The Role of Social Pedagogy in a Digitalized Society

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Abstract

This article highlights and problematizes the social pedagogical knowledge domain as a resource in inclusion work that aims to increase opportunities to become active citizens in a digitalized society. Throughout history, people have concerned themselves with how people can live and work together in an inclusive society that encourages cooperative and productive bonds. This question is highly relevant in contemporary digitalized society, a society characterized by growing social differentiation and increasing individualisation. One, maybe obvious, solution is to provide people the opportunity to participate in various social communities, creating conditions for a more inclusive society. An inclusive society provides all citizens equal opportunities to education, housing, work, and consumer participation. When people are not provided these equal opportunities, society becomes exclusionary. And if an individual is excluded from one of these basic needs (e.g., the labour market), the opportunities to participate in other areas are also reduced. Research, political discussions, and educational assessments are increasingly questioning society's role with respect to inclusion. As a result, this article specifically questions how well placed social pedagogy is in light of the increasing pressures and challenges placed upon our clients, work context and models of practice by various types changes that are brought through increasing digitalization. The article begins with a brief overview of how to understand the modern society. It then moves into an examination of influential theoretical frameworks and concepts inclusion, identity and acknowledgement. From this foundation I proceed to scrutinize the origin ideas of social pedagogy and finally, I reflect on theoretical pathways for change that might be employed to address the current intimidations and challenges that digitalization has posed for social pedagogy, both in research and in practice.

Keywords

Digitalisation, Social Pedagogy, Social Development, Digitalised Society

1. The Modern Society Conditions

Today's society is characterized by an increasingly fragmented, differentiated, and diverse society, with for examples increased differences in income, living conditions and health (Dahlgren, 2010; Moor, et al, 2015). Unlike pre-war, the social body is to a higher extent divided into several smaller social arenas that are more or less loosely linked (Bauman,

2019). We are required to manage multiple roles in parallel and as we live in a more digital world we interact in social media where roles such as for example consumers, producers, workers, employers, parents, children, and neighbours, meet in time and place. We create profiles on social network sites and Twitter accounts against the background of an audience, which in the long run means that Social media might involve a collapse of definitions of social contexts and social roles, complicating boundary work but facilitating social surveillance. Individuals strategically reveal, disclose and conceal personal information to create connections with others and tend social boundaries. These processes are normal parts of day-to-day life in communities that are highly connected through digital technologies.

The admission criterions for entry to a community do not only contain a utilitarian aspect but also require a degree of action capacity. In each of these areas, we must act appropriately for a specific role. For example, being a parent requires a different approach than being a neighbour, but all those roles simultaneously meet in our Facebook-profile. That is, a person's role depends on context. In a sense, contemporary society includes all of us, because it does not require more of us than functioning in specific ways in specific situations. In addition, modern society also seems to depersonalize participants in the system where the individual as a person becomes less important. It is the benefits we bring, the qualities and qualifications, that count, and how well we can act without introducing disturbances in the system (Bauman, 2008), a volatility that highly characterizes digitalized modern society.

We address both things to consume, human relationships and values, and if we are not satisfied, we can change. Such an approach implies that we are all interchangeable. But in a society that appeals to its members as consumers, our role as public relations agents for ourselves becomes increasingly important. This self-promotion, nevertheless in social media, can enhance the process of a modern society as it develops the expectations and identities of social roles rather than of individuals. That is, society can only relate to participants engaged in the system. If we do not exist in a system, we will not be seen; therefore, social pedagogy must problematize and analyse the access to these arenas, physical as well as digital, because, as argued by Kornbeck and Rosendal Jensen (2009), it is only there that the basis for categorization of who is inside and outside can be revealed. Herein lies also a presumptive risk of marginalization and exclusion; the fewer systems we participate in, the greater the risk we will become invisible?

2. The Role for Social Pedagogy in Social Development

The concept of social pedagogy was developed in the 19th century as an answer to the societal needs of pedagogy that went beyond educational institutions (Hämäläinen, 1989, 2015, 2019). Social pedagogy became a response to the needs that arise when a society faces major changes that affect the relationship between the individual and society. Just this relationship implied the need of a societal pedagogical strategy to prevent social exclusion and marginalization. This preventive strategy was intended to decrease the risk of the society becoming fragmented, a condition that inevitably would lead to isolation of certain groups. Therefore, social pedagogy can be said to be an integration concept that not only focuses on education but also on the community writ large (Hämäläinen, 2019).

