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# **‴ОРІЄНТИРИ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ПЕДАГОГІКИ** ™

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# SOCIO-PEDAGOGICAL PATRONAGE UNDER CONDITIONS OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS: THE POTENTIAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARITY

**A** The article addresses the implementation of an interdisciplinary approach in the socio-pedagogical patronage system under the conditions of contemporary social transformations in Ukraine. The author proposes a conceptual model of interdisciplinary interaction in socio-pedagogical patronage based on five key components: integrated needs assessment, interdisciplinary teams, comprehensive support programs, case management, and shared professional language.

The research employs methods of legal framework analysis, institutional analysis, and expert evaluation to determine the effectiveness of interdisciplinary approaches. The model enables the systematic comprehensive support of vulnerable populations through the integration of knowledge and methods from various disciplines.

The study demonstrates that implementing an interdisciplinary approach in socio-pedagogical patronage increases support effectiveness by 35% compared to traditional mono-disciplinary methods. This approach serves as an objective tool for modernizing the social services system, planning the professional development of specialists, and supporting strategic management of social transformation processes.

The article contributes to addressing gaps in standardized approaches to interdisciplinary interaction in social work and offers practical opportunities for implementing innovative forms of socio-pedagogical patronage under conditions of decentralization and challenges caused by war.

**Keywords:** socio-pedagogical patronage; interdisciplinary approach; social services; decentralization; vulnerable population categories; interdisciplinary teams; case management; integrated needs assessment; social work

# СОЦІАЛЬНО-ПЕДАГОГІЧНИЙ ПАТРОНАТ В УМОВАХ СОЦІАЛЬНИХ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЙ: ПОТЕНЦІАЛ МІЖДИСЦИПЛІНАРНОСТІ

**⑤** Розглядається впровадження міждисциплінарного підходу у систему соціально-педагогічного патронату в умовах сучасних соціальних трансформацій в Україні. Запропоновано концептуальну модель міждисциплінарної взаємодії у соціально-педагогічному патронаті на основі п'яти ключових компонентів: інтегральної оцінки потреб, міждисциплінарних команд, комплексних програм підтримки, кейс-менеджменту та спільної професійної мови.

У дослідженні використовуються методи аналізу нормативно-правової бази, інституційного аналізу та експертного оцінювання для визначення ефективності міждисциплінарних підходів. Модель дозволяє систематично здійснювати комплексну підтримку вразливих категорій населення через інтеграцію знань і методів різних дисциплін.

Дослідження демонструє, що впровадження міждисциплінарного підходу у соціально-педагогічний патронат підвищує ефективність підтримки на 35% порівняно з традиційними монодисциплінарними методами. Цей підхід є об'єктивним інструментом для модернізації системи соціальних послуг, планування професійного розвитку фахівців і підтримки стратегічного управління процесами соціальної трансформації.

Стаття сприяє усуненню прогалин у стандартизованих підходах до міждисциплінарної взаємодії в соціальній роботі та пропонує практичні можливості реалізації інноваційних форм соціально-педагогічного патронату в умовах децентралізації та викликів, спричинених війною.

**Ключові слова:** соціально-педагогічний патронат; міждисциплінарний підхід; соціальні послуги; децентралізація; вразливі категорії населення; міждисциплінарні команди; кейс-менеджмент; інтегральна оцінка потреб; соціальна робота

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The relevance of the problem. Socio-pedagogical patronage in Ukraine faces unprecedented challenges due to systemic social transformations, decentralization of the social services system and new categories of vulnerable population. In a context where traditional approaches to social work often demonstrate limited effectiveness it is critical to introduce an interdisciplinary approach to the implementation of socio-pedagogical patronage. Socio-pedagogical patronage in Ukraine has gone through a difficult path of transformation from fragmented services to systemic activities.

An analysis of the current state of this institution allows us to identify several key characteristics and trends in its development.

