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The Relationship of Social Groups: Empirical Evidence from Ukraine and Lithuania

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Abstract. Despite of the fact that the notion of relationships of social groups is sufficiently researched in Sociology, Political Science, Economics and other sciences, the interest among representatives of Social Studies in this concept doesn't fall off. Taking the above mentioned into consideration, the aim of the study is to substantiate the implementation of relationships of social groups as a technology, identify methodological approaches for assessing the state of relationships of the social group's accumulation and individual or group level perception. The object of research is a relationship of social groups as an attribute of social development. The subject of research includes relationships of social groups's forms of accumulation and realization as technology of social work with the elderly. To conduct a qualitative study, the authors developed a model for conducting research and authors' questionnaires. The study involved 320 people: 160 elderly people were from Ukraine, 160 people were from Siauliai (Lithuania). The obtained data were subjected to the statistical processing and further their qualitative interpretation and generalization. On the basis of empirical research it has been shown that the development of measures aimed at the accumulation and realization of the relationship of social group, both in Ukraine and in Lithuania can make elderly people more active in self-organization and mutual assistance in solving vital needs and interests. The proposed author's model for the formation and implementation of the relationship of social group made it possible to define a number of recommendations for employees of social services.

Keywords: Socialization · Interaction · Potential · Adaptation · Integration · Social environment · Social change

1 Introduction

The chances and possibilities of attracting relationships of social groups to the realization of the basic tasks of sociology are a little investigated problem in both domestic and foreign scientific literature. As a technology, the deployment of the relationship of social groups in the provision of services to various groups of clients in articulated form is also practically not applicable. And if, in an agrarian or even industrial society, it was too early to spill about the implementation of relationship of social groups as a social technology,

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then the socio-cultural potential of a network society, in our opinion, is sufficient to supplement traditional methods of social work practice. The research of social networks of modern society by the vector "capital - introduction - the potential" also removes the problem of the separation of potential from the realities of social reality. After all, if social (human) capital covers achievements, innovative activity ensures their present realization, then social potential (capital) is permanently sent to the future.

The tasks of scientific research: 1. To make a correlation between the concepts of 'socio-cultural potential' and 'relationships of social groups' in order to define the technological efficiency of the latter. 2. To substantiate the legality of the identification of the implementation of relationships of social groups as technology. 3. Identify the peculiarities of the formation and implementation of relationships of social groups of the elderly. 4. To describe the methodological basis of relationships of social groups through the empirical study. 5. To conduct a comparative analysis of the results of research on the peculiarities of the formation and implementation of relationships of social groups of the elderly in Ukraine and Lithuania. The novelty of the study: the possibility of attracting the implementation of relationships of social groups as a technology is sustained, the methods of assessing the state of relationships of the social group's formation and its perception by different categories of social subjects is proposed.

2 Methodology

An analysis of the problems of implementation of the relationship of social groups as a technology of social work was also conducted, and proposals were developed for social workers based on the research conducted to work with this category of clients.

To conduct a qualitative study, the authors developed a model for conducting research and authors' questionnaires. The study involved 320 people: 160 elderly people were from Ukraine, 160 people were from Siauliai (Lithuania). The obtained data were subjected to the statistical processing and further their qualitative interpretation and generalization. Mathematical data processing and graphic presentation were carried out using the computer package of statistical programs SPSS (version 23.0). On the basis of the theoretical and empirical research carried out, the authors' model of realization of relationships of social groups as a technology work with the elderly, recommendations for social workers for working with this category of clients were developed.