Natorp (1904) argued that social pedagogy should focus on the social conditions that improve people's lives and encourage social life. When Natorp made these observations, the main concern was human communities. In this context, social pedagogy concerns itself with a larger social structure and emphasises factors concerning individuality and demands for equality and justice regarding participation in division of labour, politics, and social life management. Such focus requires examining the existing and developing actors, structures, and the socio-economic conditions that influence education and community building (Madsen, 2009; Kurten-Vartio, 2005; Mathiesen, 2008). And just as Janer and Ucar (217) finds, social pedagogy aims to responds and develop knowledge and strategies to reveal and overcome accurate social problems and conflicts in society to support integration of people and groups. This social aspect is a

fundamental concept of social pedagogy as social pedagogy concerns itself with resolving the social problems associated with issues evolving from digitalization.

To meet the challenges of digitalization, social pedagogy is under pressure to develop its theoretical and philosophical basis, design strategies that engage practitioners for problem-solving, collaboration, and knowledge construction. Practitioners working with youth may be at the forefront of this digital challenge since young people are more likely than other age groups to use the Internet and for many, Internet is part of daily life today, and it has almost fully penetrated the youth age groups in some countries. However, despite an increasing use of digital technologies in social pedagogical work, evidence about the effectiveness of using those, or being affected by digital technologies is loosely organized. We need more research that examines the various needs and changed conditions that is brought by digitalization in society.

But how can we understand the pedagogical dimension in social pedagogy? There are several definitions of pedagogy, but common way of approaching pedagogy is as the art and science (and maybe even craft) of teaching (Moss and Petrie, 2019). Such definition is quite narrow as it, for example, fails to honour the historical experience, and to connect crucial areas of theory and practice. Further, according to Dewey (1963), all forms of education that support development requires learning how to do things. Thereafter, one should build on that knowledge by encouraging people to put what they have learned into words. But then another question is raised, what is learning? One explanation can be provided by Säljö (2000, p. 151) who says "Learning is about becoming involved in knowledge and skills and to be able to use them productively in the context of social practices and activity systems (my translation)". As Säljö points out, there is a relation between experiences generated from involvement and participation, the development of knowledge and the capability to use such knowledge in a certain situation, within a certain activity. From my point of view, this means that the social and cultural contexts in which learning occurs and where knowledge is expressed are important to take into account.

One can say that Dewey (1963) had a community-oriented pedagogy, as he believed that education could serve a wider purpose – to compensate and equalize social inequalities. That is similar to social pedagogy as it aims to reduce social gaps and endorse equality (Hämäläinen, 2019). Dewey argued that if knowledge is to have real meaning, it must also be useful and one could say that his pedagogical understanding is based on the view that human beings learn by doing with others – i.e., learning is a social activity. The willingness to participate in the collective is strongly associated with socio-cultural theory as defined by Säljö (2013) and Vygotsky (1999). Such focus on practical and utilitarian knowledge implies that for learning and knowledge to be relevant, knowledge must be seen from wider perspectives (Moss and Petrie, 2019).

I would argue that one of the biggest challenges concerning contemporary society is to learn how to use or control the new digital technology. From this follows that socialisation as well as the life itself more and more takes place in the use of digital technologies, in the interaction between humans, materials and conceptual systems. As the digital technology, to some extent, responds to the human user, it also becomes an interactive part that out of pre-programmed functions even pre-structures how the user can or should make sense of it. That does not mean, from the point of view in this article, that the technology itself can be ascribed the changes that occur in society. Instead, in order to understand activities, societal development and citizens living conditions in transition, one must study the technology in use where the social and the material are inherently are intertwined in practice (Orlikowski, 2007).

