

# Social, Societal, Social Work and Psychological as Understood by Academic Social Workers – Towards the Phenomena-Based Disciplinary Identities

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**ABSTRACT.** *The article presents research that studies social, societal, social work and psychological as phenomena. It focuses on them not as definitions or conceptualizations but as on the experienced and understood. The theoretical approach is phenomenology. The study has three research questions. First question is the following: What are general structures of social, societal, social work and psychological as phenomena? Secondly, what is the common structure of all four subjects as phenomenon? And, thirdly, what is their unique structure? The research material consists of the results provided by two earlier studies that focused on the understanding of social, societal, social work and psychological in Lithuania and Finland. The research material was analyzed by eight methodical steps that combined traditional content analysis and phenomenological analysis. The article describes the process of analysis in detail. The analysis reveals that all four subjects are the same phenomenon because of their contextual and interactional structure. Besides their common structure, social work and societal have most common*

*features. Social work illustrates itself fundamentally more as work than as social. Concerning the unique structures, psychological appears as the most distinct phenomenon. Social work manifests itself particularly as a work with goals. Societal does not have anything unique. The results are discussed in the frame of disciplinary identities and possibilities for true multi-professionalism and interdisciplinary research. The phenomena-based results show that there is less co-operation between the subjects and disciplines than could and should be.*

**KEYWORDS:** *academic social worker, content analysis, phenomenological analysis, phenomenology, identity of social sciences, disciplines of social sciences.*

**RAKTAŽODŽIAI:** *akademiniis socialiniis darbuotojas, turinio analizė, fenomenologinė analizė, fenomenologija, socialinių mokslų identitetas, socialinių mokslų disciplinos.*

## Introduction

What does social work mean? It has been one of the main interests of our Social Work Identity research group. We have performed three empirical studies motivated by this interest. In the first study, the focus was the Lithuanian context (Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė, Godvadas, Malinauskas, Perttula & Naujanienė 2008), in the second study, Finnish context (Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė, Godvadas, Malinauskas, Perttula & Väänänen 2010), and in the third study we made a comparative analysis of two countries, Lithuania and Finland (Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė, Godvadas, Malinauskas, Perttula & Väänänen 2009). The meta-analysis made in this study further explores the empirical results of the first and the second studies.

Besides national context(s), we adopted two additional contexts in studying the subject. Research participants had earned the doctoral degree in social work at Finnish universities or they were Lithuanian doctoral students who have been accepted at doctoral degree programs at University of Lapland, Finland. Therefore, the second context in our studies was the academic one. The third context stems from the educational background. Because the research participants had received the official permission to study for a doctoral degree in social work, they had the preceding degree in social work or in the subject thematically close to social work. To sum up, in our three previous studies based on the understanding of the meaning of social work, the context has been threefold – national, academic and educational.

In this study, we analyze social work not as a contextual subject but as a phenomenon. As such, we look for the answers that can be considered as general in non-contextual sense. Based on our study design, we do not claim that the results will illustrate the general features for sure. However, we argue that the results portray potential proposals for the general features of the phenomena.

The aim of this research is to study not only social work but also social, societal and psychological in the same manner: not as subjects but as phenomena. In the above-mentioned empirical studies the analysis of the understanding of social, societal and psychological were performed solely to perceive more clearly the features of social work.

It is widely accepted that social sciences are contextual disciplines (see Payne 2005). That is why a phenomena-based orientation needs good theoretical arguments. However, adopting a phenomena-based orientation does not mean devaluing a contextual orientation. As an example, our above-mentioned three studies were realized in contextual frame. A phenomena-based orientation is one orientation to the theme that we consider inspiring. The theoretical arguments for a phenomena-based orientation stem from the phenomenological way of thinking.

In phenomenology, a phenomenon means the ways reality appears for human consciousness. Therefore, phenomena are reality as experienced. In phenomenology, reality is outside the experienced world, too, but for a person it appears as experienced. Using Edmund Husserl's (1965, 107–108) words, it is possible to say that human reality is characterized by "a flow of phenomena."