3 Results and Discussion

The concept of "relationship of social groups" was first introduced into the science by P. Bourdieu. In the cycle of works, he justified the idea that "relationship of social groups is a set of real or potential resources that are connected with the existence of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relations of mutual acquaintance and recognition". In other words, the membership in a group gives it the opportunity to use both the material and symbolic benefits. Obviously, the volume of this public good depends on the size of the network and the effectiveness of the links in it. P. Bourdieu is convinced that the amount of relationships of social groups available to a social subject depends on the scope of the connections that he can mobilize, as well as on the amount

of economic, cultural or symbolic capital possessed by social agents affiliated with this agent. P. Bourdieu argued that social space is a kind of logical construct, an environment in which social processes take place. The distinctive feature of this environment, in the opinion of the researcher, is the control of various forms of relationships of social groups. The distribution of this capital is a kind of system-forming element of the functioning of the social institution. At the same time, P. Bourdieu points out that the existence of such connections, networks that contribute to the accumulation of social capital, is not a tribute. For example, if family relationships have a genetic basis, then social interactions require everyday care for their establishment and support. For this, there should be a constant interaction and exchange of tangible and intangible resources, during which every member of the social network compensates for the expenses of his own time with the benefits and profit from staying with the company. The involvement of social technologies in autopoiesis of social systems is possible only with the presence of a certain consolidating factor inherent both for individuals and social groups, and to society as a whole [1, 2]. Such a factor, in our opinion, is the accumulation and realization of the relationship of social groups, which is interpreted by the researchers at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries as a special social technology that will penetrate social and cultural practices that are tangible to social work [3–5].

The most schematic definition of the relationship of social groups, which is found in the scientific literature, defines it as a trust and a network. Despite the simplicity of this definition, it immediately reveals three dimensions of relationships of social groups: structural (people perceive themselves as part of a social network, some circle of networks); relational (the effectiveness of the relationship between social agents depends on the level of trust and mutual commitment); cognitive (network agents must be united by common interests, goals, values and norms) [1].

Relationship of social groups is an endangered property, value, characteristic, which appears only when individuals, groups, organizations are united in social networks. It is a relationship that allows social actors to work more efficiently, relying on resources and support for each other.

For the first time, the potential of relationships of social groups was disclosed in the economy. In the first half of the twentieth century, business analysts began to recommend that key companies pay more attention to the development of corporate culture, the establishment of a system of connections between employees, the formation of the spirit of brotherhood in them, the feeling the integrity and importance of collective labor.

Such tendencies in our time are moving from the sphere of economics to the various spheres of social management. Confirmation of this is the instant dismissal of Western statesmen, politicians and heads of institutions in disclosing their involvement in actions that are inconsistent with the moral image of a position. Consequently, the idea of relationships of social groups implies such an approach to social management, in which units of analysis of the effectiveness of project implementation are not individuals, but groups [4].

In the twentieth century, the term “relationship of social groups” in the updated sense appeared in the works of L. Hanifan and acquired an economic dimension. She defined relationships of social groups as a factor affecting the everyday life of people. Such circumstances, in the opinion of the author, are mutual sympathy, friendly relations,

etc. The only commonality with the usual understanding of capital lies in the fact that investing in relationships of social groups can lead to similar material and social gains [5].

The deepening of the content of the notion of relationships of social groups took place in a variety of directions and depended on the specifics of the social sphere, to the characteristics of which it was involved. The retrospective of the theoretical analysis of relationships of social groups can now be found in a large number of scientific studies. In this or that aspect, this problem, as we mentioned above, was studied by P. Bourdieu, J. Coleman, R. Patnam, A. Portes, M. Vulcock, W. Baker, H. Flepe, N. Lin, D. Naroan, J. Field, T. Skokpol, S. Knack, F. Kieffer, M. Fafchamps, B. Mintn, D. Messi, K. Espinosa, Eriksson K.. D. Slerk, Verhaeghe, P., Tampubolon, G. and others [3, 4, 6–9]. At the macro level, relationship of social group is interpreted as societal characteristics of the individual, its compliance with collective norms, which allows for social control of the person and direct it to achieve socially important goals. On the meso-level relationship of social group dissolves in social networks, in the system of connections, resources of groups and organizations. At the micro level, relationship of social group is a sign of the individuality of the subject, and therefore reduces to a set of inherent social actor real and potential resources that can be used by them as a member of one or another social network.