3. Inclusion and Spaciousness

Globalizhe path into a social community has historically been a central issue for social pedagogy and investigating

integration was the way social pedagogy attempted to answer this question (Hämäläinen, 2013). However, today's society has other qualifications as it is no longer clear what to be integrated into and other concepts have emerged as increasingly important, such as digital inclusion. Although integration is often used to describe a process or a state where the parts have been adapted to the whole, the concept of inclusion really means the whole is being developed to accommodate the parts. Madsen (2005) argues that there is a social pedagogic basic idea of a "spacious" society where there is room for everyone, regardless of social background, special needs, or cultural affiliation:

> The basic justification of social pedagogy lies in the adoption of, or acceptance of, that people live in different worlds, but in the creation of conditions so that people can live differently in the world.
>
> (Madsen, 2005. Page 12, my translation)

Character his view implies that the world has to adapt (open up) for each individual regardless of his or her conditions and needs rather than the individual being forced to adapt to and normalize into the world. Such an approach would require various types of educational and social efforts. If we consider a society based on the idea of the importance of participation in social arenas, it also means we understand that the degree of our experience of participation and inclusion depends on whether we are welcomed or denied access not only to physical social arenas, but to digital social arenas as well. Creating spaciousness by inclusion might therefore be an aspect of how contemporary social pedagogy can serve the late contemporary society.

Digital technologies provide both infrastructure for, and key propulsion of, new forms of communities. Broadly speaking, digital technologies embraces a range of tools and media that provide the infrastructure for communication and includes devices such as smartphones, tablets and computers with all capacity for instant information-sharing and social networking. Of course, digital technologies are widespread but not universal and there are large parts of the population who do not have access or interest in such devices. But still, from a generic perspective, digital technology changes communication patterns nevertheless since they are independent of place and gives access to overwhelming amount of information. As one can partake in groups of certain interest all over the globe, it also builds relationships with people.

The recognition of the existence and role of parallel and competing global networks, across and in-between different sites of exchange and communication, invites a number of key questions, which need to be taken up for the development of social pedagogy: (a) How are peoples identity created and maintained within and between digital communities? (b) How are the processes of identity and community formation digital contributing to people's visibility offline? (c) How can we re-conceptualize the transformation of social spaces in the Digital Age? These questions embrace both social pedagogy as fields of practice and of research and clarify and reinforce the need for cooperation between the fields.

Regardless of its purpose or form, the subsistence of social pedagogy largely depends on its ability to attract and retain society's respect for handling social dilemmas that occur. Today, society's have the privilege of benefitting from social pedagogical contributions for understanding, explaining and managing issues of inclusion and social development. But one central aspect of societal development and citizens' inclusion that not has been elaborated is what the introduction of digital technologies implies concerning changed strategies and competences for information sharing, communication, co-ordination and organization of social pedagogical activities. Or as emphasised by Heath and Luff (2000), when it comes to the use of digital tools:

> The ways in which these tools and technologies, even basic information systems, are embedded in and depend upon practical activities within the workplace and the practices, procedures and reasoning of staff,

remain largely unknown. (p. 4)

The main issue drawn from the citation is that more studies are needed that consider how digital technologies feature in work practices and their accomplishment. And, even though the citation are relatively old the main concern remains, we still need to know more about how digital technology enter into and transform the practices, procedures and theories of social pedagogy. I suggest that instead of only thinking in terms of context, one can also think of as being involved in digital groups, as shared places. I mean that the concept sharing has a material and emotional derivation that corresponds to the ways these communities are organized.

Digital communities (Poell, Nieborg, and van Dijck, 2019) serve as providers of a variety of information, for example, how to find a restaurant, how to engage with a certain religious group, where to find the best price for a product, and many other everyday issues. This information is public in the sense that every user, whether a member or not, can have access. But even though websites provide general and generic information, the collective distribution of knowledge is often shared inside forums, where the tension between private and public sometimes seems to disappear (Fang, Li, Arain, and Bhatti, 2019). People share personal and private experiences in a fundamentally public space, as everyone in the forum can read, although some requires membership. By thinking in terms of digital inclusion, I think that social pedagogy can evolve and develop refined theoretical basis for belonging and identity that is based on sharing personal and private experiences, in digital communities.

