



European Union
European Social Fund
Operational Programme Employment



Continuously reinvented: the history, characteristics and challenges of social work education in Israel

Talia-Meital Schwartz-Tayri, MSW, PhD

Continuously reinvented

- The origins and development of social work education
- Ongoing challenges and dilemmas in Social work education
- Recent developments in the curricula

The origins of social work education in Israel

- The establishment of the first school of social work by the Jewish “National Committee” and upon German standards.
- The struggles to establish a profession with no colonial power support and legitimate German social work pedagogy in a different cultural realm.
- First courses on social treatment offered to volunteers and to trained social workers (two weeks).



Siddy Wronsky and her students

The origins

- 1934 Sidy Wronsky's full-fledged social work school supported by philanthropic sources, based on the German social work teaching model, and included theoretical courses and field work
- Initial teaching program lasted for a year, and in 1942 it was lengthened to two years in order to enrich the syllabus.
- The development of a comprehensive curricula
- During the 1940s, 91 social work students graduated from the full program, and another 56 completed courses for trained social workers who immigrated to Palestine.

Under fire

- Responding to the need for ‘instant social workers’ and the report by Professor Philip Klein
- The era of academization on the 60s-80s
- The role of field apprenticeship
- The key role of the National Training Center for Welfare Workers of the Ministry for Labor, Social affairs, and social services, in the professional socialization and in providing expertise

American 'idols'

- The American influence on the development of social work education – advantages and disadvantages
- The dominance of the clinical orientation in social work schools
- The tension between academic research and practice
- The foundation of seven new social work departments in public colleges

Multi-challenged

- Responding to regulation, social work legalization, and shifts in welfare policy
- The New Public Management and the need to foster research and evaluation skills among social workers
- Strict regulation of the Council for Higher Education (CHE) regarding the curricula, field work standards, and establishment of new social work schools and department in academic institutions
- Social work students orientation and readiness for practice

Balancing the clinical and the critical

- The need to respond to multiple inequalities
- The rise of social protest movements and the “new governance”
- The demand to integrate critical and policy praxis within social work education, and the establishment of the first policy-practice clinic
- Students participation in curricula design

Thank you