specialists in their studies and works by defining a fundamental doctrine of man. Striving to overcome the partiality and one-sidedness in the practical work with people, to link together the various types of such activity is becoming more common for the life of our society. The structure of education and training principles could not be understood, if not being correlated to the overall structure of human nature based on the scientific foundations of general human study.

Not only science, but also practice demands for a unified theory of human study, for cohesion and integration of all means aimed at studying human and managing its development.

These anthropological approaches to human phenomenon analysis give the researchers new directions representing completely unexplored areas of the complex science of man, his intellectual world, his everyday existence.

Functions of educational anthropology consisted in giving an overall view of man using philosophical-anthropological methodological principles.

We consider personality as a social condition of the individual, incidental only to man, finding expression in a stable set of behavioral relations and features in society, while individuality- as a specific personal profoundness, personal intellectual organization of man, that distinctiveness, intrinsic to a particular person as social being, a synthesis of his soul and body.



This approach to examining the individual is a conceptual basis of the organization of focused influence on the personality of the ex-servicemen and their families, aiming at forming in them qualities of vital concernment and providing for the optimal social support ensuring.

Such an understanding, in which the focus is on personality: its originality, uniqueness, where subjective experience is taken into account and related to educational impact tasks, we define a person-centered approach and make it stand out as a necessary social and educational condition providing for the effectiveness of the social adaptation process.

***Person-centered approach includes:***

- studying and reporting individual peculiarities of personality;
- the influence of different environments: consciousness, emotional and volitional behavior in different types of activities- academic, professional, public; in areas- social, pedagogical, psychological and medical;
- adequate combining of individual and group educational forms of influence, where each person is given information, psychological support, career forecasting and planning, assistance in case of labor readjustment, entrepreneurial activity with reflection of results obtained.

In this context, increases the importance of socio-pedagogical activity, resting, on the one hand, on the issue concerning social education problem of an individual, the development of his ability to live in a group, in a social environment, to refer to social structures when solving individual, group and social problems, and, on the other hand, on transformation of the individual's living environment, social groups, which, of course, involves more than the activity of educational institutions. So, the organization of social and pedagogical activity is a leading socio-educational condition for the successful functioning of the common model of organization of former military personnel and their families social adaptation process.

Pedagogical system management methods can be classified on various grounds. Classification according to the functions of management would be as follows: diagnostic, analytical, planning, organization, coordination and control.

Business organization is one of the determining functions of pedagogical system management.

Socio-pedagogical activity as a system is a social activity in a specific microenvironment in the interest of harmonization of life and social relations of the individual, targeted assistance focused on socio-psychological state and personal organization of personality.

Social work is a professional activity of helping an individual, a family, community to improve their capacity for social functioning.

Innovation can be regarded as an activity related to the development, modification and implementation of new technologies in education and training process.

We can identify the following classification of typological aspects of the socio-pedagogical activity oriented on adaptation of former servicemen and members of their families:

1) intrapersonal- training and social education of personality;

2) micro-environment- family environment as an educational system; the social group, school as an open educational system supporting the forming of adequate relations in the various types of activity: professional , cultural and domestic, healthy lifestyle in the living environment, prevention of deviant behavior of children and adults by means of social activity;

3) macro-environment - protection of human rights, life standard boosting, social support to former servicemen and members of their families, social workers training, developing social thinking in subjects engaged in activity.

Interpersonal level, as well as the personality itself, contains enormous educational potential.

Education is a complex, multi-faceted, contradictory dialectical, purposive process of personality formation of a human being, who represents a social and cultural life phenomenon.

This definition includes any educational influence, training and intellectual communication and so on, that can be set as a goal by professional and public educators, supervisors, administrators, experienced, highly qualified social workers.

Objectives of education may be general, related to development of significant societal qualities. First and foremost, training of a person who meets social and public expectations, i.e. a proprietor , consumer, patriot, etc. Fulfilling these expectations and within the frameworks of the age-oriented approach in education, pedagogy sets certain knowledge and skills, values and norms necessary in solving socio-cultural tasks for each age stage and develops forms and methods for inclusion, for the development of orientation and attitude of the individual in the process of organization of work of the various institutions. Reflection and self-regulation of personality, encouraging and creating conditions for adequate self-knowledge, forming significant with regards to personality and socially acceptable qualities for personal self-fulfillment and self-assertion (vital qualities and skills) can be referred to as subgoals of education.

Pedagogy in the educational process is so closely intertwined with psychology, making it sometimes difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins.

Science has not yet developed a psychological and pedagogical program on formation of personality but only certain approaches, so the problem of education could be address to in its pedagogical and psychological aspect. This unconventional approach allows looking into the mechanisms, content, methods and specifics of the guidelines of the educational process in a new light.

The absence of adequate theoretical basis for the study of self-development of personality is an obstacle regarding the

implementation of reconstruction processes occurring not only in society, as a whole, but also in the education system. Handling the problems of self-determination and self-development, self-control and self-regulation of personality and, of course, the formation of self-awareness will be instrumental in putting formation of personality on a practical basis as an entity of the self and not as a subject of education.

The self-education is a process of intentional and independent reconstruction of his own physical strength, mental properties, social qualities of a personality performed by the individual himself to achieve individual goals, adding meaning to his own life, as he understands it. Lacking pedagogical purpose, orientation to the intellectual world of a man and its perfection, social work is largely impaired and deprived of its humanity.

At the bottom of such a model underlies the idea that at each age stage the individual faces a number of problems, favorable or unfavorable resolution of which depends on personal development and the age approach to education has to be applied in such a manner so as to create conditions for their effective resolving. In applying a person-centered approach based on age approach the individual should be assisted in solving such problems.