Drawing on the works of N. Fridkina, F. Fukuyama, R. Patnema, A. Portes, O. M. Tatarko, N.M. Lebedeva, V.P. Kolesova, M.O. Sysoev, V. A. Sazhina. We will try to consolidate some approaches to assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of relationship of the social group as a technology of social work, to give this issue quantitative and qualitative certainty. This will allow further development of methods and techniques for data processing during empirical research in different categories of clients [10, 11]. First of all, we note that the first approach for measuring the relationship of social group was proposed by R. Patnem and envisaged the analysis of two types of statistical data. The first is information about groups and groups of members, as well as indicators of their political activity. The second type is the World Values Survey (WVS). However, as O.M. Tatarko observed (2011), with this approach, there are two problems. The first is that relationship of social group has qualitative characteristics, that is, necessary to take into account the nature of collective activity, which this group is capable of. The second problem is related to the radius of trust, that is, how many members of the group trust not only people in the group, but also outside it. On the other hand, some consolidated in terms of discipline, purpose, values of the group (e.g., terrorist organizations), obviously, are also not carriers and spokesmen of the relationship of social group. Therefore, the mechanisms accounting of groups is unlikely to be productive in assessing the relationship of the social group of society.

There is an opposite approach to the measuring relationship of social group. Instead of measuring relationship of the social group as a positive value, the lack of relationship of social group is measured by assessing violations in the functioning of society. This may be the level of crime, drug addiction, litigation, tax evasion, various manifestations of deviant behavior in society, etc. However, this approach, according to some researchers [6], is also not productive, since it gives an idea of the absence of a relationship of social group, which obviously does not indicate what method it is to accumulate and to realize.

At the same time, it was asked the question. Is it possible, on the basis of a socio-psychological survey, to reconstruct the relationship of the social group of a society or its separate groups?

If we proceed from the assumption that relationship of social group is a form of socio-psychological relations (network + trust), then, having studied these types of relations on a sufficiently representative sample, it is possible to get an idea of the relationship of the social group of society as a whole. But for this purpose, it is necessary to develop a technique for evaluating social settings (emotional and evaluative components of the consciousness of respondents) regarding trust, complicity, tolerance. Obviously, measuring the relationship of social group at macro and micro levels is different. If the micro level requires a greater concentration of psychological and diagnostic methods and techniques, then the macro level requires the attraction of more or less objective indicators of social reality. The methodology of studying the relationship of social group at the level of society involves an assessment of how much an individual is ready to contribute to society in a positive attitude towards others and a desire to work for the benefit of all (adhere to norms, laws, principles of common life, etc.). So, the study of the relationship of social group needs to be assessed:

1) the willingness of social actors "to invest" in positive relations in society (to trust, treat others as equal, help, etc.);
2) the level of support by individuals and groups of those characteristics of society that contribute to the development of the relationship of social group.

In order to identify these parameters, representatives of social sciences recommend to pay attention to the following types of measurements (Lysenko, Markovskaya, Bjornskov):

- Measure commitments and expectations; branch of information channels; level of support for social norms;
- identification of social institutions; informal, horizontal links (World Bank experts).
- measuring confidence level; involvement of individuals in social networks; assessment of dominant social norms and beliefs.
- measurement of structural social aspects (strength of connections in social networks, network configuration, etc.); cognitive aspects, level of group identity, mutual responsibilities, etc.

In general, the following indicators can be used to assess the relationship of the social group [10]. The level of personal confidence (World Values Survey).

1) The level of institutional trust. In order to assess the level of institutional trust, it is necessary to identify those social institutions that prevail in the society and establish the level of trust in them by a simple ranking.
2) Characteristics of civic identity.
3) The perception of the state of accumulation and realization of relationship of social group of the environment and society as a whole.

