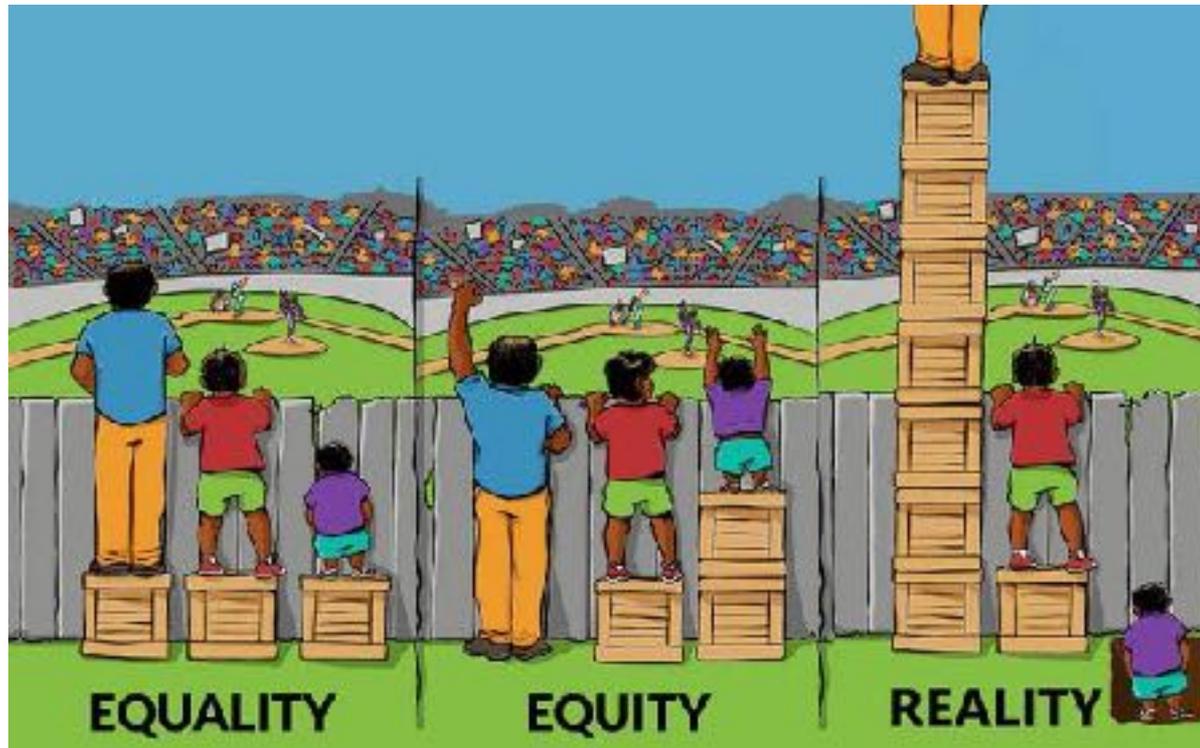


WHAT IS THE MEANING OF SOCIALLY JUST PEDAGOGY IN SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION IN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT?



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Outline

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Terms

- External supervisor- contacted by the university to supervise students in groups
- Ke Moja- means I am fine- without drugs The logo for 'Ke Moja' is a stylized, colorful graphic with the words 'KE MOJA' in a bold, blocky font. The letters are filled with a gradient of colors including blue, green, and yellow, and are surrounded by a white, cloud-like or smoke-like border.
- Lecturer - teaches a theory course to students on group work
- Learners - the school children -the group members
- Field instruction is described as “the place where students learn to practice” (Bogo, 2005, p. 163)
- Students- refer to student social workers (group facilitators)
- Field instruction coordinator- a lecturer responsible for conducting tutorials to students called preparing for practice skills training
- Nyaope- is a street drug that can go by different names depending on the areas it is sold in, “Nyaope” in Pretoria, “Sugars” in Durban (KZN), “Ungah” in the Western Cape and “Pinch” in Mpumalanga