I argue that visibility can be considered as an outcome of the inclusiveness and public-ness of these communities; being fully accessible as sites of exchange, knowledge, and support, they, for example, bring together environmental activists living all around the world. As a result, digital spaces act as sites of empowerment, allowing citizens to feel part of a larger community that shares similar feelings and forms of attachments. Moreover, networks work as gatekeepers toward different forms of friendship. As mentioned earlier, digital acquaintances can evolve into long-term offline friendships, which in turn can expand to include friends of friends, thus benefitting from other people's relations and contacts. In a nutshell, the concept of visibility not only comprises the amount of networks a football supporter can activate because of the support received within the community, which seems to make the process of integration in the local society faster and smoother, but also the social and political "consequences" of integration.

From a perspective of social pedagogy, digital communities are emerging as comfortable communities where people can feel secure, receiving a feeling of belonging that is based on sharing the experience of interest and a contentious relationship with others, which produces a generalized feeling of indifference toward a inclusive community (Kordzadeh and Warren, 2017). Moreover, if we shift from a user to a theoretical perspective Madsen (2009) suggests that the concept inclusion in social pedagogy can be understood as embracing society's underlying culture in the following ways:

● A political vision to engender communities, where all participants have the right to participate in public life – regardless of their special needs;

● A disciplinary goal for welfare professions in the efforts to create more inclusive, learning, and development environments, where all people are given access to active participation; and

● Knowledge of mechanisms that create exclusion and knowledge of mechanisms that create inclusion, including access in to a social pedagogy.

The recognition of the existence and role of parallel and competing digital networks, across and in-between different sites of belonging, invites a number of key questions, which emerge from the definition above: (a) How is peoples identity created and maintained within digital communities? (b) How are the processes of identity and community formation in digital communities contributing to identity and inclusiveness in physical sphere? (c) How can we

re-conceptualize the transformation of social spaces in the Digital Age?

4. Acknowledgement and Socialization

A key aspect for social pedagogy is acknowledgement, which according to Honneth's (1996) discussions concerning the importance of acknowledging the other as a unique person with his or her own value. This acknowledgement is not the same as "approval", which is based on authority where one party has the power to approve or disapprove the other. Individual identity can be understood as a milieu of relationship building that conveys different degrees of acknowledgement and these acknowledgements directly affect how people understand their relationship with others as well as themselves.

A prerequisite for the development of a positive identity is self-reliance, self-respect, and self-esteem, all aspects obtained through acknowledgement of the surroundings. The path to these three parts can be divided into three spheres. In the personal sphere, love manifested in close relationships forms that kind of acknowledgement that builds self-confidence. In the public sphere, acknowledgement takes the form of being respected and having access to civil rights. These rights mean that we are acknowledged as equal citizens and this affects our self-esteem. Self-esteem means we dare to take place in society and participate in the democratic process on equal terms. In the social sphere, acknowledgement of individuals helps develop a sense of belonging and social solidarity in groups, which also builds our self-esteem.

When our individual achievement and/or contribution to the groups joint achievement is acknowledged, we sense we are included – that we are good enough. Similarly, Taylor, et al. (1999) argue that one of the strongest contributing factors to the failure of multicultural societies is the lack of acknowledgement between groups. Taylor et al. (1999) argue that because other people's acknowledgement is the foundation of our identity (of our belonging), the disapproval or rejection from others is a form of exclusion that leads to social tension and ultimately social conflicts. This is increasingly happening in various digital networks and in forms other than historical, which social pedagogy must relate to and develop knowledge about.

We are being incorporated in various ways in the community to learn to act as a citizen on the basis of the norms, rights, and duties that are expected. In short, socialization is a process that results in internalization of the prevailing norms and values. However, to be a citizen in today's digital society requires partly other forms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Dufva and Dufva, 2019). To be involved in social and cultural everyday digital and physical life presumes that the socialization process involves more than just taking over existing norms and values, as today's society is so diverse and fragmented. We can no longer orient ourselves by learning from ancient traditions through imitation; we now have to rely on socialization to learn to be co-creators of our own living conditions.

