

Components of future social workers' readiness to implement mediation

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to review the theoretical background, to develop components of future social workers' readiness to implement mediation in their practice and study to what extent this competence is developed via different diagnostic techniques like Diagnostics of One's Proneness to Conflict Behavior. The study results demonstrate that a significant proportion of students (28.8%) are highly motivated to study the principles of peacebuilding and implementation of mediation practice, and 25.5% have well-developed qualities required for a mediator. In conclusion, the process of building the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation requires a step-by-step approach.

Key words: mediation, peacebuilding, restorative, social work.

Componentes de la preparación de los futuros trabajadores sociales para implementar la mediación

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es revisar los antecedentes teóricos, desarrollar componentes de la preparación de los futuros trabajadores sociales para implementar la mediación en su práctica y estudiar hasta qué punto esta competencia se desarrolla a través de diferentes técnicas de diagnóstico como Diagnóstico del comportamiento de una persona al conflicto. Los resultados del estudio demuestran que una proporción significativa de estudiantes (28.8%) están altamente motivados para estudiar los principios de la construcción de la paz y la implementación de la práctica de mediación, y el 25.5% tiene cualidades bien desarrolladas requeridas por un mediador. En conclusión, el proceso de construcción de la preparación de los futuros trabajadores sociales para implementar la mediación requiere un enfoque paso a paso.

Palabras clave: mediación, construcción de la paz, restauración, trabajo social.

1. Introduction

The building of a peaceful democratic society has become a priority focus for state institutions over the last few years. Peacebuilding envisages the rooting of universal human values and the development of tolerant society by implementing restorative practices and a new understanding of a conflict and how it can be resolved. At the state and legislative levels, a number of steps has been taken so far to reduce social tension and promote the practice of peaceful conflict

resolution: the LU “On Mediation” was drafted (No. 3665 dd. Dec. 17, 2015) and the mediation service is now the CSSFCY function (as required by the State Social Service Standard: Mediation, No. z1243-16 dd. Oct. 13, 2017). The issue of building a peaceful educational environment is outlined in the State Social Program “National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child until 2021” approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Resolution No. 230-p dd. Apr. 5, 2017, the State Target Program for Peace Restoration and Strengthening in the Eastern Regions approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Resolution No. 1071 dd. Dec. 13, 2017, Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 1127 dd. Aug. 08, 2017 “On Approval of the Plan of Measures for the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine for the Development of Psychological Service within the Educational System of Ukraine until 2020” and others. School reconciliation services have become more common in recent years and are supported by the Package of Educational Programs “Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts: Basic Mediation Skills” (authors: V. Andreyenkova, K. Levchenko, N. Lunchenko, and M. Matviychuk). However, these steps are merely local and do not address the root cause of the problem to make the practice of peaceful conflict resolution more efficient. Bearing all these considerations in mind, it is worth paying more attention to the training of future mediators, especially among future social workers. It is a social worker who, given his/her professional competences and tasks, will convey the peacebuilding ideas in the community, reduce social tension at the local level and develop the restorative culture to promote successful resolution of conflicts.

Notably, that in the process of professional training, future social workers acquire knowledge, skills, and competences required for their professional activity and have an opportunity to build and develop their professional and personal qualities. It is the development of qualities and the level of the knowledge, skills and competences so acquired that allow us to talk about future social workers’ readiness to work in the social sector. Though common in scientific literature and in practice, mediation is still innovative in the practice of training future social workers.

Social work involves direct contacts with a particular person or a group that exist in a particular environment. A social worker should understand that the overall environment is represented by all levels of life (such as individual, interpersonal and social) and that a person may face different conflicts at each level. The impact of a conflict situation at each level sets the new requirements for the skills of successful conflict resolution. It is the lack of a conflict resolution culture that affects the communication of a human in the society and, as a consequence, the very process of socialization. Therefore, a social worker must be prepared to develop a restorative culture of communication among his/her clients, to promote the development of win-win conflict resolution and to function as a peacekeeper. These considerations set the new requirements for vocational training programs for social workers, which should make future teachers ready to implement mediation in the social sector.

We determine the future teachers’ readiness to implement mediation as a specific professional characteristic of a personality that includes special knowledge of conflict science and conflict resolution techniques, various skills, which are necessary for the implementation of the mediation practice, a complex of individual psychological qualities, motivation to implement restorative practice, and a professional focus on peacekeeping in teaching activities (Orland-Barak, 2014; Moore, 2014; Paschall et al., 2014).