In this research, the focus is on *understanding*. By understanding, we mean reflecting on what was experienced. As such, understanding is one mode of experiencing and also one way of explicating the reality as it appears for a person (see Packer 1985). Understanding takes place according to the same logic as every experience does: by intentional acts that give an object for the consciousness in order to experience it as something (see Merleau-Ponty 1994).

There are different kinds of things that in phenomenology are called objects. In this study, the objects are named as social, societal, social work and psychological. We assume that these objects belong to the *ideal reality* that does exist only if a person constructs it (see Perttula 2008). A person creates an ideal reality by her reflective acts; in other words, by understanding. Because of the intentionality, person's consciousness moves towards the ideal objects similarly as to all objects in reality. In this process, ideal objects such as social, societal, social work and psychological are understood as something. By regarding social, societal, social work and psychological as ideal objects we focus on phenomena and a set the arguments for adopting a phenomenological approach in the study.

It is not evident that a phenomenon appears directly as such for the consciousness (see e.g., Klein & Westcott 1994). In other words, it is not an everyday thing that a person understands the ideal object as a phenomenon. This is why it is crucial to make difference in studying social, societal, social work and psychological as subjects and phenomena. In the study of subjects, the research can start from conceptualizations and definitions given to the subjects. In the study of phenomena, the research focuses on the ways people understand the subjects. In phenomenology, there is an assumption that a phenomenon consists of general structure and constituents of the structure (e.g., Moustakas 1994). Structures and their constituents are not like physical blocks or clear socio-cultural configurations. General structure can be also called a meaning network (Perttula 1998), which implies that a phenomenon has the meaning-character. Consequently, the general structure of a phenomenon can be grasped

only by rigorous and systematic analysis within the phenomenological attitude (see Natanson 1973). As such, a phenomenon expresses the general features of how an object appears for a person as experienced, e.g. as understood.

Based on these theoretical pre-conditions, we set three research questions:

1. What are the *general structures* of social, societal, social work *and* psychological as phenomena?

To answer to the first research question, we need to search for the *structural constituents* as they are understood that make up the phenomenon of social, societal, social work, and psychological. In particular, the analysis can be accomplished by four sub-questions, without comparison. The results related to the first research question include four distinct descriptions.

2. What is the *common structure* of social, societal, social work *or* psychological as the phenomena?
3. What is the *unique structure* of social, societal, social work *or* psychological as the phenomena?

To answer to the second and the third research questions, we need to conduct a comparative analysis of the structural constituents of social, societal, social work and psychological as phenomena. The analysis was accomplished by comparing the structural constituents of each phenomenon. The concepts of *comparative structural constituent* and *comparative general structures* are introduced to illustrate the comparative nature of the analysis. Common and unique comparative structures will express the phenomena on a more abstract level than general structures do in the first research question.

## Methodical Procedure and Empirical Results

The research material was analysed by eight methodical steps. Method as a concrete procedure was developed during the research process. It utilizes the formula formed for content analysis (e.g., Miles & Huberman 1994; Ragin 1994; Tesch 1990; Weber 1990) but employs it from a phenomenological perspective and methodical concepts (e.g., Giorgi 1994 and 1997; Karlsson 1993; Perttula 1998 and 2009).

To answer to the first research question, methodical steps from 1 to 6 were applied. The results related to the first research question – four general structures – will be presented along with the 6<sup>th</sup> step of the method. To answer to the second research question, the 7<sup>th</sup> methodical step was performed. The result to the second research question – common structure – will be presented in this part. The result to the third research question – unique structure – will be displayed after the final, 8<sup>th</sup> methodical step. Besides the results, each methodical step is described and concretized in this section of the article.

