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FEATURES OF THE USE OF TRAINING TECHNOLOGIES IN SOCIAL WORK

Тренінгові технології дедалі більше утвірджаються як важливий компонент сучасної соціальної роботи, особливо в умовах тривалих соціальних криз, збройного конфлікту, вимушеного переміщення населення та глибоких суспільних трансформацій. В Україні повномасштабна війна суттєво загострила соціальні проблеми та зумовила потребу у впровадженні ефективних, гнучких і практикоорієнтованих методів професійної діяльності. У статті здійснено теоретичний огляд тренінгових технологій у соціальній роботі з акцентом на їх концептуальні засади, класифікацію та відповідність актуальним потребам українського суспільства.

Розглянуто тренінгові технології як окрему форму професійної діяльності у соціальній роботі та окреслено їх відмінності від психоосвітніх і терапевтичних втручань. Особливу увагу приділено експерієнційному навчанню як методологічній основі тренінгових підходів, що передбачає активну участь, рефлексію та формування практичних навичок. Запропоновано класифікацію тренінгових технологій, зокрема навичкові, психоосвітні, резілієнс-орієнтовані та MHPSS-тренінги, а також громадсько-орієнтовані й партисипативні формати.

Окремо проаналізовано застосування тренінгових технологій у контексті воєнних викликів, зокрема у роботі з ветеранами, внутрішньо переміщеними особами, громадами та фахівцями соціальної сфери, які зазнають професійного вигорання. Зроблено висновок, що тренінгові технології є важливим інструментом підвищення професійної спроможності, розвитку стійкості та психосоціального благополуччя в сучасній соціальній роботі України.

Ключові слова: соціальна робота, тренінгові технології, експерієнційне навчання, психосоціальна підтримка, резілієнтність, професійна компетентність

Training technologies have become an increasingly important component of contemporary social work practice, particularly in societies experiencing prolonged social crises, armed conflict, forced displacement, and systemic transformations. In Ukraine, the full-scale war has significantly intensified social challenges, creating new demands for effective, flexible, and practice-oriented methods of professional intervention. This article provides a theoretical overview of training technologies in social work, focusing on their conceptual foundations, classification, and relevance to the current needs of Ukrainian society.

The paper examines training technologies as a distinct form of professional activity in social work, differentiating them from psychoeducational and therapeutic interventions. Particular attention is given to experiential learning as a methodological basis for training approaches, emphasizing active participation, reflection, and skills acquisition. The article proposes a structured classification of training technologies, including skills-based, psychoeducational, resilience-oriented and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) trainings, as well as community-based and participatory formats.

Special consideration is given to the application of training technologies in the context of war-related challenges, including work with veterans, internally displaced persons, local communities, and social service professionals facing high levels of stress and burnout. The advantages and limitations of training technologies in social work are analyzed, highlighting their preventive potential, adaptability, and resource-efficiency, alongside methodological and ethical constraints. The article concludes that training technologies represent a crucial tool for strengthening professional competence, community resilience, and psychosocial well-being in contemporary Ukrainian social work practice.

Keywords: social work, training technologies, experiential learning, psychosocial support, community resilience, professional competence

The social work system in Ukraine is currently operating under conditions of unprecedented complexity shaped by the prolonged impact of the full-scale war and deep societal transformation. The consequences of the armed conflict include mass internal displacement, a rapid increase in the number of

veterans and their families, the fragmentation and weakening of local communities, economic instability, and the deterioration of social infrastructure. These processes are accompanied by widespread psychosocial distress, prolonged exposure to traumatic experiences, uncertainty, and chronic stress among broad segments of the population.

In this context, social workers are required to respond not only to material, administrative, and legal needs but also to complex psychological, emotional, and relational challenges affecting individuals, families, and communities. Their professional role increasingly encompasses crisis intervention, psychosocial support, facilitation of social adaptation and reintegration, as well as the strengthening of individual and collective resilience. At the same time, social work professionals themselves operate under conditions of high emotional load, role overload, and limited resources, which further complicates the effective delivery of services and highlights the need for adaptive, practice-oriented approaches within the social work system.

Traditional forms of professional preparation and service delivery in social work are often insufficient to adequately respond to rapidly changing social realities, particularly in contexts of crisis, instability, and prolonged uncertainty. Standardized educational programs and conventional service models tend to be time-consuming, rigid in structure, and poorly adapted to the immediate and complex needs of vulnerable populations. As a result, social workers frequently face a gap between theoretical knowledge and the practical competencies required for effective intervention in real-life crisis situations.