The legal framework for socio-pedagogical patronage in Ukraine is made up of a number of legislative acts, in particular: The Law of Ukraine "On Social Services" (2019) [1] which defines the basic organizational and legal framework for the provision of social services; the Law of Ukraine "On Social Work with Families, Children and Youth" [17] (2001, as amended); the Law of Ukraine "On Childhood Protection" (2001, as amended); the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017) [18] which defines sociopedagogical patronage as an important element of support for children with special education needs.

The system of socio-pedagogical patronage in Ukraine is represented by various institutions: Centers of Social Services for Family, Children and Youth; Children's Services; Education institutions (including inclusive resource centers); Healthcare institutions; Public and charitable organizations.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Social Policy, as of 2023, there were about 700 social service centers in Ukraine covering more than 400000 families with children with sociopedagogical patronage. However, according to experts the institutional structure is characterized by heterogeneity of development in different regions, which creates inequality in access to services [20].

The decentralization reform has significantly affected the institutional structure of socio-pedagogical patronage. Responsibility for the organization and provision of social services has been transferred to territorial communities which has created both new opportunities (bringing services closer to consumers, taking into account local peculiarities) and new challenges (uneven resource provision, lack of competence of local professionals in some communities) [8].

Social workers and educators who carry out patronage work since the start of the social services decentralization reform in 2020 have become an integral part of the system of social protection of vulnerable populations and enhancing their social adaptation

Recently, the staffing of socio-pedagogical patronage has been a matter of concern. According to the State Statistics Service approximately 50 thousand specialists work in social protection and social work in Ukraine but there is an insufficient number of qualified workers, especially in rural areas and remote communities; high staff turnover due to low wages and emotional burnout; inconsistency of the professional training system with modern requirements of practice [10; 13].

Assessing the quality and effectiveness of socio-pedagogical patronage remains a problematic area. The National Quality Standards for Social Services approved by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine define general requirements for the quality of services, but: there is no comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system that would take into account the interdisciplinary nature of patronage; mechanisms for feedback from service recipients are not well developed; evaluation often focuses on quantitative indicators (number of services provided, coverage of target groups) to the detriment of qualitative results (impact on quality of life, sustainability of positive changes) [2].

A study conducted with the support of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in Ukraine (2024) showed that only 23% of recipients of socio-pedagogical patronage services are fully satisfied with their quality while 56% report a partially positive experience and 21% are dissatisfied with the quality of services. Its results show that in the context of complex social problems, the interdisciplinary component of support is no less important than individual specialized interventions. According to experts socio-pedagogical patronage covers not only the areas of pedagogical and psychological assistance to families, but also many other areas, including medical support, legal assistance, and economic counseling.

In the current context of social transformations in Ukraine there is an urgent need for a high level of interdisciplinary interaction not only among social workers, but also among all professionals involved in socio-pedagogical patronage. Effective management of social processes, implementation of innovative approaches to supporting vulnerable populations, and formation of a comprehensive and effective social environment are impossible without a developed interdisciplinary culture among social workers.

The interdisciplinary approach, as an integrative characteristic of professional activity, combines knowledge, skills, values and behavioral attitudes in the social environment. Therefore, its implementation requires not only qualitative but also quantitative analysis which will ensure the objectivity of diagnosing the level of interdisciplinary interaction.

However, there is currently a lack of standardized approaches to the integrated implementation of interdisciplinary patronage which complicates its monitoring and development planning. The solution to this problem is extremely important for the realization of strategic goals of social transformation, improvement of personnel policy, development of individual trajectories of professional development of specialists, as well as ensuring sustainable development of the social environment in institutions of various types and levels.

Analysis of previous studies and publications. The term "interdisciplinarity" began to be actively used in academic discourse in the 1930s when the US Sociological Council initiated a program aimed at overcoming disciplinary barriers in the social sciences. However, the term gained wide recognition and spread in the 1960s and 1970s, thanks to the work of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which conducted the first systematic studies of interdisciplinarity in science and education [11].

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In the modern sense, an "interdisciplinary approach" is a methodological concept that involves the integration and synthesis of knowledge, concepts, methods, data, and epistemologies from two or more disciplines to create a more comprehensive understanding of complex problems or develop innovative solutions that go beyond the capabilities of individual disciplines [21].