**Subjects of education** are two: personality and conditions directly affecting it. Moreover, these conditions can be divided into three groups:

- conditions- individuals (e.g. teachers, social workers; administrative personnel at each levels);
- conditions- quality of groups to which a particular individual belongs (family, group, school);
- conditions- economic (premises, equipment etc.), legal, administrative etc.

With an object of distinguishing various activities of the educator (pedagogue, social worker) aimed directly to education and conditions they are given different names: educational activity and work aimed at creating educational conditions (on our end, reconstruction of social environment and formation of social and legal, protective mechanisms within society, providing the individual with feeling of safety).

Subject to social activities on the one hand is the very person and his family, and on the other- society, performing its functions within the system of official and non-governmental, voluntary and public social institutions. Social work institution implies a family on the one hand, on the other- institutions interacting with it, carrying out social policy in various fields and areas.

Every social institution has specific, to a great extent unique opportunities, consistent with their socially conditioned functions.

The main part of the leisure time of adults and children takes place within a social, family environment, in the sphere of their wider social interaction and cultural development. Under the territorial proximity to family, social work directly performed in this milieu has additional, yet almost untapped reserves for the improvement of pedagogical and social

influence of the family on its closest circle. Unfortunately, in the period of Bulgaria's transition to market relations, the family found itself in very difficult conditions. Protracted socio-economic and political crisis in society affected dramatically the level of life of the family, giving rise to a number of negative phenomena: unprecedented birth-rate dropping, deterioration of health of children, growing number of orphans, single mothers, juvenile delinquency increasing, falling prestige of educational and socially useful services. In this situation, only the family, having in mind its resources, can perform a number of vital functions: education and personal development, implementation of basic needs, psychological and economic support, only the family can provide each member comfort and help resolving all types of conflicts.

This leads to reconsidering of the initial formulation regarding the family work, to focusing public attention on the family and modification of the very methodological foundations in the mutual relations of family and society on the principles of primacy of the individual and family over any public institutes.

There are further objective and subjective factors that can both facilitate the proper understanding of social relations, society and state imposed requirements, formation of habits of moral behavior by the individual and to oppose it or just to negatively affect personality. These are the people within the environment of an individual, his personal relationships, the so-called reference groups, which the man enters and which have a great influence on him. Man as an individual is not formed outside the reference groups. And his nature is a combination of public relations, reflected and transformed by the referent groups.

Constructive approach to problems in learning and eliminating them, the search for new forms of social support to a given class of families makes the process of its social adaptation a social practice phenomenon, represents a complex of methods used to achieve an objective, requiring pedagogical impact and representing a key unit throughout the educational process.

Within the society (the macro-level) education is carried out through a system of various social institutions: the family, the state, pre-school, school, extracurricular educational, instructive and cultural institutions, public and legal, international associations (UN, UNESCO, EU), territorial, industrial, social and political, scientific, cultural, religious, government, public, national, social and other organizations established in the interest of intellectual and cultural self-retaining of society and development of the individual.

Society can influence the formation of personality directly and indirectly. Direct influence is exerted by the media, works of art, literature, cinema, theater, examples of heroic deeds, highly committed labor of people and more. Realization and utilization of this is just a reflection of our social relations.

In this model, the implementation of organization of the process of social adaptation is envisaged at three levels:



- micro-socium (family) - as an educational system, providing education and personal development, basic needs, economic and psychological support;

- meso-socium (school)- teaching situation related peculiarities: regulatory, logistical, social, psychological, staffing;

- macro-socium (region) - social and psychological departments work (development of real mechanisms for implementation and enforcement of energy and psychological potential of human resources), the work of social adaptation centers, places for medical rehabilitation; the use of foreign experience, mass media (to change the attitude towards the military and Bulgarian Army in general), using the three sectors of economic activity: government, non-government, commercial, i.e. coordination of all financial, intellectual, technical and personnel capacity of the society to form pedagogical thinking in different subjects within the society.

The essential feature of procedural and functional dynamics in solving these problems is that the subject of pedagogically adjustable relations within the society is not only the individual, but also the various structural units of his/her social environment. In the process of pedagogically manageable influences their humane, educational, training and educational potential is getting more and more evident, whose effect is particularly noticeable and occurs primarily in the specific areas of implementation of social policy.

Under pedagogical potential of the society we mean the totality of interactions of the individual with the environment (entities and educational opportunities of social environment).

Identification, organization and use of the entire educational potential of the society to encourage the development and self-actualization of potential of each individual is at the heart of social education and socio-pedagogical approach in all types of social activity.

To integrative educational opportunities of the society can be added: information services, regulatory, logistical, social, psychological and educational support, defining pedagogical orientation of the process of social adaptation of individuals.

Considering management processes for the development of this model, we determine that these processes take an important place and prominently occur in each component at each level of functioning of the educational system. There are the following main problems: in the structure and staffing of social pedagogy oriented educational institutions and coordination of work within and between these structures (government, non-government and commercial type); in organization, operation and development, promoting the activity of research, educational institutions and training centers in the field of social activities in Bulgaria (at national, regional/ military district level/ and local/ regional level); in using and facilitating the activities of scientific, training and scientific-pedagogical staff qualified in social pedagogic (other qualification social workers including); in forecasting the main tendencies, routes, and research, scientific and educational activities development issues of priority (within different structures of social pedagogy and social work); in

their information richness, e.g. by setting up computer networks both at regional and at national and international level.

Important conditions for the effective social adaptation of former military personnel and their families shall be the use of integrative educational opportunities of the society and guiding its educational potential.

Social work requires training of multilayered social practice-oriented specialists: mastering the pedagogic of relations in the social environment, in the family, in society, in open microenvironment of personality, in the world of work, lifestyle and leisure time within various professional groups and people falling within other categories (in our practice, ex-servicemen and their family members) .

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