

SOCIAL WORK FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ART

Sanat Perspektifinden Sosyal Hizmet

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ABSTRACT

Art has an important place in social work applications. Social work, like art, is a tool that serves people and improves their well-being. Considering the therapeutic feature of the art and the awareness-raising feature of social work, the place of art in helping the individual cannot be denied. The two most important areas related to human habitats intersect directly or indirectly in many respects. These two areas develop a common perspective on human orientation and community service although they differ in terms of working styles. Therefore, social workers should also contribute to increase the benefit of art to the spiritual development of individuals, their perspective on the world and their understanding of social responsibility. The purpose of this study is to reveal how art contributes to the social work discipline. Some branches of art have important functions in raising the awareness of the applicants, whom social work experts address. For this purpose, the branches of art that contribute to the social work discipline will be examined.

Keywords: Social Work and Art, Social Work and Cinema, Social Work and Psychodrama

ÖZET

Sanat sosyal hizmet uygulamalarında önemli bir yere sahiptir. Sosyal hizmet de tıpkı sanat gibi insana hizmet eden ve insanların iyilik hallerinin gelişmesini sağlayan bir araçtır. Sanatın tedavi edici özelliği ve sosyal hizmetin bireyin farkındalığını artırıcı özelliği bir arada düşünüldüğünde, sanatın bireye yardım konusundaki yeri yadsınamaz. İnsanın yaşam alanları ile ilgili en önemli iki alan birçok açıdan doğrudan ya da dolaylı olarak kesişmektedir. Bu iki alan çalışma biçimleri açısından farklılıklar içerirse de, insan odaklılık ve topluma hizmet noktalarında ortak bir bakış açısı geliştirmektedir. Bu yüzden sanatın bireylerin manevi gelişimine ve dünyaya bakış açısına toplumsal sorumluluk anlayışlarına katkısının artırılması için sosyal hizmet uzmanlarının da katkı sağlaması gerekmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı sanatın hangi açılardan sosyal hizmet disiplinine bu katkıyı sağladığını ortaya koyabilmektir. Sanatın bazı dalları sosyal hizmet uzmanlarının bazı dalları ise sosyal hizmet uzmanının hitap ettiği kitle olan müracaatçıların farkındalıklarını arttırmada önemli işlevler görmektedir. Bu amaçla çalışmada sosyal hizmet disiplinine katkı sağlayan sanat dalları incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Hizmet ve Sanat, Sosyal Hizmet ve Sinema, Sosyal Hizmet ve Psikodrama

"Creativity is contagious. Pass it on!"
Albert Einstein

1. INTRODUCTION

Social work supports the social change, solving problems in human relations and the empowerment and freedom of the people to increase their well-being. It uses various social work interventions on the principle of social justice and human rights while doing so.

Social workers ensure the psychosocial adaptation of the individuals with the environment and undertake the protective, preventive and rehabilitative functions. They use various techniques and approaches to carry out these functions. In these techniques and approaches, including the art elements or implementing these elements to their profession with the observations made on stage is defined as "social work with art". It is possible to use many different art elements in social work with art. One of these elements is psychodrama-based spontaneity drama. Psychodrama, which is used in social work approach accompanied by impromptu plays with stage interaction, allows the individuals to discover a new ground within the framework of their potential structure. As the psychosocial functionality of the individuals becomes stronger, they can get to know themselves, gain self-help skills and, more importantly, acquire creative thinking skills to deal with difficulties (Songül, 2008).

Art, similar to social work, encourages people to understand social realities. However, art does not provide a path or solution as social work. However, social workers that use art make people aware of themselves and encourage them to see their limits (Moffatt, 2009: 215).

2. ART AND SOCIAL WORK

Courage is an issue that people suffer most. Creativity can overcome the change obstacle. Each client is unique and their conditions are in constant change. In this case, it is important for social workers to be creative. The main field which the creativity is based on is art.

In the relation between social work and art, acquiring solid reasoning skills by establishing the right relationships, creative thinking, self-awareness, empathy and commitment to values stand out as common points. Art enables us to evaluate behavior and actions as a whole without being reduced to the instantaneous insolubility of people. Thus, art makes it easier to establish correct relationships and to develop reasoning skills in doing so. Similarly, the generalist approach of social work examines the humans with the physical environment and evaluates them as part of a whole. It aims to understand the condition of the individuals and prove their values by demonstration. Therefore, individuals can obtain more solid reasoning skills (Tazeoğlu Erol, 2016: 45-47).

3. TYPES OF ART THAT CAN BE USED IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES

Social work is an authorized profession and discipline with the aim of helping people adapt to society on the basis of empowerment and liberalization and to be functional in their social environment. Those in need of this profession and the main group, which is the essence of social work, are defined as “clients”. Individuals, groups, families or organizations seeking benefits from the social work experts constitute the clients (Özdemir, 2016: 38). It is important that social work, which aims to empower and liberate clients, can utilize art and art therapy in social work practices. The discovery and professionalization of art therapy dates back to the 1960s. The term art therapy was first used by artist Adrian Hill in 1942 to describe his work with tuberculosis patients in the King Edward II sanatorium. Later, art therapy began to be used in psychiatric hospitals and was used as a type of psychotherapy in the hospital system in the 1950s. Art therapy, which includes practices in all areas of art such as painting, music, drama, cinema, literature, and dance, is an important self-expression task for patients who do not respond to psychotherapy methods (Hasgül, 2016: 56).