Having analyzed the components of the social workers’/teachers’ readiness identified by the scholars (E. Bogdanov, O. Karpenko, N. Kuzmina, L. Petrovska, O. Piekhota, V. Slastionin, B. Khasan, L. Tsoy and others), we defined the following components of future social workers’

readiness to implement mediation: motivational, personal, informational and activity-related components (Table 1).

A motive is one's internal driver that underlies one's interest in cognitive activity (Kuzminsky, 2005; Fan & Wolters, 2014; Oreopoulos et al., 2017). Accordingly, the motivational component is formed in the process of practical activities, which involved a student.

An important indicator of the development of this component is individual's value orientation both in his/her professional and personal life. Among the basic values essential for a future mediator, the value of peace and peacebuilding prevail (actions to identify and restore auxiliary framework to strengthen and support peace to prevent conflict recurrence, to strengthen trust and enhance interaction between former opponents to prevent conflict recurrence (Peace Building, 2016; Wallensteen, 2015; Jeong, 2017; Cahn & Abigail, 2014). For a social worker willing to implement the practice of mediation, the most important values should be the values of human life, well-being, communication, commitment to resolve conflicts in a peaceful way etc.

Individual's commitment to self-education, focus on professional activity, self-awareness as a party to social work are some of the most significant indicators of the development of this motive. The main values and motives for a future mediator include the respect for people regardless of their social status, recognition of the unique and individual nature of each conflict situation, commitment to ethical behavior in relationships, and willingness to develop the values of non-violent communication.

Y. Melnychuk analyzes the fundamental principles of the mediation process (such as responsibility, confidentiality, independence, voluntariness, and humanism) which, in our opinion, are also important for the training of future social workers to implement the mediation practice (Melnychuk, 2016).

As part of the training process of future social workers, their attitude towards their clients and their professional ethics are built and developed by using various training activities, case studies and discussions of social situations and by the involvement of students into practical work under the supervision of their mentors – mediation practitioners (Turner, 2017).

In the system of professional training of future social workers, the non-violent mindset is built by encouraging students to join various initiatives and mass events related to the practice of peaceful conflict resolution, creative teams and art groups at their educational institution and creative writing programs and by diagnosing the level of students' proneness to conflict, holding seminars and training on tolerance building as well as by determining the role of the social worker's personality in the prevention of violence in the community (Rubin, A., & Babbie, 2016; O'Connor, 2015).

We define that the key values and motives underlying the attitude to the mediation practice include: one's personality-oriented attitude to the profession; an individual approach to mediation, one's commitment to professional creative endeavors, self-improvement and self-development; recognition that one's activities are an important means of self-realization and self-affirmation; awareness of the personal and social significance of the mediation practice; the priority of this work in the context of a military conflict; readiness to maintain the image and authority of one's profession. It should be noted that the involvement of students in preventive initiatives, mediator training camps, social worker intervention teams, and other activities that could bring them closer to practice encourage their motivation to master their profession.

With the axiological criterion, we can diagnose whether a student has sustainable social values, how deep is his/her professional self-awareness and awareness of his/her role as a future mediator. The student's internal conviction that peaceful conflict resolution is a socially important

activity demonstrates a high level of development of the motivational component of future social workers' readiness to implement mediation.

The content of the personal component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation lies in the development of personal qualities that would help them to resolve conflicts in an efficient way. In their studies, V. Bocharova, I. Zymna, A. Kapska, and R. Ovcharova analyze the basic qualities that a social worker/teacher must have.

In our opinion, the skills and qualities which are important for a future mediator include: empathy, communicability, mindfulness, attentiveness, respect for interlocutors; authority and persuasiveness, tolerance, benevolence, self-confidence, tactfulness, empathic attitude, correctness, endurance, psychological flexibility, dignity, optimism, patience, justice, honesty, willingness to help, humane attitude towards people, high cultural level, good manners, decency, kindness, humanity, mercy, logical thinking, erudition, broad outlook, critical (analytical) thinking, specificity, persuasiveness, objectivity, self-possession, common sense, competence and professionalism, intuition, sense of harmony, etc.

It should also be noted that future social workers should develop one more quality for their professional practice – neutrality. This means that a mediator should act equally in the interests of both parties, regardless of their age, gender, social status, race, skin color, language, religion, political or any other beliefs, national or social origin, property status, status at birth or any other status, and should have no personal interest in a particular way to resolve a conflict (Pranis et al., 2008).