### 1<sup>st</sup> step

The results of two above-mentioned studies (see Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė, Godvadas, Malinauskas, Perttula & Naujanienė 2008; Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė, Godvadas, Malinauskas, Perttula & Väänänen 2010) set the starting point for the empirical analysis. In these two studies, the research material had been gathered by questionnaires consisting of five open-ended questions. The questions were the following: (1) What are social phenomena? (2) What are psychological phenomena? (3) What are societal phenomena? (4) What are social work phenomena? and (5) How should social work phenomena be studied scientifically? The questionnaires were sent to all 85 persons who earned a doctoral degree in social work at any Finnish university from 1994 to 2005, and to all 29 Lithuanian social work doctoral students accepted at the University of Lapland. 33 answered questionnaires from the Finnish sample and 9 from the Lithuanian sample were returned. We analyzed the answers using the modified conventional content analysis and formed the named categories as the empirical results of two studies.

The goal in this 1<sup>st</sup> step of the analysis was to receive an inclusive view of the research material – the named categories described as the results of the two previous studies – as a whole.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> step

All named categories from two studies were gathered. Categories written in italics come from the Lithuanian research material and other categories, from the Finnish research material. In the table, all four subjects – social, societal, social work and psychological – are treated as distinct ones. The task of this step was to unite two research materials by showing the relations between subjects and categories. There are fifty categories in total, including nine identical categories from the two materials. From 50 categories, 20 were related to social work, 13 to social, 8 to societal and 9 to psychological.

TABLE 1. THE RESEARCH MATERIAL AS SUBJECT-RELATED CATEGORIES

SOCIAL WORK	SOCIAL	SOCIETAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL
1. <i>Problematic nature</i>	17. <i>Interaction</i>	28. Wider viewpoint	36. <i>Scientific</i>
2. <i>Related to justice</i>	18. <i>External to mind</i>	29. Connectivity	37. <i>Inner</i>
3. <i>Help and care</i>	19. <i>Macro phenomenon</i>	30. Stratification	38. <i>Behavioral</i>
4. <i>Intervention</i>	20. <i>Experienced</i>	31. Societal context	39. <i>Mental</i>
5. <i>Interaction</i>	21. <i>Perceived</i>	32. Dimension of social policy	39. Mental
6. <i>Challenging situation</i>	22. <i>Problem related</i>	33. Ethic	38. Behavioral
7. <i>Giving voice</i>	23. Stratification	34. Power issues	40. Individual level
1. Problematic nature	20. Experienced	35. Help and care (28-35)	37. Inner
8. Marginalization	17. Interaction		41. Threatening to life (36-41)
3. Help and care	24. Holistic		
9. Services	25. Collective		
4. Intervention	26. Community		
10. Ethic	27. Social problems (17-27)		
11. Social policy			
12. Stratification			
5. Interaction			
13. Social context			
14. Theorize			
15. Research			
16. Object/Aim (1-16)			

3<sup>rd</sup> step

The heart of this methodical step was to make all possible *pair comparisons* between the four subjects. The pair comparisons were social-societal, social-social work, social-psychological, societal-social work, societal-psychological, and social work-psychological. Hence, the comparison was made in three pairs for each subject. The analytical unit of the comparisons was the title of the category. In these horizontal comparisons, categories are called comparative categories.

Two sorts of results of comparisons were described: *similarities* as evident and potential, and *differences* as evident and potential. The terms “evident” and “potential” are used in a phenomenological sense: what is clear is evident, what is potential needs clarification (see Giorgi 1992). It must be kept in mind that the comparisons concerned the pairs of subjects, not four subject altogether.

As an example, the results related to the comparisons of all three pairs involving social work are described in the following table. The results of the comparisons of other three pairs – social-societal, social-psychological and societal-psychological – were created in an identical way and the analysis related to them is available for every interested reader by request from the authors.