3.1. Social Work and Cinema

The use of cinema, which is an art branch, for educational purposes in social work training, enables social worker candidate students to gain creative and critical thinking skills and increase their capacity to make aesthetic value judgments (Tazeoğlu Erol, 2016: 126). Discussion environments on topics such as policies, management, social development, development and community organization are created through films and students who receive social work training are able to discuss and focus on social problems, social values and policies. For example, Scout’s Honor is a documentary about how a boy scout joins the homosexual boy scouts community and tries to change the system to become a leader in this community. The student gets information on issues such as gay rights, legislation, the role of the judiciary, and social justice by watching this film. The skills that the student gains through discussions at the end of the film are advocacy, lobbying, writing a petition and public speech.

In the movie Losing Isaiah, a middle-class Caucasian family adopts an African American baby and the biological mother of the baby who has recovered from substance abuse after three years struggles to get her baby back. Information about social problems and ethical values such as substance abuse, poverty, child rejection, racism is obtained from this film. Students gain the ability to determine policy analysis skills and strategies for complex social problems with the analysis of this film.

In the movie *And the Band Played On*, the progress of HIV / AIDS and the role of the U.S. Center for Disease Control in the treatment of the disease are examined. This is a movie based on real events which tells the story of how the governing body affects the public health policies on the research and treatment of AIDS. This film assesses the impact of power and wealth on laws and implementations and the role of the media in social policy practices.

Kieslowski's film titled *"Gadajace glowy"* (Talking Heads) examines the issue of identity and self-awareness within the framework of who I am. In order to understand the ecosystem theory in social work, Kieslowski's *"White"* is shown as an example. The film shows the lead actor as a client. It examines the relationship between the impotence problem of the client, who is a Polish living in France, with other systems such as marriage and mafia and the way he perceives power and his cultural discrimination. In the film titled *"Experiment"*, the discussion environment of the basic concepts of role theory such as role rigidity, role model and role repertoire is examined. The film titled *"Ordinary People"* is used in family counseling trainings while examining the film titled *"Short Term 12"* on childhood traumas ensures that theoretical trainings are based on the basics of reality.

The following films examine the problems that are the main focus of social work in many dimensions: *"Short Term 12"* examines domestic violence; *"Wild Strawberries"*, *"Tokyo Story"*, *"Arrugas"* (Wrinkles) old age and its problems and *"Orange and Sunshine"* child abuse. The films *"Rain Man"* and *"Temple Grandin"* examine autism while *"Tamam mıyız?"* (Are we OK?) and *"Black"* provide information about possible problems and interventions that disadvantaged groups may encounter.

The film of Dardennes Brothers titled *"Rosetta"* is a good example of how a person can contribute to the change of government policies by emphasizing the social problem of poverty. It is a film in which the unemployment problem is handled with realistic perspectives in order to affect the legal and regulatory structures that we encounter at the macro level of social work and to draw attention to a social problem. The film examines the life of 17-year-old Rosetta. Struggling with poverty, Rosetta has an unemployed and alcoholic mother. She has become a symbol of the struggle for the survival of poor people in Belgium while trying to help the boy, whom she loves, getting his job back which has come to a point that causes her to be fired and even left to die. After the release of the film, the *"Rosetta Plan"* was prepared by the Belgian Government on 24 December 1999. Furthermore, *"Rosetta Plan- Kickstart for Youth"* project has been expanded by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security in Turkey on 31 October 2016. According to the Rosetta Plan, Turkey Assessment Report, business agreement practice with employers in Belgium started in April 2000, and in 2001 42 percent of the women and 40 percent of the youth were employed by signing more than 50 thousand labor contracts (Tazeoğlu Erol, 2016: 135-138).

3.2. Social Work and Music

Music affects physiological and psychological responses in humans. It has unique elements such as rhythm, tempo, tone, volume and melody. There are important features of music such as memory association and creating images, highlighting emotions, facilitating social interaction, and providing relaxation and attention. These features are of great importance for the social service discipline that is empowered and aimed at helping people to be functional in their social environment (Özyıldız and Uçaner Çifdalöz, 2019: 577-579).

The effect of hip hop music in the 15-18 age groups in Portugal, who has been detained for crimes such as sexual harassment, murder, and drugs, has been studied. As a result, the needs of young adults such as to be understood, to do something for themselves, to be unique and respectable and to be a member of a group have concluded positively with music therapy. Thus, they can express themselves in a stronger manner and behave safer without threatening anyone. In Turkey, the music therapy is used in hospitals for treatment. Turkish Music Therapy Association was founded in 2014 in Ankara. The Association works to introduce and develop music therapy and to expand the

practice field of music therapy for therapeutic purposes from health to social works (Uçaner and Jelen, 2015: 40-41). For instance, music therapy can be one of the most effective stages of fighting against addiction. Group therapies where musical components are used in sensitive conditions such as addiction have many more facilitating effects. Self-expression with music allows the individuals to indirectly transfer their thoughts to the outside world while also protecting their privacy. Sometimes individuals can interpret the confusion that they experience within themselves through music (Özyıldız and Uçaner Çifdalöz, 2019: 579).