But first of all, how can we understand what socialization is? I see socialization as a process in which individuals develop their own identities and distinguish themselves as individuals, so socialization contains inclusive factors. To develop as humans, we need to participate and exist in different contexts, a realisation that social pedagogy addresses. This interactional perspective means that individuals become human in relationship with others. That is, to create an "I", our own identity, we have to see ourselves in others. The interactional idea rests on the assumption that humans are social beings who by their actions relate to other people. These actions can partly be controlled and regulated by the individual from knowledge of what is expected in a specific social context, but this socialization also contributes to our self-image, our identity. Identity is thus understood not as the basic characteristic of a person but as a relationship between one person and his or her social environment. The focus of the interactional approach to socialization is not what humans are, but what humans do (Molin, Gustavsson, and Hermansson, 2008; Cameron, 2004).

What does this mean in a digital context, in social media? Goffman (2009) means that in order to choose the "right role" in a context with other people who we have not met before, we first need to study the language, gestures, facial expressions, and various external attributes that are used, accepted, and expected. Thereafter, we can define the situation and be able to develop and select our own role and performance. We choose the role both from what we want to show and what the situation requires, or whatever we believe it requires that we show. Sometimes we think more of the standards we strive to convey than the standards we "mindlessly apply" because we communicate things all the time through verbal as well as non-verbal expressions, gestures, and facial expressions: "The actions can cease to express themselves but can not cease to transfer the expression" (Goffman, 2009).

Dewey (1963) argued that we rarely or never reveal ourselves singularly and directly, but indirectly through the environment. Dewey says, in other words, that socialization takes place not only through verbal mediation of how it should be, but also through the surrounding environment as a whole. That means that people's digital socialization is a process by where one learns to form value judgements about their use of digital media and the internet (Helsper and Eynon, 2010). Both development and use of digital technologies are, as I see it, closely connected to the way we understand and see ourselves and how we act. So, simultaneously as digital technologies mediate thoughts and conceptions, they can be seen as reifications of human action. That is tantamount to Lave and Wenger (1991) who argue that the ways we use and adopt to digital technologies are closely connected to becoming a member in a community. "Understanding the technology of practice is more than learning to use tools; it is a way to connect with the history of the practice and to participate more directly in its cultural life" (Lave and Wenger, p. 101).

5. Social identity

A further aspect of socialization concerns social identity. Looking back on the late contemporary society, we can see that people often are engaged in social arenas on the Internet, where we risk being assessed on the basis of our social identity. These sorts of interactions mean that someone who is not so close to us can easily ascribe us an identity based on the external attributes and signals such as appearance, age, gender, and language. This virtual intimacy then becomes a basis of our social identity that we share with other groups or categories of people who by their external attributes signal the same as we do. This social identity also says something about our social position or status. It determines what is expected of us, how to behave in a regimented way as other people with the same characteristics in these digital communities.

The creation of identity, according to Ziehe (2003), is influenced by the increasing and widespread digitalization of society, changes that have especially influenced the way young people think about their own identity and their environment. The world simultaneously becomes both larger and smaller through digital technologies with its increased accessibility to people and cultures with global media lifestyles and values that will adapt, including the creation of identity. This influence of technology can be seen as a form of cultural release, where deep-rooted socio-cultural norms and values dissolve, which might result in an increased rootlessness and insecurity (Lips, 2013). However, this technologization of society might also result in an increased freedom to create one's own life opportunities without being subject to traditional patterns and norms.

This new form of identity-making is often expressed in the media as an individual life project. Headlines like "Appreciate your self"or "Reach your opportunities" have become increasingly common in various media and usually these headlines are based on the individual and are about the individual, not the group and the context in which the individual is a participant. Society might partly contribute to the fact that certain individuals and groups are seeking "shelter" in traditional values and belongings, whereas others affirm diversity and opportunities for freedom of the late

contemporary society means. Irrespective of the view one takes, it is the creation and development of an authentic identity that is manifested through the choice of lifestyle. One might argue that the desire for integration in today's physical society is greatly weakened since the boundaries between the physical and the digital are unclear. Therefore, there is also an increasing acceptance of social diversity, and it is largely up to the individual to manage his or her own digital identity, a responsibility that traditionally had been managed in physical society (Lips, 2013).