All these qualities help a mediator to actively interact with other parties involved in the mediation process, enhance motivation to the chosen profession, creative rethinking and use of peacebuilding practice, and encourage students to search for innovative approaches and develop their own style of work.

A personality-related criterion diagnoses the level of intellectual, organizational, leadership, business, and other qualities required for a student to work in the field of peaceful conflict resolution. Knowledge and internal acceptance of the moral norms of behavior and activity based on mediator's goals and objectives, opportunities and available instruments are important for a future specialist. We define this criterion as a separate one because a student who has broad knowledge and skills and is committed to work in the future as a mediator, but lacks the appropriate qualities required for this profession will not be able to perform his/her functions at a high professional level.

The information component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation means that a student has the appropriate knowledge of psychology, the humanities and the law, which will help him/her to organize the mediation process. This component allows students to acquire the necessary system of knowledge, which improves the efficiency of implementing various forms and methods of professional activity to achieve a specific goal, allow them to plan their own activities and evaluate their performance.

The knowledge that a future social worker committed to implement the mediation practice should master can be divided by two groups: theoretical and methodological (Package of Educational Programs, 2018). Theoretical knowledge includes: a conceptual and terminological framework related to mediation issues; history of mediation development; understanding on how violence affects the level of social well-being; fundamentals and principles of peacebuilding; root causes and internal structure of a conflict; stages of conflict resolution; conflict resolution styles; the concept of restorative practices; main models of conflict prevention; legal and regulatory framework of mediation, etc.

Methodical knowledge include: the method of psychological and pedagogical diagnostics of the level of conflict of a personality and a group; the specifics of the implementation of restorative practices; the specifics of restorative communication; principles, means, and methods of collecting, systematizing, generalizing and using information at mediation meetings; rules for an effective initial meeting with the parties; causes and signs of mediator's emotional exhaustion; features and innovative approaches to conflict transformation; principles of mediation; stages of mediation; signs of "problem" participants of the mediation process; the specifics of organizing the promotion of mediation in communities; restorative practice "The Circle"; ethical requirements to the mediator working for the reconciliation service; the technology of mediation support for mediation participants in the post-conflict period; forms and methods of social and educational work to prevent conflicts; a methodology of work with pedagogical staff on the creation of a peaceful educational environment; the mechanism of activity of the Reconciliation Services; requirements for the selection of conflict situations for mediation; success criteria for reconciliation service and others.

The cognitive criterion demonstrates to what extent a student has acquired the theoretical knowledge of the implementation of mediation and peacebuilding in the community. Using this knowledge, a student can effectively implement the principles of restorative approach in the practice of a social worker (a systematic approach to the resolution of conflict situations, which involves the restoration of conflict-affected socio-psychological state, ties and relationships in the life of its participants and their social environment, and the improvement of the situation caused by the conflict (Karnozova, 2009)).

The deeper and more thoroughly a student understands the problem, the higher is his/her motivation to continue learning, the more professional he/she will approach practical problems and the more successful will be the results of his/her activities. In this context, this knowledge is the main element for acquiring practical skills.

The activity-related component of the future social workers' readiness includes the practical experience in mediation and restorative techniques in social work (knowledge of mediation techniques and methods, forms and methods of working with clients in the process of the mediation support). The level of development of this component depends on how a student is active in his/her practice as a social worker (volunteering and practical training at social institutions).

A future mediator should develop certain practical skills, so/he she could find information about the negative consequences of conflicts and violence and use it as part of his/her basic educational or training material; select and use the necessary information for the educational work in the community; study and adapt the best mediation practice; create an atmosphere of trust to promote efficient communication; select the optimal ways and methods of communicating with clients; identify the root causes for conflict behavior; select appropriate diagnostic tools; introduce non-violent patterns of behavior; prevent and deescalate conflict situations in everyday life; analyze the structure of a conflict; identify the gender component in a conflict; prevent discrimination on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, cultural characteristics, religion, or disability; practice restorative communication; predict possible ways out of a conflict situation; be patient while communicating with clients; predict client behavior during mediation and post-conflict period; be able to feel the internal state of the client; apply techniques of empathy; demonstrate the principles of peacebuilding by own example and authority; use the rehabilitation practice "The Circle"; organize informational and educational events to raise awareness of mediation, restorative practices, and peaceful resolution of conflicts; plan and organize mediation meetings; make a self-analysis of his/her professional competence; critically evaluate the adequacy and feasibility of his/her

activities; see and understand the positive and negative aspects of his/her activities; analyze the results of his/her work; and continue self-education.

