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SOCIAL WORK AND THE PRODUCTION OF THE MEANING ABOUT CLIENTS

If we asking for the identity of Social Work, we have to ask what does this question implies. What means it to ask for an identity? And we also have to ask what happens in the actual practice of Social Work. This PhD-project concentrate not at the more theoretically question about the meaning of asking for an identity of the professional Social Work. The focus of this Project is more about the empirical view of the Social Work practice. Based on the results of the empirical research the goal is to give some inputs for the question about the identity of professional Social Work.

When the claim for the practice of social work consists to expand the space of possibilities for the clients (Ziegler 2008:50), then it is necessary to analyze the current space of possibilities first. But the current space will not just create by the practice of Social Work. Social Work is just a part of it. Therefore, the Social Work has to reflect that it takes not just a 'Location' in the view, stay in which their addressees, but that it is itself a figurative element of space, an actor such as in the social arena so that the space as social space constituted (Otto/Ziegler 2008: 149).The goal is to analyze the Social Work practice in relation to other professions and in relation to the structural conditions.

The research is located in the field of State-funded pre-vocational and pre-employment promotion ("berufsvorbereitenden Bildungsmaßnahmen"). These measures are fixed in the (German) law for employment promotion (Arbeitsförderung) and aim to the labour market integration of young people. In 2004 the intervention program was restructured to enhance the efficiency and the effectiveness. Since that time, diagnosis of customers' acceptability (Eignungsanalyse) is seen as the central precondition of the intervention (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2009). The dissertation project is focussed on the orientations of the social work professionals in relation to the other professions in this field. In this field are working besides social worker, teachers and trainers. Social Work are seen as an important actor in this transformed field and their degree of latitude (Eckert/Heisler et al. 2007).

The questions are:

1. What meanings of clients can be analyzed in social work practice?
2. In which connections are the meanings of clients in social work practice to the political programs?
3. In which connections are the meanings of clients in the different professions?

References

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