Of course it is important to link the overview of socialization to a process where the importance of gaining access to the various venues is central to the development of social pedagogy. If we do not get that opportunity, we are at risk of being excluded. In practice, social pedagogy have great possibility to arrange the environment to encourage the conditions that will allow everyone to actively participate in their community, even though it might be in digital arenas.

6. The Importance of Social Pedagogy in Digitalised Society

All social pedagogy should be undertaken and conducted on the basis of a process-participatory perspective where the individual is seen as a key player in the joint development of skills and participation in social life. Social pedagogy should include individual and group work. In this context, I believe that social pedagogy is about a relational perspective that proceeds from an emancipatory relationship where the role is to develop and enhance knowledge about the citizens' movement to a more central and active participation in community life. Such relational view recognizes that social pedagogy should emphasize motivation, commitment, and self-responsibility for inclusiveness and development. That is, social pedagogy should recognize and respect cultural differences with the emphasizes of the importance of critical reflection and the development of the capacity of the citizens' to manage the complexity that often characterizes the various tasks associated with human life. In this way, social pedagogy can be seen as a way to integrate the various aspects of the problems, challenges, and areas of knowledge in the public and private sphere as well as about the inclusive room. Such theoretical lens gives valuable insights that develop and affirm an analytical reflectivity where individuals socialisation in relation to their own abilities, making context learnable, understandable, and accessible for citizens. In this manner, individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for and control over their own life and their own inclusion process.

The overall basic view in social pedagogy are characterized by a humanistic and democratic approach where the individual's own abilities are recognized and acknowledged through respect, dialogue, and debate in and about subject knowledge as well as value questions during interventions and inclusion process. Individuals must know and feel that they have the support, but they also need to be aware of their responsibility for their own knowledge and personal development in all life. At the same time, social pedagogy can provide knowledge that encourage them to share the responsibility for each other's development. This responsibility does not mean the individuals' are left alone. On the contrary, this should be seen as a process gives knowledge about how citizens gradually can move their consciousness from being in a marginalized situation to becoming strong, independent individuals in society whose identity is based on their own interests and abilities. By raising the awareness of the individuals´ own abilities and their own responsibilities based on their own experiences, they will develop their own identity, with a change in self-perception, tolerance, understanding, and respect for people's differences.

Today, the relationship between digital technologies and social participation has become more complex and includes everything from organizing communities to social workers to people's perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes about digital media. Not the least, the multidimensional use of digital technologies in informal settings has developed and affected patterns of abuse, exclusion, and vulnerability, a trend that ultimately affects how the social pedagogue needs to work. How and to what extent should a social pedagogue use digital media? The answer to this question is constantly

changing as our understanding of knowledge and pedagogy changes with the change in technology. Clearly, this is a complex area that has significant societal implications.

Given social pedagogy's historically philosophical foundations, traditional practice modalities and mainly individually oriented focus, the impact of digitalization entails some important challenges and opportunities. Many of the social pedagogical models were, as already said, developed on the basis of current social problems, and there is a need to always proceed with the development. Otherwise it might be rather ironical if the conditions for social pedagogical work changes trough digitalization, but not its the work processes.

7. Conclusion

In all, this article suggests the need to have a major re-think regarding our theoretical models as well as modalities of practice. For some inexplicable reasons it appears that social pedagogy has had difficulties to really be proactive and decisive in its response to digitalization of society. Today we can see that social pedagogy is taking root in more countries and this means it is being used in increasingly more diverse social and cultural contexts where different problems and challenges must be understood. Although social pedagogy is being adopted in different countries and by various organizations, social pedagogy is being challenged, with questions that both open up hamper some options for action. As I see it, this means that one of the greatest challenges for social pedagogy as both a field of knowledge and a field of practice is to be adaptive, innovative, and progressive to meet new demands in a digitalized society.