In contrast, training technologies offer a flexible, dynamic, and practice-oriented approach that enables both social work professionals and service users to acquire relevant skills in a relatively short period of time. These technologies emphasize active participation, experiential learning, and reflection, allowing participants to strengthen individual and collective resilience, enhance adaptive capacities, and develop context-sensitive coping strategies. In crisis settings, training formats facilitate rapid knowledge transfer, promote peer support and mutual learning, and create safe spaces for processing experience, thereby increasing the effectiveness and sustainability of social work interventions.

The purpose of this article is to conduct a theoretical analysis of training technologies in social work and to identify their role and potential in addressing contemporary Ukrainian social challenges. The objectives include clarifying the concept of training technologies, outlining their theoretical foundations, proposing a classification, and analyzing their advantages and limitations.

Training technologies in social work represent a structured set of methods, formats, and pedagogical approaches aimed at the development of professional, social, and adaptive competencies through active, experience-based learning. Within the contemporary paradigm of social work, training technologies are conceptualized not merely as educational tools, but as an independent form of professional intervention that integrates learning, empowerment, and psychosocial support.

Unlike traditional instructional methods that prioritize the transmission of theoretical knowledge, training technologies emphasize participant engagement, interaction, and reflexivity. They are typically implemented in group settings and are based on the principles of voluntary participation, psychological safety, and mutual respect. This makes training technologies particularly effective in addressing complex social problems that require not only knowledge acquisition but also behavioral change, emotional regulation, and the development of practical skills.

From a theoretical perspective, training technologies in social work draw upon interdisciplinary foundations, including adult learning theory, social learning theory, and experiential learning models. These approaches highlight the importance of learning through action, reflection on experience, and social interaction. As a result, training technologies facilitate the integration of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components of learning, which is essential for sustainable competence development in both social work professionals and service users.

In the context of social work practice, training technologies serve multiple functions. They contribute to professional capacity building, support preventive interventions, and enhance psychosocial resilience at individual, group, and community levels. Training formats are frequently used to strengthen communication skills, coping strategies, decision-making abilities, and social competencies, as well as to promote empowerment and self-efficacy among participants.

Importantly, training technologies are characterized by a high degree of adaptability. Their structure and content can be modified in response to specific target groups, cultural contexts, and situational demands, including crisis and post-crisis environments. This flexibility distinguishes training technologies from standardized educational or therapeutic models and positions them as a valuable tool within contemporary social work systems facing rapid social change and resource constraints.

In contemporary social work practice, training technologies are frequently applied alongside psychoeducational and therapeutic interventions, which necessitates a clear conceptual distinction between these forms of professional activity. Although they may share certain methods, such as group work or structured sessions, their goals, theoretical foundations, and expected outcomes differ significantly.

Psychoeducational interventions are primarily aimed at increasing participants' knowledge and awareness regarding psychological processes, social phenomena, or specific life challenges. Their central function is informational and explanatory, focusing on the normalization of reactions, understanding of symptoms, and dissemination of coping-related knowledge. While psychoeducation may include interactive elements, its primary outcome remains cognitive—enhanced understanding rather than the systematic development of skills or behavioral change.

Therapeutic interventions, in contrast, are designed to address psychological distress, mental health disorders, or trauma-related symptoms through clinical or counseling-oriented approaches. These interventions are based on diagnostic frameworks and therapeutic models, and they typically require specialized professional qualifications, ethical safeguards, and clearly defined therapeutic contracts. The primary goal of therapy is psychological healing, symptom reduction, or emotional processing, rather than training or competence development.

Training technologies in social work occupy a distinct intermediate position between these two approaches. Their primary focus is not treatment or diagnosis, nor solely the transmission of information, but the development of practical skills, social competencies, and adaptive behaviors. Training formats emphasize active participation, experiential exercises, group interaction, and structured reflection, enabling participants to practice new behaviors in a safe and supportive environment.

A key distinguishing feature of training technologies is their orientation toward empowerment and capacity building. Participants are viewed not as patients or passive recipients of knowledge, but as active agents capable of learning, experimenting, and applying new strategies in everyday life. This perspective aligns closely with the values of social work, including respect for dignity, self-determination, and strengths-based practice.

Moreover, training technologies allow for preventive and developmental work without entering the therapeutic domain. This is particularly important in crisis and post-crisis contexts, where large populations may require support that strengthens coping capacities and resilience but does not necessitate clinical intervention. By maintaining clear boundaries from therapeutic practice, training technologies ensure ethical safety while remaining accessible and scalable within social work systems.

Classification of training Technologies in Social Work Practice. Training technologies used in social work practice can be classified according to their primary goals, target groups, and functional orientation. Such classification allows for a clearer understanding of their theoretical and practical value and facilitates the selection of appropriate training formats in response to specific social challenges. In contemporary social work, training technologies are most commonly differentiated into skills-based training, psychoeducational training, resilience-oriented and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) trainings, as well as community-based and participatory training formats.