3.3. Social Service and Psychodrama

Psychodrama is a psychotherapy method that allows individuals to reexamine and stage their problems. Social workers who play a role in improving and developing the relationships of the individuals established with their environment have the opportunity to use psychodrama as a method in their professional interventions. In this way, social workers provide their clients with the ability to prepare and cope with their past and current problems, expectations, anxieties and difficulties. Psychodrama developed by Jacob Levy Moreno is known as a role-based therapy type (Aygün Cengiz, 2007: 90). Humans start the struggle for life even before they are born, and according to Moreno, birth is a desired victory for the embryo. The struggle effort inherent to humans includes the potential to cope with problems. The existence of problems leads to a better understanding of the solution, the presence of diseases to health, the wars to peace, and death leads to a better understanding of reality. Life finds meaning with problems and problems find meaning with solutions (Ulupınar, 2014: 56).

Geçtan (1976: 103) defines psychodrama as psychiatric treatment with drama. Psychodrama and social work are complementary disciplines. The rule of “start working from the perspective of the client” used by social work has similarities with psychodrama. Psychodrama consists of the following items:

- ✓ Protagonist (Person or lead actor in question with mental problems)
- ✓ Director (Therapist)
- ✓ Auxiliary Ego (group members chosen to portray people who have a place in the life and in the formation of the mental problems of the Protagonist)
- ✓ Audience (Treatment Group)
- ✓ Stage or space used for this purpose

Psychodrama has two main orientations:

- ✓ Protagonist based psychodrama: In this type applied for mental treatment, a personal problem of one of the group members is performed on stage.
- ✓ Group-based psychodrama: The topic chosen in this type of practice is a common problem of the group. It is mostly applied in places such as schools and factories.

Psychodrama should be included in social work practices as a useful method in terms encouraging the individuals to speak during their treatments, especially those who are prevented from frequent interference and autonomy in our society (Geçtan, 1976: 109).

3.4. Social Service and Literature

Literature enables learning the social work with its different dimensions while allows understanding the psychology and cult of people in different social groups through art. In this way, it becomes easier to comprehend the approach method of social work to humans and its importance in professional communication.

As an example of parental indifference in Kafka's book "Metamorphosis", the story of Samsa, who turns into an insect as his parents humiliates him, is a good example of the unhealthy roles of parents in social roles in the development of the individual (Tazeoğlu Erol, 2016: 49).

Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables" and Knut Hamsun's "Hunger" examines the problem of poverty while Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment" examines the problem of guilt. The problem of urbanization is revealed in detail by Peyami Safa's "Fatih Harbiye" and Orhan Kemal's "Kötü Yol". Anthony Burgess's "A Clockwork Orange" and Emile Zola's "L' Asommoir" also provide an explanatory interpretation of the substance abuse phenomenon. İrfan Orga writes about the immigration problem in "Bir Türk Ailesinin Öyküsü", Charles Dickens' "Oliver Twist" and Kemalettin Tuğcu's "Köprü Altı Çocukları" examine the problems of children and makes it easier to analyze and synthesize the facts of the phenomena. It is important to be able to evaluate the concept of suicide from Leo Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina" and William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" and to see violence against women in Alina Bronsky's "Broken Glass Park" as well as understanding the manifestations of literary works in the interaction between the society and the individuals. On the other hand, human evaluations made in Dostoevsky's "Notes from Underground" and John Steinbeck's "Mice and People" makes it easier to analyze the subjects of social work and to see the place of literature in social problems at a glance. Literary works help a social worker to acquire the ability to evaluate the facts within the required framework (Karatay, 2020).

4. CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

Communication is of great importance since social work is a profession that is directly connected with human problems and relationships. Solving the problems of the client, the communication and interaction established while doing so continues throughout the entire professional relationship from the beginning of the helping process. It is necessary to strengthen communication and improve the relationship of trust in order for the client to be empowered at the end of the relationship formed with the social worker. Non-verbal skills, continuing skills, guiding skills, self-referencing skills, skills of recognizing needs and understanding others are included in helpful relationships (Gökçearslan Çiftçi and Altınova, 2017: 1390). Social work experts should be equipped with all of these skills. Especially in disadvantaged groups, it is necessary to benefit from various fields of art in order to increase the skills of the social worker. Art is extremely effective as a means of communication and intervention in meeting the social needs of the client. The relationship of art branches such as cinema, music, psychodrama and literature with social work will make it possible to move the humanity forward.

Ethical Statement

During the writing process of the work titled "Social Work from the Perspective of Art", scientific, ethical and quoting rules were followed; no alteration was made on the data collected and this study was not sent to any other academic media for evaluation.

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