Field education in South Africa

- South African society is very complex, the burden of apartheid endures
- Transformation is required and group work creates opportunities for development, empowerment & problem-solving (Rasool & Ross, 2016)
- Developing courses that are creative, thoughtful and effective in developing public good social work professionals
- Field instruction in the second year of the BSW degree, students need to accumulate 180 hours of field instruction inclusive of: preparing for practice skills training ; Ke Moja training; weekly FI tutorials: site orientation; 10 weeks of concurrent practice ; weekly group supervision and two formal assessments per year
- Finding suitable placement sites for students is a challenge
- Schools have been seen as an option but hardly any on-site social workers employed at most public schools
- Substance use is a problem at schools (Flisher, Parry, Evans, Muller, and Lombard, 2003; Mholongo, 2005)

Our intention

- To move away from didactic teaching to collaborative learning with 2nd year social work students
- To teach group work theory and skills development in learning communities (Wenger, 2006)
- To encourage student-centred active learning
- To achieve learning outcomes of critical thinking, integration of theory with practice, reflection, reflexivity and an acute understanding of diversity and difference
- To be mutually beneficial to the local public schools and students engaged in field education

Substance Use

- It is an international problem and rife in South Africa
- Learners encounter substance use as a social problem in schools as some children will experiment with various types of drugs
- Students need knowledge and skills to manage such social problems
- The South African National Council for Alcoholism (SANCA) runs programmes called Teenagers against drug abuse (TADA) and programmes of primary prevention through stories(POPPETS) which are aimed at pre-primary and early primary school children(Dreyer, 2012)

Nyaope is a mixture of rat poison, heroin and anti-retroviral medications



<http://sowetourban.co.za/10356/mec-welcomes-steps-curb-nyaope-abuse/>

Social justice

- Social justice as an “ideal condition in which all members of a society have the same basic rights, protection, opportunities, obligations and social benefits (Barker, 2003, p. 404)
- Safeguarding the equitable distribution of resources
- Post 1994, the developmental perspective to social welfare and social work training is grounded in a rights-based approach, and social justice is a core component within the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree
- Thus social justice should be the golden thread that runs through all teaching and learning in social work education and field education

Socially just pedagogy

- Socially just pedagogy is most appropriate for South Africa, a country with an idiosyncratic history of inequality and violation of human rights as a result of colonialism and apartheid (Patel, 2015)
- In different ways, the struggle against inequality persists, and these matters have been brought to the fore in the recent #feesmustfall movement in 2016 where students highlighted the transformation and financial challenges faced in higher education (Naicker, 2016)

3 aspects of Socially just pedagogy

1. Curricula, pedagogies and educators' attitudes and interactional styles that are likely to enhance the learning and life opportunities of individual students, including those who belong to typically underserved groups in the present education context (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billing, 1994)
2. Socially just educators have insight and are mindful of how structural inequities of educational institutions can hinder student learning therefore they will challenge and work towards the transformation of any educational structure or policies that reduce students' learning opportunities (Carlisle, Jackson & George, 2006; Kincheloe, 2005; McLaren, 2003; Nieto, 2000)
3. Educators who are socially just go beyond the educational context and focus on the transformation of any structure that maintains injustice at societal level (Giroux, 1988; Kincheloe, 2005; McLaren, 2003)

The role of a social work educator

- “Imparting knowledge and encouraging critical and creative thinking in their students”
- (Regehr, Bogo, & Regehr, 2011, p. 469).
- Teaching practice skills and technical knowledge
- Ensuring that graduates do not pose a risk to the people who they work with and therefore to measure competence
- Problems with assessment as assessors give above average ratings resulting in the ceiling effect , despite differences in performances and is often based on the relationship of the student with the supervisor

The role of the external supervisor

- Positive regards
- Progression towards autonomy
- Describing and judging
- Encouraging responsibility
- Maintain focus of purpose
- Role of the mentor social worker
- Effective communication skills, empathic active listening
- Timely, supportive, authentic listening
- Modelling of career growth
- Sharing and teaching of practice knowledge
- Compassion and growth mind-set

Role of the student in Group Work

- Opportunities for reflection
- Collaboration and support - increased skill in collaborative participation
- Increased comfort in leadership roles
- Publically articulating their programmes
- Practice learning that is socially mediated
- Increased confidence as a student social worker
- Time to reflect and act
- Shared material