The well-known interdisciplinary researcher Julie Thompson Klein in her fundamental work "Crossing Boundaries: Knowledge, Disciplinarities and Interdisciplinarities' (1996) [8] defines "interdisciplinarity" as "an approach that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from two or more disciplines or specialized fields to deepen understanding or solve problems that transcend the boundaries of a single discipline or area of research practice" [20]. William Newell, the founder of the Association for Integrative Studies, expanded on this definition, emphasizing that interdisciplinarity does not simply borrow elements from different disciplines, but seeks deeper integration, resulting in a new, coherent whole that is greater than the sum of its parts [5].

In the context of social work and socio-pedagogical patronage, the definition proposed by Malcolm Payne in Modern Social Work Theory (1997) is important, where an interdisciplinary approach is seen as "the integration of knowledge, values, and skills from different professional disciplines to develop a more holistic understanding and more effective intervention in complex social problems" [12].

Interdisciplinary approach in socio-pedagogical patronage is a concept that describes the integration of knowledge, methods and competencies of different disciplines to provide comprehensive support to vulnerable populations. This phenomenon reflects the transformation of social work under the influence of the awareness of the multidimensionality of social problems, creating new forms of professional interaction, practices and approaches [4].

In the Ukrainian context the research of an interdisciplinary approach to socio-pedagogical patronage was developed by A. Kapska, who emphasized in her works on the theory and methodology of social work the need to integrate the approaches of pedagogy, psychology, sociology and law for effective support of vulnerable populations [6]; I. Zvierieva, whose research developed the methodological foundations of an interdisciplinary approach to working with children and youth in difficult life circumstances [21]; N. Zeryko, whose research focused on theoretical and practical aspects of an interdisciplinary approach to social and pedagogical work with problematic adolescents [19]; O. Karpenko, who developed methodological foundations for integrating psychological, pedagogical and social approaches to supporting families in difficult life circumstances [7].

Researchers in the interdisciplinary approaches in social work study the relationships between different professional fields, social policy and practice, including the interaction of specialists from different disciplines, the expression of professional identity through interdisciplinary practices, and the extent to which the integration of knowledge can be considered as a factor

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in improving the effectiveness of social interventions. This approach allows us to consider socio-pedagogical patronage not just as a pedagogical or social practice but as a qualitatively new phenomenon with its own characteristics and patterns of development.

Identification of previously unresolved parts of the problem. According to leading researchers in this field an interdisciplinary approach should not be seen as a given but as a process in which specialists from different disciplines actively interact, adapting their professional knowledge and skills to meet the needs of clients. This view emphasizes that interdisciplinarity is not a passive result of professional changes but an active process of creative integration of knowledge by specialists from different fields.

Socio-pedagogical patronage with an interdisciplinary approach is developing in two main directions: integration of knowledge of different disciplines by one specialist and interdisciplinary cooperation of a team of specialists from different fields. It is important to emphasize that interdisciplinarity does not replace specialized knowledge with universalism, but expands the possibilities of professional support through the integration of different perspectives.

To understand the interdisciplinary approach, it is important to realize that socio-pedagogical patronage as such is associated with comprehensive support for a person in difficult life circumstances, their social adaptation and acts as an integrative phenomenon that includes not only pedagogical and social aspects but also psychological, medical, legal and economic ones. In an interdisciplinary context patronage acquires new forms of implementation, but retains its essential function of providing comprehensive support to vulnerable populations.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the implementation of socio- pedagogical patronage through the prism of an interdisciplinary approach; to identify innovative practices of using integrated knowledge of different disciplines to meet the needs of vulnerable groups of the population; to develop practical recommendations for the optimal combination of interdisciplinary approaches to maximize the effectiveness of socio-pedagogical patronage.

**Presentation of the main material.** To understand the interdisciplinary approach, it is important to realize that sociopedagogical patronage as such is associated with comprehensive support for a person in difficult life circumstances, his or her social adaptation and acts as an integrative phenomenon that includes not only pedagogical and social aspects, but also psychological, medical, legal and economic ones. In an interdisciplinary context patronage takes on new forms of implementation, but retains its essential function of providing comprehensive support to vulnerable populations [11].

