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Requirements of Using Interactive learning in Social Work Education

As a prerequisite for getting Master Degree in Social work

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First: the problem of the study:

Social Work Education is one of the important issues in Social Work. There is an emergent need for developing the education programs so that they can allow the preparation and graduation of highly skilled practitioners who are able to deal with the new situations resulting from changes in our society. The practice of Social Work profession needs the knowledge that enables the practitioner to define goals, functions, and finding out solutions. The professional skills are formed through accumulated experiences acquired by the practitioner throughout his practice of different professional activities. This can be achieved through an educational content that helps in the preparation of generations of practitioners able to afford the future development loads and from whom the society can achieve the maximum benefits, with a guarantee of their sustainability.

Although the importance of the education of social work as a human profession whose achievements are utilized for social protection and development in different fields, the reality of social work education indicates an obvious shortage. This was clearly realized by the researcher during his own preparation period as a practitioner, and come to be more concrete through his field practice. This shortage is concerned to the curricula that are not consistent with the real professional practice and the contemporary changes, or to the learning styles and educational patterns used for theoretical and practical preparation of social workers in all aspects of knowledge, skills and values.

Various new methods of learning have been emerged, such as, continuous/lifelong learning, computerized learning, e-learning, distant learning, individualized learning, peer learning, in-setting learning, cooperative learning, and interactive learning.

Interactive learning, as a teaching method, is a new method that focuses on learner's role, and shifts the learner situation from just a negative receiver of knowledge to a positive participant in the learning process. It also focuses on forming a unique learning environment for each learner, in which previously learned experiences are linked to the current learning situation. It also provides the learner with opportunities to express his/her own views, to participate actively in building his/her own experiences, and to interact with colleagues in a positive and cooperative way in which he/she assumes some kind of responsibility. It also argues students and encourages them to depend on themselves in searching and investigation about knowledge and information so that they can acquire the necessary skills, experiences and ability to solve problems and make decisions under the direction and guidance of the teacher.

Accordingly, we can say that the problem of the current study can be stated that the social work education has a clear shortage in various aspects including, as some examples, the inconsistency of curricula with the nature of the social reality and its recent changes; the obvious gap between the academic study and the field reality in many fields of professional practice. The social work graduates are not qualified enough to satisfy the requirements of labor market. Finally, the traditional teaching methods used in social work education and social workers' preparation are not

suitable for preparing the competent social workers who are able to compete in the open and practical environment. This calls for the necessity of paying more attention to the development and improvement of social work education; and to the desirable quality. This cannot be done through the traditional methodologies that help in achieving this goal. The interactive learning is one those modern methodologies that can achieve more positive educational outcome. It is a method that depends on active and interactive environment based on discussion and participation between students and teaching staff members.

This can contribute in the enhancement of social work education, which led the researcher to study requirements of using this method as an initial step towards the development of social work education. Accordingly, the problem of the current study is limited to the investigation of interactive learning in social work education.

II- Goals of the Study:

The study is based on a main goal that is "to identify the requirements of using the interactive learning in social work education".

There some sub-goals that stem from this main goal, as the following:

- 1- To identify the requirements that should exist in *a teaching staff member* when using the interactive learning in social work education.
- 2- To identify the requirements that should exist in *a social work student* when using the interactive learning in social work education.

- 3- To identify the requirements that should exist in *curricula* when using the interactive learning in social work education.
- 4- To identify the requirements that should exist in *learning environment* when using the interactive learning in social work education.
- 5- To identify the most widespread teaching methods that are recently used in social work education when using the interactive learning.

III- Questions of the Study:

The current study has attempted to answer a main question, that is, "**What are the requirements of using the *Interactive Learning in Social Work Education?***".

This question could be answered through answering the following sub-questions:

- 1- What are the requirements that should exist in *a teaching staff member* when using the interactive learning in social work education?
- 2- What are the requirements that should exist in *a social work student* when using the interactive learning in social work education?
- 3- What are the requirements that should exist in *curricula* when using the interactive learning in social work education?
- 4- What are the requirements that should exist in *learning environment* when using the interactive learning in social work education?

- 5- What are the most widespread teaching methods that are recently used in social work education when using the interactive learning?

IV- Terminology of the Study:

1. Requirements,
2. Education,
3. Interaction,
4. Social Work Education, and
5. Interactive Learning.

V- Methodology of the Study:

1. **Type of the study:**

This study belongs to the analytical descriptive studies.

2. **The Method:**

The study was based on the comprehensive social survey
beside case study methodology.

3. **Tools of the Study:**

- a. ***Data-Collection tools:***

The researcher used two main instruments to collect data
from the field of the study:

- 1- A form to measure the requirements of using the *Interactive Learning* in Social Work Education, and
- 2- A guide for experts to identify the requirements of using the *Interactive Learning* in Social Work Education.

b. *Data-Analysis tools:*

The researcher depended on the *Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS-18)* for analyzing the data of the study.

VI- Fields of the Study:

Place: all the faculties and institutions of Social Work in Egypt (4 faculties and 12 institutions for social work), and also the department of Curricula and Teaching Methodology in Faculty of Education, Fayoum university.

Human Scope: all the members of teaching staff in faculties and institutions of social work in Egypt (341 staff members and 35 experts).

Time Scope: the study took about a year and four months, beginning from December 2013 till March 2015.

VI- Results of the Study:

The study could identify a set of requirements that should exist when using the interactive learning in social work education.

These requirements are as the following:

a) Requirements belongs to teaching staff:

- 1- Ability to stimulate the motivation for achievement in students,
- 2- Ability to enhance the positive competition among students,
- 3- Ability to help students face problems during their learning.

b) Requirements belongs to students:

- 1- The health of personal aspects of a student (physiological, psychological, mental and social aspects).

2- Ability to utilize the knowledge and information gained education.

3- Preparation for assuming responsibility during education.

c) ***Requirements belongs to curricula:***

1. The curricula in social work education should encourage students on individual investigation and to increase their knowledge.
2. The social work education's courses should include different societal issues.
3. The social work education's courses should include various practical applications based on theoretical aspects.

d) ***Requirements related to the learning environment:***

1. The learning environment should contribute to the improvement of cooperation value among students and teaching staff.
2. The learning environment should be provided with the necessary equipment such as, *facilities, healthy air, lights...etc.*
3. The learning environment should contribute to enhancing the value of assuming social responsibilities among students.

e) ***Requirements related to teaching methods:***

1. Conducting collective research
2. Dividing students into groups
3. Problem solving.