Value of field education to students

- Self-awareness
- Gain self-worth and insight
- Learn about groups while working in groups
- Develop an appreciation of working with real-world conditions in schools that assisted to build knowledge, develop skills, shape values and advances competence

Research Methods

- Qualitative
- Focus group, reflective report of students
- Face-to-face interviews with the external supervisors
- Data analysis - thematic analysis
- Participants
 - Two student- focus groups
 - Face to Face interviews were conducted with Five FI supervisors

Affordances: conducting group work with adolescents in schools

- The advantages of group work with adolescence is that it is natural way for them to relate to each other as adolescents spend much of their time in groups inside and outside the classroom and groups affect socialization through early developmental stages and provides the context to understand that receive interventions that can be rehearsed before real life (Gerrity & DeLucia-Waack, 2006)
- There is a focus on generalising behaviour said practiced in groups and groups allow for multiple feedback and increase self-esteem (p. 97) by helping others (Shechtman, Bar-El & Hadar, 1997, pp. 203-204).

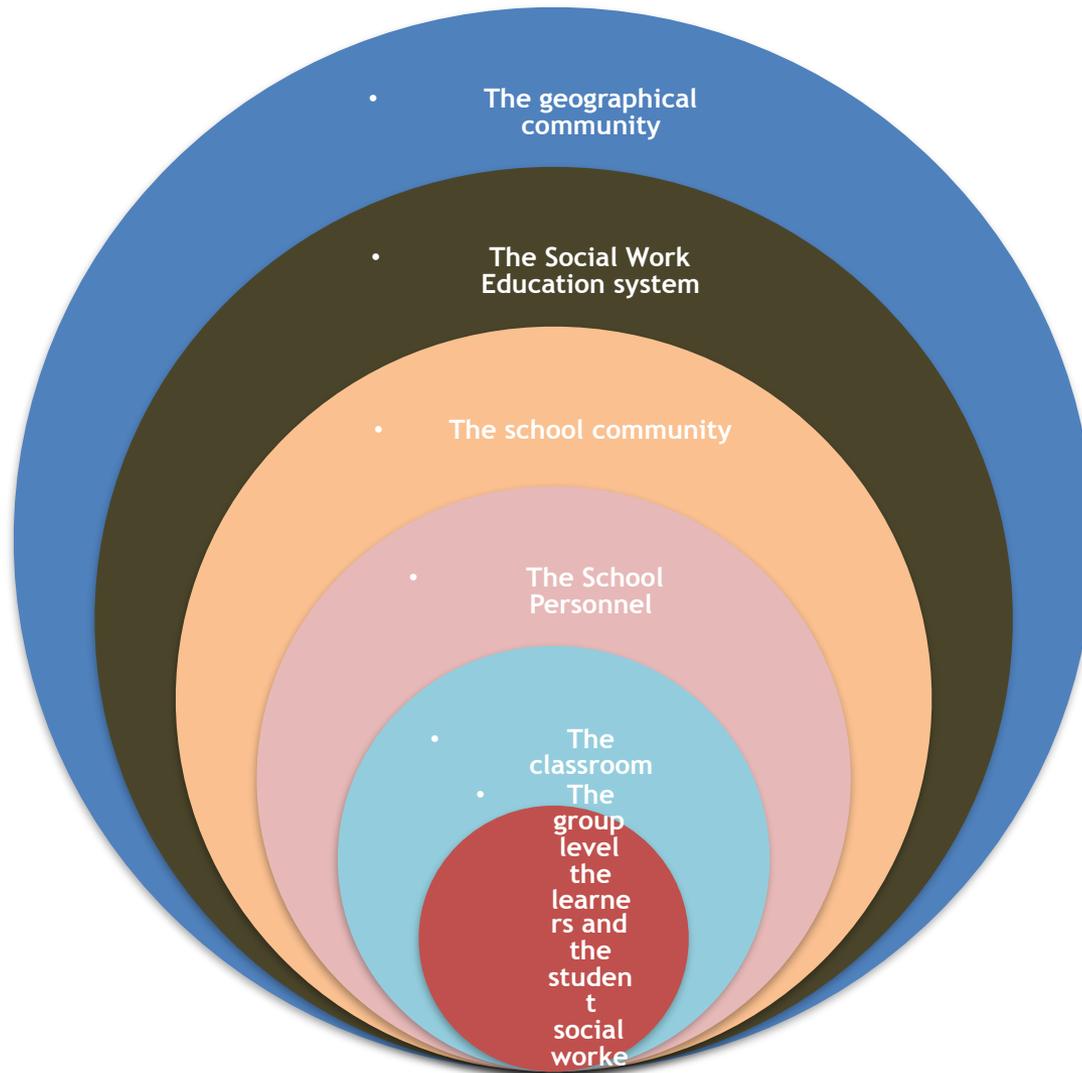
Affordances quotes from students

- The programme provided safe spaces for learners to obtain relevant information and meeting the needs of the community that make students see their role within society (Hessenauer & Simon, 2015).
 - *You know by doing programmes like these you actually find out what it is that they [the learners] know and have the opportunity and build on that in terms of giving them information about things they don't know. I think it is very important. [Student-Lolo]*

Placement Sites

- The schools were in areas where drug abuse was a social problem in the community.
- So students were able to integrate the eco-systematic perspective within the field learning (Meyer, 1983; Zastrow, 2012).
 - *The location they are placed at like in Coronationville, drug abuse is rife and it's something I found to be a concern to them is a norm you know and it's a way of life you know that when you get to grade 10 you have to join a gang. Their uncles or cousins are selling drugs and to them they desensitise it for them is a way of survival or to earn an income ... most of them expressed that the teachers the way they treat them, [the teachers] treat them like they are already criminals. So I think it was important to teach them that you have a choice and you don't have to fall into the systems and the expectations of the systems and that you have been confined to. [Student, Conqueror]*

Eco-systems



Value for field education

- A field education supervisor noted the students were able to demonstrate during group supervision sessions as well as in the reports the use of various skills:
 - ... so they [students] used skills like *intervening, interviewing, questioning skills, facilitation skills and there was a lot of leadership.* [Field education supervisor -Elvin]

Integration of theory with practice

- Further evidence of how students were able to draw on their learnings of theory and integrate these with practice to understand the developmental stages in a group as noted by the comment of the student in the focus group.
 - ... *stages that like you should know the characteristics of every stage like a member of the group is giving you attitude then you should know if this person is doing this then the group is at this stage and this is what I must do.* [Student- Lolo]

The value of small group teaching and learning

- The value of students collaborating in a small group that has a degree of cohesion and safety compared to listening to a lecture in a big class group (Hessenauer & Simon, 2015) was noted
 - *You become more active than when in a big class, because in a small group you let down a little and be able to talk with the person next to you and be able to discuss whatever your issues or your fears but in a large group it's impossible. [Student-Nancy]*

Constraints :conducting group work in schools

- “... in terms of Ke Moja for me I found the programme interesting not great it needed to be creative and interactive with your group and add some things... (student Focus group, P 12)
- “ I think the implementation was right but the training period, the person who was training us was the one we were not comfortable with”
- “I think there was no social work element like in the training”
- “The department should inform the schools like we had to force our way like in terms of welcoming and whatever, they thought we are there to investigate them”

Recommendations

- The use of pedagogy to underpin group work education
- Finding placements for large groups of students
- Active learning when conducting groups and during supervision and theory classes - developing students as producers of knowledge
- Using schools as placement options for training social work students
- School social work prevention programme on drug use that creates opportunities for students to engage with issues of social justice and the integration of theory with practice, critical thinking and reflection
- Small group learning

Socially just pedagogy

- Socially just pedagogy is a key requirement in social work field education
- It calls for educators to be thoughtful and committed and apply individual and structural analytical lenses to ensure socially just teaching when creating a safe space for students to develop and thrive
- In so doing, students are exposed to learning about groups, working in groups and understanding how working with real-world conditions in schools help to develop skills, values and competence



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community developers who utilize group work to submit papers, workshops,

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