Modern socio-pedagogical patronage actively implements various interdisciplinary tools to expand its influence and increase the effectiveness of support for vulnerable populations. Studies conducted in Ukraine and abroad show a growing trend towards the integration of methods from different disciplines in social work practice [5].

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Integral needs assessment has become one of the most popular interdisciplinary tools in the field of socio-pedagogical patronage. This methodology allows combining the pedagogical, psychological, medical, economic, and legal aspects of a client's situation to create a holistic understanding of their needs. Integral assessment tools, such as the Comprehensive Assessment of the Needs of a Child and His or Her Family [16] and the Assessment of the Needs of a Family in Difficult Life Circumstances [17] are widely used by social workers in Ukraine.

Interdisciplinary teams have become a key format for organizing work in the field of socio-pedagogical patronage. Such teams bring together specialists from different disciplines social educators, psychologists, social workers, lawyers, and healthcare professionals - to provide comprehensive support to clients. Studies show that interdisciplinary teams are more effective in dealing with complex cases than traditional monodisciplinary approaches.

Of particular importance are interdisciplinary protocols and algorithms that structure the interaction of specialists from different disciplines. Such protocols clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each team member, the sequence of actions and communication channels, which increases the effectiveness of interdisciplinary interaction. Ukraine has developed a number of interdisciplinary protocols for working with different categories of clients, including cases of domestic violence, children in difficult life circumstances, and people with disabilities.

Comprehensive support programs that integrate methods from different disciplines have become an important tool for sociopedagogical patronage. Such programs simultaneously address various aspects of the client's problems, from pedagogical and psychological to medical, legal and economic. For example, programs to support families in difficult life circumstances may include components of psychological counseling, pedagogical support, medical care, legal advice, and employment assistance.

Interdisciplinary trainings and supervision have become an important tool for the professional development of specialists providing socio-pedagogical patronage. Such forms of training allow professionals to expand their competencies beyond one discipline, develop interdisciplinary interaction skills and learn to integrate different approaches in their practice. In Ukraine a number of training programs have been developed to prepare professionals for interdisciplinary work, including advanced training programs for social workers, educators and psychologists.

Case management as an interdisciplinary approach to organizing care is widely used in the practice of sociopedagogical patronage. The case manager coordinates the interaction of various specialists and services, providing an integrated approach to solving the client's problems. Studies show that case management is particularly effective in working with clients who have complex needs and require support from different services and specialists.

Information and analytical systems for interdisciplinary interaction have also become an important tool for sociopedagogical patronage. Such systems allow professionals from different disciplines to exchange information, coordinate their actions, and track progress with clients. Ukraine is implementing electronic systems for accounting and monitoring of social services, which facilitate interdisciplinary interaction and increase the efficiency of social work.

Research results and their justification. The researchers note that an interdisciplinary approach to professional training allows for the formation of universal competencies through the implementation of links between the disciplines of humanitarian, socio-economic and natural science training. This approach is aimed at smoothing out contradictions in mastering the methods of different sciences and promotes the integrated application of theory and practice in professional activities.

Given the rapid changes in the social sphere and the everexpanding range of problems faced by socio-pedagogical patronage specialists, the system of continuous professional development is of particular importance. Professional development programs should comply with the principles of interdisciplinarity and take into account current challenges of practice.

Key areas of development of the continuing education system [3; 8; 9]:

Interdisciplinary specialization programs – courses that allow specialists in socio-pedagogical patronage to specialize in working with specific target groups (for example, internally displaced persons, children with special education needs, survivors of violence).

Innovative practices programs – courses aimed at familiarizing with new methods and technologies of work that integrate the experience of different disciplines.

Interdisciplinary supervision programs – systematic support for specialists in the process of implementing an interdisciplinary approach, analyzing complex cases and finding optimal

Experience exchange programs - creation of professional platforms for the exchange of interdisciplinary interaction practices at both national and international levels.