The technological revolution society is experiencing has the potential to help different professions and welfare actors to increase the efficiency of service provision, assist with quality control, and facilitate information sharing. A common characteristic of systems for information sharing is that they provide an extended access from not only a single profession, but also from other professions and institutions involved in the provision of social interventions. One crucial issue I would like to address is how information from various actors' is used to present a typical (client) case, and how such cases are reformulated in the processes of decision making in respect to the client´s future care. Further, I argue that a trademark in social pedagogy is that knowledge is "social" and "relational", which risk to be fragmented into items of information in digital systems are "stripped of its context". Much research has examined the role of digital technologies as a support function in organizations that address complex social problems, such as collaboration efforts between various agencies and knowledge management (Tapia et al., 2013; Tatham and Spens, 2011). However, I argue that we still need more knowledge on the enabling and constraining role that digital technologies plays within these organizations and how what this means for relations, confidence and meaning making in empowering and mobilizing work.

Organizations within the social sector, as well as researcher in the field of social pedagogy has the ability to take into account the different types of intellectual and practical knowledge that professionals are expected to have. From a knowledge perspective this is important since we need more knowledge about how professional and institutional issues interplay with changes in society and understandings of what constitutes professional knowledge. Digital technologies need to be understood and defined by social pedagogy as material and created or adapted to solve practical problems, and treated thereafter. In responding to the changing circumstances in society, where digital technology is used, amongst other thing, as a hub for sharing information, making decisions and evaluation, research need to underpin new learning models, new working processes and new organizational structures for developing social pedagogy in practice.

When the conditions for participation in society are changing, it is important that research and practice learns from and with each other. This is also important for formal and informal education, and for making tacit and local knowledge visible, understandable and transparent among and between professionals as well as organizations. To continue to

protect and perhaps to further strengthen the links between research and practice means that this challenge may be reformed into an opportunity, which is an approach that is completely in line with social pedagogy´s own tradition of ideas. To move between different fields of knowledge then becomes an opportunity to learn both from and with each other.

As we already know, almost all aspects of the individuals living conditions are strongly context-bounded. To be included in a society can hardly be restricted to be a question only regarding the individual; on the contrary, it is also a matter of working with norms, values, boundaries and acknowledgement within the context (read society) itself. Today's complex organization of the various actors in the welfare society means that demands on the practice of social pedagogy increasingly will be directed to aspects of coordination within and between different sectors and professions. This places increased demands on the ability to shift perspective, transparency, collaboration skills, etc. that directly address the client's needs. And as seen, issues of learning, being included, developing and changing identity is a matter of relations between the individual and the surrounding society, therefore the societal aspect must be a matter of social pedagogy both in practice and as a field of knowledge. Especially when it comes to inclusion work.

In an era of globalization and migration, social pedagogy has a tremendous important role to play. Working with issues of inclusion even in digitalized communities gives the possibility, or sets the responsibility, to work with boundary crossing aspects of societal learning and development. Even though some might argue that working on macro and meso level is not in the core for social pedagogy, social workers have an obligation to work side by side with those professional groups and knowledge domains who have. In fact, social pedagogy as a knowledge domain can be seen as a boundary crossing force that embraces institutions and profession such as in schools, healthcare, elderly care but also areas as employment agencies, housing market and entrepreneurship. Moreover, as I see it, one of the most important and challenging movements is into the digital world. In the digital world people interact, socialize, are being included or excluded, build communities under other circumstances than in the past. Social pedagogy needs to acknowledge these changes and look for ways these technologies can help people develop knowledge together. Several questions still need to be addressed for further research and discussions:

- How and to what extent is the use of digital media changing the way people live their lives?
- How do digital media influence the way people develop and maintain social relationships as well as their own identity?
- In light of global influence, what are the new ways of organizing social pedagogical work that will be productive?
- How and why will different activities open up new kinds of social interventions that will support a client's development?
- How will mobile digital technology change the way social pedagogues and social workers work and how will these technologies affect the way clients learn?
- How does digitizing conditions influence understandings of participation, mobilization, and inclusion?

As seen, some historical bases in social pedagogy are challenged since some basic conditions for interaction and participation in communities are changed. Simultaneously, as I see it, the increased digitalization and globalization opens up for new forms of learning opportunities between theory and practice in social pedagogy, where methods and outcomes can be aggregated crossover institutional, municipal and national boundaries.

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