Skills-based training. Skills-based training constitutes one of the most widely applied categories of training technologies in social work practice. These trainings are primarily focused on the development and reinforcement of specific professional, interpersonal, and life skills that are essential for effective functioning in complex social environments. Common areas of focus include communication skills, conflict resolution, emotional regulation, case management, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities.

From a theoretical standpoint, skills-based trainings are grounded in competence-based and experiential learning approaches, which emphasize learning through practice, feedback, and reflection. Participants are provided with opportunities to rehearse new behaviors in structured and safe settings, thereby reducing the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life application. In social work education, skills-based trainings are frequently used to prepare professionals for direct client interaction, while in client-oriented interventions they support empowerment, self-efficacy, and adaptive functioning.

Psychoeducational training. Psychoeducational training occupies a distinct position within the classification of training technologies, combining informational components with interactive and experiential elements. The primary objective of psychoeducational trainings is to enhance participants' understanding of psychological processes, social dynamics, and stress-related reactions, particularly in the context of crisis, trauma, and life transitions.

Unlike purely informational lectures, psychoeducational trainings actively engage participants through group discussions, reflective exercises, and structured activities that promote self-awareness and mutual support. These trainings are widely used in social work with vulnerable populations, including

internally displaced persons, families affected by trauma, and individuals experiencing chronic stress. By increasing psychological literacy and normalizing emotional reactions, psychoeducational trainings contribute to preventive intervention and reduce the risk of maladaptive coping strategies.

Resilience-oriented and MHPSS-Based trainings. Resilience-oriented and MHPSS-based trainings have gained particular relevance in contexts affected by armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies, and prolonged social instability. These training technologies are aligned with international mental health and psychosocial support frameworks and are designed to strengthen both individual and collective resilience.

The core focus of such trainings includes the promotion of psychological safety, emotional stabilization, adaptive coping, and the restoration of a sense of control and predictability. Rather than addressing clinical symptoms, resilience-oriented trainings aim to enhance protective factors, social connectedness, and adaptive resources. In social work practice, these trainings are frequently applied in group formats with communities, displaced populations, veterans, and professionals working under high-stress conditions, contributing to sustainable psychosocial well-being without crossing into therapeutic intervention.

Community-based and participatory trainings. Community-based and participatory trainings represent a collective-oriented category of training technologies that emphasize active involvement of community members in identifying needs, resources, and solutions. These trainings are rooted in participatory and empowerment-based approaches, viewing communities not as passive recipients of assistance but as active agents of change.

Participatory training formats foster dialogue, shared responsibility, and local ownership of social initiatives. They contribute to the strengthening of social cohesion, trust, and collective efficacy, which are particularly important in communities affected by displacement, social fragmentation, or post-crisis recovery. In social work practice, community-based trainings support sustainable development by enhancing local capacities and promoting inclusive decision-making processes.

The application of training technologies in social work acquires particular significance in the context of contemporary Ukrainian social challenges shaped by war, mass displacement, community disruption, and professional overload within the social service system. Under conditions of prolonged crisis and uncertainty, training formats offer flexible and scalable tools for strengthening adaptive capacities, psychosocial resilience, and professional competence across multiple levels of social intervention.

Training technologies are widely applied in psychosocial support programs targeting veterans, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and their families. These population groups often face complex challenges related to adaptation, reintegration, identity transformation, and prolonged exposure to stress and traumatic experiences. In this context, training formats are used to support the development of coping strategies, emotional regulation skills, communication competencies, and social reintegration capacities.

Rather than focusing on clinical treatment, training technologies emphasize normalization of reactions, empowerment, and strengthening of personal and social resources. Group-based training formats provide safe and structured environments for sharing experiences, rebuilding trust, and restoring a sense of agency. For veterans and IDPs, trainings contribute to the development of adaptive strategies for navigating new social roles, accessing support systems, and managing stress in everyday life. Their preventive and capacity-building orientation makes training technologies particularly suitable for large-scale psychosocial interventions in humanitarian and post-conflict settings.

At the community level, training technologies play a crucial role in supporting social recovery, cohesion, and resilience in war-affected areas. Armed conflict and displacement have disrupted traditional community structures, weakened social ties, and reduced trust in collective institutions. Community-based training formats address these challenges by fostering participatory engagement, leadership development, and collective problem-solving.

Through participatory and community-oriented trainings, local stakeholders are actively involved in identifying shared challenges, available resources, and potential strategies for recovery. Such approaches strengthen social capital, enhance collective efficacy, and promote inclusive decision-making processes. In the Ukrainian context, community trainings contribute to rebuilding local resilience by supporting volunteer initiatives, facilitating dialogue between different population groups, and promoting collaborative responses to social and humanitarian needs. As a result, training technologies function not only as educational tools but also as mechanisms for restoring social cohesion and community agency.