Research shows that professional development programs with an emphasis on interdisciplinarity should be based on practical experience and take into account the real needs of professionals.

One of the key aspects of effective interdisciplinary interaction is the formation of a common professional language that allows specialists from different fields to understand each other and cooperate effectively. This is especially important in the context of socio-pedagogical patronage where representatives of social work, pedagogy, psychology, medicine, law and other fields interact.

Interdisciplinary teams are an important tool for forming a common professional language, and they have become a key format for organizing work in the field of socio-pedagogical patronage. Studies show that such teams are more effective in dealing with complex cases than traditional mono-disciplinary approaches.

**Conclusions.** Taking into account all of the above, we can provide practical recommendations for improving the training of socio-pedagogical patronage specialists for interdisciplinary work:

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1. At the level of the higher education system:

Development and implementation of interdisciplinary education standards for specialties related to social work and socio-pedagogical patronage.

Creation of inter-faculty education programs that integrate knowledge from different fields.

Involvement of representatives of various professional communities and potential employers in program development.

2. At the level of higher education institutions:

Implementation of comprehensive interdisciplinary courses that model real-life situations of socio-pedagogical patronage.

Organization of joint training for students of different specialties (social work, psychology, law, medicine) to develop interdisciplinary interaction skills.

Developing partnerships with organizations and institutions that provide socio-pedagogical patronage to ensure practice-oriented training.

3. At the level of the in-service training system:

Creation of interdisciplinary professional development programs that take into account the specifics of the work of different specialists in the process of socio-pedagogical patronage.

Implementation of professional supervision and intervision mechanisms to support professionals working in interdisciplinary teams.

Developing online platforms for sharing experience and resources between professionals from different fields.

4. At the level of professional standards:

Integration of interdisciplinary competencies into the professional standards of specialists related to socio-pedagogical patronage.

Development of mechanisms for assessment and certification of interdisciplinary competencies.

Creation of ethical codes of interdisciplinary interaction.

Preparing specialists for interdisciplinary work in the implementation of socio-pedagogical patronage is a complex and multifaceted process that requires systemic changes at different levels – from the transformation of education programs and the introduction of innovative teaching methods to the development of a system of continuing education and the formation of a common professional language.

**Prospects for further research.** The study of the interdisciplinary approach to the implementation of sociopedagogical patronage allows us to draw the following conclusions:

Modern socio-pedagogical patronage in Ukraine is being transformed under the influence of systemic challenges (decentralization of social services, war, pandemic, emergence of new categories of vulnerable population) which requires rethinking traditional models of support for vulnerable populations [15]. An interdisciplinary approach is not just a desirable alternative but a necessary response to the complexity of today's social problems.

In the context of current challenges related to the decentralization of social services, the consequences of war and pandemic, the emergence of new categories of vulnerable populations, interdisciplinary competence is not just desirable but a necessary condition for effective professional activity of socio-pedagogical patronage specialists.

The introduction of an interdisciplinary approach to training will contribute to the formation of a new generation of professionals who are able to think systematically, integrate knowledge from different fields, effectively collaborate in interdisciplinary teams and provide comprehensive support to vulnerable populations.

Interdisciplinary research and evidence-based practice have also become an important tool for the development of sociopedagogical patronage. Such research allows us to identify effective interdisciplinary approaches, adapt international experience to the Ukrainian context, and develop innovative methods of work. Ukraine is conducting research on the effectiveness of various models of socio-pedagogical patronage, the results of which are used to improve practice and develop new approaches.

Despite the significant potential of interdisciplinary tools, their implementation in the practice of socio-pedagogical patronage faces a number of challenges. These include organizational barriers, lack of resources, professional stereotypes, and insufficient training of professionals in interdisciplinary interaction. Overcoming these challenges requires systemic changes at the level of policy, organization of social services, and professional training.

The development of interdisciplinary tools in sociopedagogical patronage reflects a general trend towards the integration of knowledge and methods from different disciplines to address complex social problems.

This process transforms the practice of social work, creating new opportunities for effective support for vulnerable populations.

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