According to the performance criterion, we evaluate the skills and competences developed by students and required for them to implement the practice of mediation in their social work. These skills and competences allow them to choose the most efficient ways of interaction and communication with a client, to transform a conflict, and to overcome difficulties on the way to a win-win conflict resolution.

Therefore, the developed components, criteria, indicators, and the levels will allow us to comprehensively study to what extent students attending the Social Work Educational Program are ready to implement mediation.

2. Materials and methods

The proposed diagnostic techniques were applied to explore the specific components of readiness to implement mediation.

We studied the motivational component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation using the diagnostic method "Motivation to Studies at a HEI" (T.N. Ilyina). This methodology allowed us to determine the level of students' motivation to study their future profession. Another advantage is that it defines the indicators using the scales: "acquisition of knowledge" (curiosity); "mastering the profession" (commitment to master professional knowledge and build qualities important for the profession); and "obtaining a diploma" (commitment to search for workarounds when passing exams and credits). Our findings help to determine the type of the student's motivation and to search for appropriate incentives (external and internal) to enhance students' interest in the practice of mediation.

"Methodology for Studying the Motives in Educational Activity" (A.A. Rean revised by V.A. Yakunin) studied various motives of students, such as communicative, professional, educational, cognitive, social motives and motives of creative self-realization and avoidance of failures. It is this classification that gives a complete picture of how much the student is interested in developing his/her knowledge, skills and competences in mediation.

The personal component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation was studied using the method "Diagnostics of One's Proneness to Conflict Behavior" (K. Tomas, adapted by N. Grishina).

This method allowed us to trace the respondent's personal position in a conflict and the main style of his/her behavior in a conflict situation. We also had an opportunity to explore the way how a person responds to a conflict, e.g. competition (one's desire to achieve one's interests to the detriment of others); adaptation (unlike the competition, this is the sacrifice of one's own interests for the sake of others); compromise; avoidance (no commitment to cooperate and achieve one's goals); and cooperation (when the parties come to an alternative solution that fully satisfies the interests of both). Notably that any of these responses to a conflict helps to analyze how a conflict is actually perceived by a person. And, when necessary, these methods help to adjust one's behavioral tactics in a conflict situation, which is very important for a future mediator.

The methodology described in "Assessment of the Competency Level in Conflict Resolution" (P. Heppner, I. Petersen) determines the level of one's competence in conflict science which is built on the basis of social, individual and personal levels of professional activity.

The informational component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation was studied using the set of diagnostic tools developed by the author. The results of the proposed methodology were assessed using the ESTC scale.

The training and diagnostic test "Mediation in the Social Sphere" contains multiple-choice tests (50 tasks with three answers and a correct one) and open-end tasks (25 tasks to which a student should give a correct answer). It was the tests that made it possible to individualize the process of controlling the acquisition of knowledge and to check the level of knowledge of the theoretical and methodological material in an unbiased way.

The socio-pedagogical dictation "Conflict Prevention" contained 50 open-ended tasks. For each sentence of the dictation, a student can get points from 0 to 5 corresponding to the following criteria: scientific rigor (n), completeness of the presentation (p), and creative approach (t).

The activity-related component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation was studied using "Methodology for Diagnosing the Level of Development of Reflection" (O. Karopva). This methodology helped us to determine the level of students' reflectivity (the ability to analyze and study something by comparing one's "I" with events and personalities learned). It was important for us to study how future social workers are inclined to analyze their and others' activities and actions and to find out the causes and consequences of their actions in the past and in the future since it is crucial for a future mediator to think about and plan his/her activities in the smallest detail and predict all possible consequences.

The methodology "Detection and Evaluation of Communicative and Organizational Abilities (COS-1)" diagnoses how one's communicative and organizational abilities manifest. The success of the professional activities of social workers depends on their ability to establish a productive relationship with an individual or a group and to organize them for the accomplishment of their tasks.