Given these indicators, some researchers offer quantitative methods for assessing the relationship of social group. This system can be implemented through Sysoev's formula (Sysoev, 2014), used by UNDP specialists to calculate the human development index:

$$SCI = (SCIU + SCIL + SCIS)/3, \quad (1)$$

where, SCI - Social Capital Index; SCIU - Social Capital Index, taking into account the unemployment rate; SCIL - Social Capital Index, taking into account the index of life; SCIS - Social Capital Index based on social protests.

According to a similar approach, the index of perception of the state of realization of social capital at the level of individuals and groups can be determined:

$$IISC = (SCIS + SCIA + SCID + SCIBD + SCIM + SCIP)/6, \quad (2)$$

where IISC - Index of interpersonal Social Capital; SCIS - Social Capital Index based on the suicide rate; SCIA - Social Capital Index takes into account the consumption of alcohol; SCID - Social Capital Index, taking into account the number of divorces; SCIBD - Social Capital Index based on births and deaths; SCIM - Social Capital Index based on the number of murders; SCIP - Social Capital Index of prisoners.

Status of research: international. Method: in-depth interviews. Toolkit: semi-standardized questionnaire for in-depth interviews. Target audience: residents of Ukraine and Lithuania aged from 50 to 90 years. Among respondents from Ukraine: 6% aged 75 to 90 years; 63% aged 61 to 74 years old and 31% aged 50 to 60 years old. Among respondents from Lithuania: 50% at the age from 75 to 90 years; 50% at the age from 61 to 74 years. Sample: 320 respondents (160 from Ukraine and 160 from Lithuania). Social stratum: most Ukrainians (56%) attributed themselves to the lower class, while 70% of Lithuanians identified themselves with the middle class.

Level of education: 50% of those surveyed in Ukraine have higher education, and 44% - professional. In this case, 60% of the representatives of Lithuania have an average and 40% - professional education.

Work experience: 70% of Ukrainians and 30% of Lithuanians have more than 35 years of experience; 50% of Lithuanians and 15% of Ukrainians are from 25 to 35 years of experience; less than 25 years of experience, respectively, have 15% of those polled. At the same time, 83% of Ukrainians and 16% of Lithuanians held senior positions during their work.

Place of residence: 100% of Lithuanians and 81% of Ukrainians are polled by urban residents. In the process of analyzing the results of the study and conducting a comparative analysis of the responses of respondents from Ukraine and Lithuania, the first block of questions, namely: "Social activity of respondents", included a number of the following issues. Do you need help from outsiders (organizations) in everyday life and (or) in a social life? Do you contact organizations and (or) institutions to solve your problems? Do you contact the representatives of your age group for solving (discussing) your life goals? (Fig. 1).

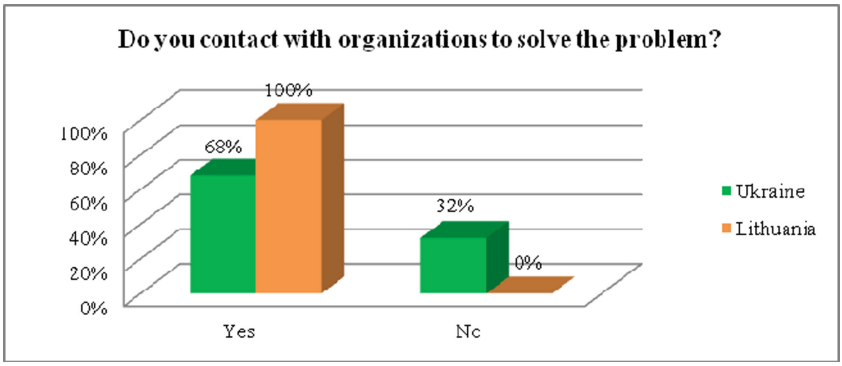


Fig. 1. The need for social assistance.

