

Chapter 5

Historical Development of Social Pedagogy

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ABSTRACT

Every field of study and/or subject has its history. Not knowing the historical development deprives whoever is studying that subject from knowing its strengths and weaknesses. That includes factors that contribute to its theory, such as the ideological perspectives, frames of reference, social significance, present status, and position in the system of science. That is why it is important that every social pedagogue, educator, social worker, and other experts who engage in education and educational work know the roots, the development, and today's state of social pedagogy as a science; it is important for anyone involved in research and practical work to improve its theory and practice and to enrich and improve it. This chapter discusses the historical development of social pedagogy. In focusing on its development, Natorpo's concept of social pedagogy is discussed, and the path of developing social pedagogy after World War II in other parts of the world, such as Croatia, is highlighted. After this focus, a conclusion is reached.

INTRODUCTION

Social pedagogy did not start during the period of educationists and philosophers, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, and John Dewey, but it has its roots and ideals in their work. It was developed around the mid-19th century in Germany. Social pedagogy was developed as an alternative to the traditional dominant formal schooling. As part of Education and the social sciences, social pedagogy became associated with social work as time went on. This association makes it important to know the historical development of social pedagogy, which is the focal point of this chapter. It also includes the Natorp's concept of Social Pedagogy and the path of developing Social Pedagogy after World War II in other parts of the world (Eichsteller & Holthoff 2011).

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BACKGROUND

Social pedagogy is a discipline and practice that has spread in many countries of Europe. It provides children, the youth, and adults, in some cases, with a different service, either to create work for themselves or to get employed. It has a history that emerges from the period of Enlightenment and was influenced by educationists and philosophers, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, and John Dewey. It was developed around the mid-19th century in Germany as reaction to the dire socio-economic conditions that were brought about by the industrial revolution. Karl Mager, a German educationalist, described it as the “theory of all the personal, social, and moral education in a given society, including the description of what has happened in practice” in 1844 (cited in Winkler 1988: 41; translation by Gabriel, 2000: 1).

Social pedagogy is, from a broad perspective, more about education (pedagogy) and its relation to the world in which we live (social world). It considers the interrelationships of the social, political, and cultural factors and how they link to their policies and provisions. Sunker and Braches-Chyrek (2009), cited by Natorp (1899/1974), an influential nineteenth-century philosopher and social pedagogic thinker, wrote: “The term social pedagogy therefore means ... that just as individual education is socially conditioned in every possible direction ... on the other hand, a human organization of social life is fundamentally conditioned by the appropriate education of the individuals who want to participate in it.”

Natorp focused on the individual as belonging to a human community (*Gemeinschaft*), and proposed that “a *social* pedagogy, which aims to encourage a strong sense of community, educates both children and adults to ensure positive relations between the individual and society, and fights to close the gap between rich and poor. All of these aims are significant for societal well-being and people’s sense of responsibility for each other.” (Eichsteller and Holtoff, 2011: 40).

This implies that the importance of the state replaces that of the community. Social pedagogy was meant to produce human conformity to counter young people’s collective oppressive experiences (Sunker and Braches-Chyrek, 2009: 1). As much as that was the case then, social pedagogy has aligned itself with the ideals of Paulo Freire as one of the educationists who influenced people recently in their thinking.

This chapter discusses the *historical development of social pedagogy*. It facilitates better understanding of Natorp’s concept of Social Pedagogy. It includes a discussion that compares Nohl’s concept of developing Social Pedagogy with the concept of solving the practical problems of social pathology. It further discusses the path of development of Social Pedagogy after World War II, in other countries, such as Croatia.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL PEDAGOGY

The term Social Pedagogy first appeared in mid-summer in Germany as a synonym for Collective Pedagogy, which was the opposite of so-called Individual Pedagogy. In his work, “The Management for the Education of German Teachers”, which was published in 1850, Diesterweg Adolf Wilhelm (1790-1866) proposed educational action, the purpose of which was to help the poor strata of society. He advocated education reform, which would reduce the impact of the Church and politics on education and would strengthen social change. With his political, social, and secular pedagogical ideas, in the spirit of enlightenment principles, he was influenced by Pestalozzi and he contributed to the democratization of German education, the internal arrangement of primary school, and a better socio-legal position of teachers. He

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