The COS-1 method is based on the principles of reflection and evaluation of certain features of one's behavior in different situations. The selected situations are familiar with a subject from his/her personal experience. Therefore, the assessment of the situation and behavior in this situation is based on how a subject reproduces his/her real behavior and the real attitude, experienced in his/her real life. Based on these assumptions, this projective questionnaire helps to identify sustainable indicators of communicative and organizational abilities. The peculiarity of the projective method lies in the fact that a subject, so to speak, designs his/her qualities, in particular his/her own behavior, in the situation proposed by the researcher.

Interviewing was used as an additional method for collecting information. Interviews were conducted by recording the respondents' answers to the standardized list of questions related to their training and future professional activities.

3. Results

As part of our empirical study, we diagnosed the level of development of the main components of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation in the social work. The sample comprised 118 respondents (fourth-year students, bachelor's degree program).

The assessment of the motivational component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation allowed us to determine that the principles of peacebuilding become ever more important for the young in today's socio-economic conditions (an armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine, ever-increasing number of bullying situations among peers, high levels of social tension, etc.).

Future social workers with a highly developed motivational component (28.8%) demonstrated an ongoing interest to mediation and pro-active approach to educational and professional activities. Such students positioned themselves as future specialists in the social sector, as change agents. In this group, respondents showed interest in the possibilities of implementing mediation in professional activities. Among future social workers with a high level of development of this criterion, the educational-cognitive motive (38.9%), the social motive (49.4%) and the professional motive (35.5%) were the most developed motives.

As shown by the study of the development of indicators of the motivational component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation, a significant percentage of students (34.7%) demonstrate a medium level of development of this component. This situation can be explained by the low educational activity of respondents who have only short and spontaneous contacts with their professional sphere. Those students who interested in mediation in their professional activities, they did not consider it important. Among the motives, communicative motives (30.5%) and prestige (26.2%) prevail in this group of respondents. Therefore, such students can easily network in their educational and professional activities if people they communicate with are really important for them.

The motives of creative self-realization (24.5%) and avoidance (23.7%) are the main motives for social workers with a poorly developed motivational component (36.5%). As a rule, these respondents have chosen the profession of a social worker by mistake.

A significant portion of students demonstrated their motivation to obtain a diploma (46.6%), while the indicator "acquisition of knowledge" prevailed in 20.3% of respondents. The reasons for such results may be associated with the low prestige of the social worker's profession. This profession could be chosen by mistake or a student may lack vision and understanding of the work of a social worker, etc.

Students with a highly developed personal component of readiness to implement mediation (25.5%) were characterized by the qualities essential for the work as a mediator. These respondents demonstrated their commitment to self-improvement of the traits of their character. Most of them had the experience of solving their own conflicts. Thus, 16.9% of students choose cooperation as the main conflict resolution tactics, while 15.2% prefer to seek a compromise.

Students with a poorly developed information component (44.9%) tend to have limited knowledge of conflict science, do not know and cannot explain the basic terms, had difficulties in matching the contents and stages of mediation, and did not see the prospects of implementation of mediation in their professional activities.

Respondents with a highly developed activity-related component of the future social workers' readiness to implement mediation (21.1%) are committed to improve their own skills and competences in implementing restorative practices in their professional activities. They considered themselves ready to work in peacebuilding and to promote peaceful resolution of conflicts. Respondents with a high level of development of the activity-related component have well-developed communication skills (high (16.1%) and very high (13.5%)), organizational skills (high (15.2%) and very high (7.6%)). Their level of reflection is promising (29.7%). As a rule, they can plan and forecast possible outcomes (especially important for mediation).

Future social workers with a moderately developed activity-related component (24.5%) demonstrated a constructive approach to the organization of mediation. Though they lacked sufficient communication skills (moderate level – 23.7% and below moderate level – 24.5%) and organizational (moderate level – 21.1% and below moderate level – 28.1%), they demonstrated strong commitment to improve their skills and competences. Their reflection skills were

retrospective (36.5%) as they demonstrated an ability to analyze the work done, lessons learned and their impact on their performance.

A significant number of respondents (54.2%) show a low level of development of this component. In practice, such students demonstrated some skills which are essential for the implementation of mediation, but showed their non-readiness to act as a mediator. Their ability to reflect is rather situational (33.1%) and allows them to analyze themselves in the situation “here and now”.

Having examined the future social workers’ readiness to implement mediation by certain components, criteria, and levels (Fig. 1), having considered the students' needs in studying the fundamentals of peacebuilding, and considering the interest of most respondents to the practice of mediation, we came to the conclusion that it is necessary to increase the number of forms and methods of practical training to help future social workers to gain successful experience in peaceful conflict resolution during their studies at HEIs.