56% of respondents in Kyiv and 50% of respondents in the city of Siauliai note that they need help from outsiders. Correlation analysis shows that the greatest need for help depends on the social class, which includes respondents (.514**), territory (.545*), education (.778) (Fig. 2).

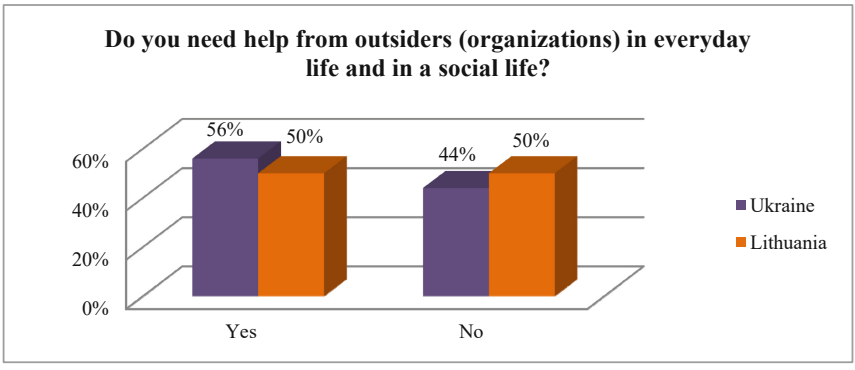


Fig. 2. Contact with organizations and institutions to solve problems.

According to the distribution, 100% of Ukrainian respondents and 68% of Lithuanian respondents are in contact with organizations and institutions to solve their own problems.

It should be noted that people of retirement age need help. People of retirement age are equally involved with organizations, government agencies, and representatives of their social groups (Fig. 3).

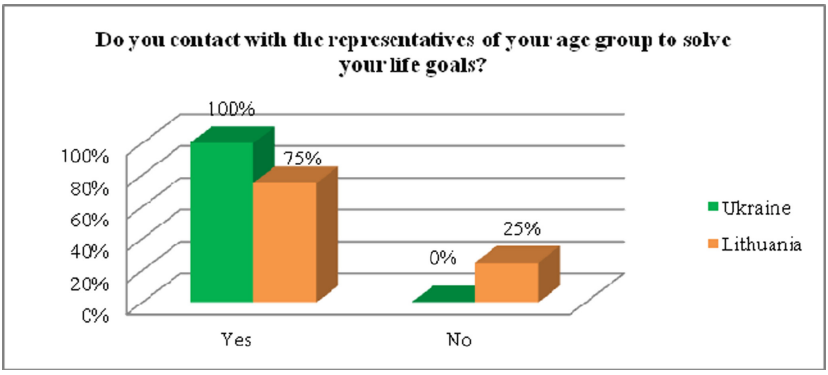


Fig. 3. Contact with age groups to solve problems.

100% of Ukrainian respondents and 75% of Lithuanian respondents said they were in contact with representatives of their age group (Table 1).

Table 1. Correlation analysis (Pearson's r).

	Gender	Age	Education	Work experience	Did you have senior positions during your career?	Which social layer do you belong to?	Where do you live?	Do you need help from outsiders?	Do you know the concept of "relationship?"
Gender	1	.0313	−.378	.333	−.204	.105	−.160	−.378	0
Age	.0313	1	−.623*	.772*	.160	−.562	0	0	.542*
Education	−.378	−.623	1	−.378	−.323	**.720****	.545*	**.778****	−.218
Work experience	.333	.772*	−.378	1	.225	**−.408**	−.053	**−.462**	.577*
Did you have senior positions in your career?	.135	.160	−.323	.225	1	**−.550***	.022	**−.221**	.234

(*continued*)

Table 1. (*continued*)