Social Work Professionals and Burnout Prevention. The prolonged crisis has significantly increased the emotional and professional burden placed on social work professionals in Ukraine. High caseloads, exposure to clients' traumatic experiences, limited resources, and role overload contribute to chronic stress and professional burnout. In response to these challenges, training technologies are

increasingly used as a preventive and supportive measure within professional development and organizational contexts.

Trainings focused on burnout prevention emphasize self-care practices, emotional regulation, stress management, boundary-setting, and peer support. Group-based formats allow professionals to reflect on their experiences, normalize emotional responses, and exchange coping strategies within a supportive professional community. By strengthening resilience and self-efficacy among social workers, training technologies contribute to sustaining professional functioning and reducing the risk of secondary traumatization. In this sense, training formats serve not only individual well-being but also the overall effectiveness and stability of the social work system.

Training technologies constitute a widely used and increasingly valued approach within contemporary social work due to their adaptability, practical orientation, and potential for large-scale application. One of the key advantages of training technologies is their flexibility, which allows for rapid adaptation to changing social contexts, target groups, and emerging needs. Training formats can be modified in terms of content, duration, and methodological focus, making them particularly suitable for crisis and post-crisis environments where timely and responsive interventions are essential.

Another significant advantage of training technologies lies in their cost-effectiveness and scalability. Compared to long-term individual interventions, training-based approaches enable social work organizations to reach larger groups of beneficiaries with relatively limited resources. This is especially relevant in contexts characterized by high demand for psychosocial support and limited institutional capacity. By emphasizing skills development, empowerment, and peer interaction, training technologies also contribute to preventive work, reducing the risk of long-term psychosocial difficulties and fostering self-reliance among participants.

The high level of practical relevance represents an additional strength of training technologies. Through experiential learning, role-playing, and group reflection, participants are actively engaged in the learning process and encouraged to apply newly acquired skills in real-life situations. This enhances the transfer of learning into practice and supports the development of sustainable competencies. Furthermore, training formats align closely with core social work values, such as participation, empowerment, and respect for individual and community strengths.

Despite these advantages, the use of training technologies in social work is associated with several limitations that require careful consideration. One of the primary challenges concerns the need for highly skilled and ethically competent facilitators. Effective training implementation requires not only methodological expertise but also the ability to manage group dynamics, ensure psychological safety, and respond appropriately to participants' emotional reactions. In crisis-affected contexts, inadequate facilitation may increase the risk of emotional overload or re-traumatization.

Another limitation relates to the variability of participants' needs and capacities. Training formats may not be equally effective for all individuals, particularly those experiencing severe psychological distress or requiring specialized therapeutic support. In such cases, training technologies should be integrated into a broader system of services rather than used as a stand-alone intervention.

Finally, the evaluation of long-term outcomes remains a methodological challenge. While short-term effects such as increased knowledge, skills, and perceived resilience are relatively easy to assess, measuring sustained behavioral change and long-term psychosocial impact is more complex. This limitation highlights the need for systematic monitoring, follow-up mechanisms, and evidence-based evaluation frameworks within social work training practice.

Overall, while training technologies offer significant benefits for contemporary social work, their effective use requires a balanced and context-sensitive approach that acknowledges both their potential and their limitations.

Conclusions

Training technologies constitute a vital and increasingly indispensable component of contemporary social work practice, particularly in crisis-affected contexts such as Ukraine. The theoretical analysis presented in this article demonstrates that training technologies go beyond traditional educational formats, functioning as an integrative approach that combines learning, empowerment, and psychosocial support. Their grounding in experiential learning and competence-based frameworks enables the effective development of practical skills, adaptive behaviors, and resilience at individual, group, and community levels.

In the context of war, mass displacement, and prolonged social instability, training technologies offer a flexible and scalable response to complex social challenges. They are particularly valuable for working with veterans, internally displaced persons, communities undergoing social fragmentation, and

social work professionals exposed to chronic stress and burnout. By emphasizing participation, reflection, and capacity building, training formats contribute to preventive intervention and support sustainable psychosocial functioning without replacing therapeutic or clinical services.

At the same time, the analysis highlights the importance of recognizing the limitations and ethical boundaries of training technologies. Their effectiveness depends on the quality of facilitation, sensitivity to participants' needs, and integration within broader systems of social and psychosocial support. Therefore, training technologies should be applied as part of a comprehensive and context-sensitive social work strategy rather than as isolated interventions.

Future research should focus on the systematic evaluation of long-term outcomes of training-based interventions, the development of evidence-informed and culturally responsive training models, and the refinement of methodological standards for their implementation in crisis and post-crisis settings. Such efforts will contribute to strengthening the role of training technologies as a sustainable and ethically grounded tool in the advancement of contemporary social work.

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