The conclusions about the need to determine the stages of formation of readiness to implement mediation in the social sector, which can be implemented as part of the professional training, are considered important for further research.

4. Discussion

Our findings allow us to conclude that the readiness for work in the field of mediation does not arise itself – it develops and is shaped as a result of the acquisition of knowledge, experience, practical skills and competences, qualities, positively focused activities, and awareness of needs and motives. Therefore, as any complex activities deployed in time, the training of specialists to implement the practice of mediation requires students to work their way through several stages:

1. Introduction to mediation. First, students learn what the work of a social worker involves; develop their own idea of the role of mediation in the social work and the institutions where such practice can be used. An important emphasis is placed on creative forms of work with students, which develop emotional and positive impressions about peacebuilding and encourage their interest to this activity. It is also important that students directly communicate with mediation practitioners who will share their expertise.

2. Interest formation. Students develop an interest in mediation and how it is implemented. They develop self-identification as a future mediator and analyze how their own knowledge, skills, competences and qualities match the requirements to the mediator. At this stage, the student's ability to mobilize all his/her efforts to effectively organize his/her own educational process is very important.

3. The stage of theoretical knowledge is a step when students acquire the basic knowledge required to implement the practice of mediation. This is the stage of active cognitive activity of future social workers and self-education in the field of social work. Students should be involved in activities that would allow them to gain a significant amount of knowledge and to use their knowledge in practice (trainings, case studies, role games, discussions, active social and psychological training, etc.).

4. The stage of practical learning is characterized by student’s commitment to improve their own skills and competences in mediation. Students have an opportunity to implement their knowledge in practice. It is important to actively interact with mediation services and organizations to share experiences and expertise. Future social workers learn how to work with a client (in a pair with a practitioner mediator) as part of his/her practical trainings at organizations of the social

sector. It is at this stage where students have an opportunity to evaluate their communicative and organizational skills, to simulate their professional activities and, if appropriate, to adjust their personal image as a mediator.

5. The productive stage involves the development of skills for the transformation of conflict, which can be called ‘creativity in the process of mediation’. Students learn to see different ways of resolving the conflict, and, thanks to their skills of working with clients, can encourage them to peacefully resolve disputes. This stage is also characterized by students’ willingness to search for opportunities for self-development (exchange programs, trainings, seminars and conferences). Now, future social workers have a complete picture of how a mediator works, what are the benefits and risks of such activities, and how mediation can be implemented in social work.

6. Supervision stage. This period characterizes a student as a mediation specialist able to provide mentor support to less experienced students. However, it is important to provide future social workers with supervisory support in their practice to prevent emotional burnout. They actively participate in peacebuilding, initiate and conduct various events and flash mobs to promote mediation. Undergraduate students organize introductory classes and share their experience in mediation.

Each stage affects the formation of the components of the future social workers’ readiness to implement mediation. It should be noted that not all students pass these stages. Quite a large number of future social workers remain at the stage of practical learning. Such division is certainly conditional, because each student can move to another stage more slowly or more quickly depending on his/her individual abilities and background.

5. Conclusions

The components of future social workers’ readiness to implement mediation as outlined above are focused on the development of personal qualities, knowledge, skills and competences required for a mediator. The results of the study of each component by the level of development allowed us to identify the stages of the formation of students’ readiness to implement mediation. The active involvement of students in the professional activities of mediators is the main condition to train future mediators from among students attending the Social Work Educational Program.

Abbreviations:

LU – Law of Ukraine

CSSFCY – Center of Social Services for Family, Children and the Youth

HEI – higher educational institution

COS – communicative and organizational skills

Components	Criterion	Level	Indicators of readiness
Motivational	Axiological criterion	High	The well-understood and well-formed value system; the peacebuilding values are an integral element of the student's personal and professional position; the peaceful settlement of a conflict is a deep personal conviction. A student is highly interested in the role of a mediator in the social sector.
		Moderate	Partly formed value system; the peacebuilding values are present in the student's view of life, but are not followed as a top priority. In certain life situations, student's behavior rejects these values. Motivated to implement the practice of mediation.
		Low	Absolutely unmotivated to peacebuilding. The implementation of mediation is not considered as a professional activity, since it is not supported by the system of student's personal values.
Personal	Personality criterion	High	Mediator's qualities are seen in student's educational activities and everyday life and are the main features of the student's character. Committed to improve the mediator's qualities.
		Moderate	Some personal traits can be seen in response to external factors, less often than in response to internal motives. They are not prominent traits of character. A student has to make significant efforts to improve these traits.
		Low	Specific qualities are insufficient and can be shown from time to time (under the influence of incentives). These qualities are developed poorly so a student cannot function as a mediator. No commitment to improve them.
Informational	Cognitive criterion	High	Acquires knowledge of conflict science quickly and eagerly; has broad knowledge on how to overcome conflicts and understands and easily uses the terminology. Improves the knowledge base through self-education; understands the need for practical activity.
		Moderate	Studies only what is interesting; understands main categories of conflict science and does not have a clear understanding of these categories. Does not understand the interrelations in the mediation, is not ready to support the discussion on the prevention of conflicts, since he/she has only basic knowledge.
		Low	Has limited knowledge in the field of conflict science. Does not see the need for self-education in mediation. Unable to explain the essence of the basic concepts since his/her opinion is based only on intuition and life experience. Unable to reproduce lecture material.
Activity-related	Performance criteria	High	Skills have become automatic. Competences transform into skills that are successfully applied in practice. Resolves complex mediation problems (conflicts). Shows a creative approach to conflict resolution, searches for non-standard solutions and ways to achieve a positive result for all parties to the conflict. Has an individual style of work as the mediator. Has a practical mediation experience, is mentor for less experienced mediators.
		Moderate	A student has limited (occasional) experience in mediation practice. Knows only some methods of mediation. Can cope with simple mediation cases, without proper transformation of the conflict. However, has a vision of future mediation activities in the social work.
		Low	The level of mediator's skills does not meet the standards for independent practice. Unable to build interaction with parties without mentor's support, works unsystematically and inefficiently. Cannot cope with elementary conflict situations.

Table: The components of future social workers'

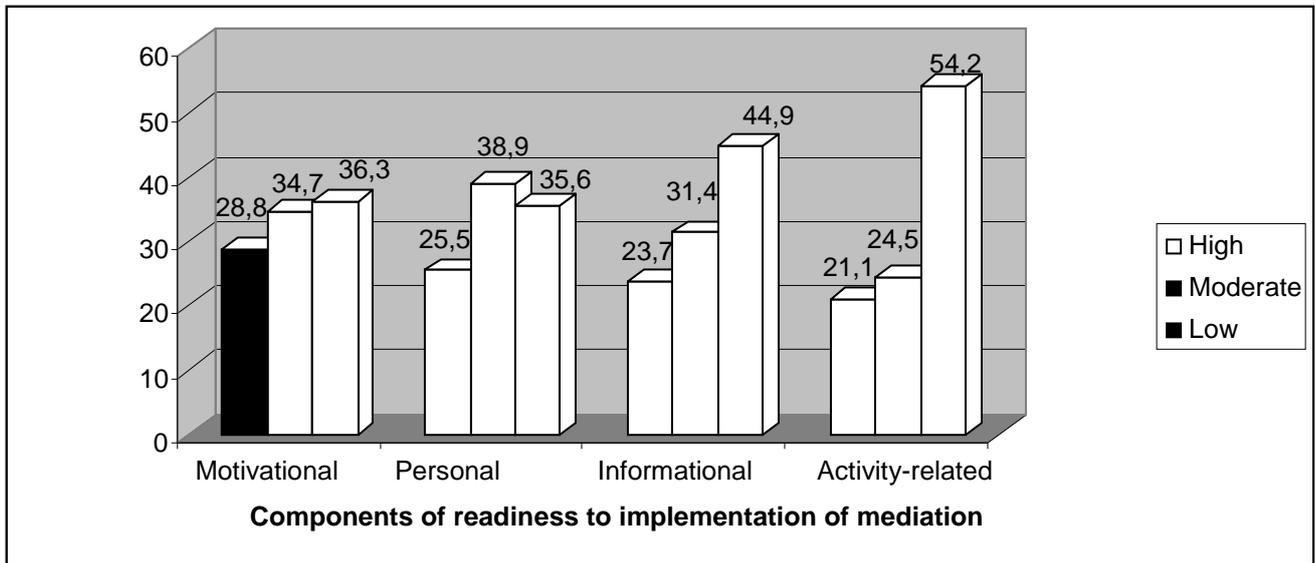


Figure. 1: Components of future social workers' readiness to implementation of mediation by level of development

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