	Gender	Age	Education	Work experience	Did you have senior positions during your career?	Which social layer do you belong to?	Where do you live?	Do you need help from outsiders?	Do you know the concept of "relationship?"
Which social layer do you belong to?	−.204	−.562*	.720**	−.408	−.550*	**1**	.392	**.514***	−.471
Where do you live?	−.160	−.431	.545*	−.053	.022	**.392**	1	**.424**	.092
Are you ready to be involved in the implementation of socially important projects if they involve representatives of your social group?	.135	.515*	−.221	.315	−.127	**−.110**	−.367	**−.595***	.0078
Are you ready to participate in the development of the social network of representatives of your social group?	0	.213	−.048	−.126	−.561*	**0**	−.303	**−.333**	−.218
Have you had the experience of solving the problems of your social group?	−.289	.181	.073	−.192	.078	**−.236**	−.462	**−.218**	.333
Do you know the concept of "relationship of social group?"	0	.542*	−.218	.577*	.234	**−.471**	.092	**−.364**	0

Educational actions have to be directed to growth of expenses of the educational sphere, increase in its efficiency, creation of necessary conditions for attraction of extra budgetary funds, assignment of information support, formation of the transparent control system of quality of education [8, 9].

So, interpersonal interaction is a specific kind of social relations, where interacting subjects act not only as communicative partners, but as social subjects, the interaction between which generates, reproduces, affirms, continues and transforms social relations [9].

4 Conclusion

According to the results of the study, and based on the analysis of the scientific sources, we can conclude that the implementation of relationship of the social group as a social work technology can be applied when working with different categories of clients.

In this case, such technology has the features of quasitechnology in the absence of methods of quantitative analysis of the state of society and characteristics of individual groups of individuals. At the macro level, the indicators of the accumulation and realization of the relationship of the social group are objective (statistical) indicators of social reality. At the micro level, there are also individual and psychological characteristics of social groups and their members.

It is established that the identification of the relationship of the social group as a technology of social work is legitimate, but it requires quantization according to various parameters that are important for social groups.

The correlation between the concepts of "socio-cultural potential" and "relationship of social group" has allowed to reveal the technological capacity of the last and the direct link of relationship of the social group with the potential of social development.

The methodological foundations of the empirical research on the implementation of relationship of social group, which include statistical methods (at the macro level), as well as methods of psychological diagnosis and support (at the micro level) are established.

The basic approaches to the mechanisms and sources of accumulation of relationship of the social group are determined. These include: (1) value orientations, imperatives mastered by actors in the process of socialization; (2) individual social interaction; (3) compulsory solidarity.

It is substantiated that the accumulation and realization of the relationship of the social group of the elderly can be an innovative social technology, provided that the matrices of trust are developed in the middle of the social network of clients of the corresponding group and between them, social workers and authorities.

On the basis of empirical research it has been shown that the development of measures aimed at the accumulation and realization of the relationship of social group, both in Ukraine and in Lithuania can make elderly people more active in self-organization and mutual assistance in solving vital needs and interests.

The proposed author's model for the formation and implementation of the relationship of social group made it possible to define a number of recommendations for employees of social services. The main recommendations include the following: (a)

promote the involvement of elderly people in supporting formal and informal communications; (b) involve the elderly people discussing the actual problems of social life; (c) take measures to expand the network of elderly people through social networks; (d) create and maintain robots of clubs with interests, trainings in order to create a sense of community; (e) demonstrate the effectiveness of a joint solution needs and interests; (f) form a positive attitude to help representatives of their and other age groups in order to build trust as the main source of accumulation and realization of the relationship of social group; (g) demonstrate tangible and intangible benefits that can be obtained from representatives of the relevant category of clients, provided that they actively participate in the life of the company; (h) to support the social and cultural initiatives of the elderly; provide opportunities for participation in general discussions on ways to meet the needs and interests of the relevant social group; provide suggestions for additional education; (i) involve government officials in helping older people's associations; (j) expand cooperation with institutions and organizations where social services clients work to help provide and organize forms of engagement of elderly people in the life of labor collectives as consultants.

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