TABLE 2. COMPARATIVE CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL WORK

SIMILARITIES	
SIMILARITIES WITH SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL	
SOCIAL WORK	SOCIAL
EVIDENT SIMILARITIES	
Interaction	Interaction
Stratification	Stratification
Problematic nature	Problem related
POTENTIAL SIMILARITIES	
Problematic nature	Social problems
Marginalization	Social problems
Social policy	Macro phenomenon
Social context	Collective
Social context	Community
SIMILARITIES WITH SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIETAL	
SOCIAL WORK	SOCIETAL
EVIDENT SIMILARITIES	
Stratification	Stratification
Dimension of social policy	Dimension of social policy
Ethic	Ethic
Help and care	Help and care
POTENTIAL SIMILARITIES	
Giving voice	Power issues
SIMILARITIES WITH SOCIAL WORK AND PSYCHOLOGICAL	
SOCIAL WORK	PSYCHOLOGICAL
EVIDENT SIMILARITIES	
None	None
POTENTIAL SIMILARITIES	
Research	Scientific
Problematic nature	Threatening to life
Giving voice	Individual level
DIFFERENCIES	
DIFFERENCIES WITH SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL	
EVIDENT DIFFERENCIES	
SOCIAL WORK	SOCIAL
Related to justice	External to mind
Help and care	Macro phenomenon
Intervention	Experienced
Challenging situation	Perceived
Giving voice	Holistic
Marginalization	Collective
Services	Community
Ethic	Social problems
Social policy	
Social context	
Theorize	
Research	
Object/Aim	

POTENTIAL DIFFERENCES	
Challenging situation	Problem related
Marginalization	Collective
Marginalization	Community
Theorize	Experienced
Object/Aim	Holistic
DIFFERENCIES WITH SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIETAL	
EVIDENT DIFFERENCIES	
SOCIAL WORK	SOCIETAL
Problematic nature Related to justice Intervention Interaction Challenging situation Giving voice Marginalization Services Social context Theorize Research Object/Aim	Wider viewpoint Connectivity Societal context Power issues
POTENTIAL DIFFERENCIES	
Marginalization	Societal context
Object/Aim	Societal context
Object/Aim	Wider viewpoint
DIFFERENCIES WITH SOCIAL WORK AND PSYCHOLOGICAL	
EVIDENT DIFFERENCIES	
SOCIAL WORK	PSYCHOLOGICAL
Problematic nature Related to justice Help and care Intervention Interaction Challenging situation Giving voice Marginalization Services Ethic Social policy Stratification Social context Theorize Research Object/Aim	Scientific Inner Behavioral Mental Individual level Threatening to life
POTENTIAL DIFFERENCIES	
Social context	Inner
Stratification	Mental
Theorize	Individual level



EVIDENT SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCIES	
EVIDENT SIMILARITIES OF SOCIAL WORK	EVIDENT DIFFERENCES OF SOCIAL WORK
Help and care	Related to justice
Intervention	Challenging situation
Interaction	Giving voice
Ethic	Marginalization
Social policy	Services
Stratification	Social context
Problematic nature	Theorize
	Research
	Object/Aim

4<sup>th</sup> step

In this methodical step, *units of meaning* – citations from the original research material – and a *verbatim description* of them were added to the analysis. The units of meaning together with the related verbatim description and the category were organized according to the classification presented in the previous 3<sup>rd</sup> step: evident similarities, potential similarities, evident differences and potential differences. Each of four subjects – social, societal, social work and psychological – was handled separately according to the first research question.

In the following table, social work is again used as an example to show how the analysis was conducted.

TABLE 3. COMPARATIVE CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL WORK ATTACHED TO VERBATIM DESCRIPTIONS AND UNITS OF MEANING

SIMILARITIES	
EVIDENT SIMILARITIES	
SOCIAL WORK	OTHER SUBJECTS
<p><b>Interaction</b></p> <p>Interaction emphasized a social work phenomenon as related to the variety of interactions. It is related to human interaction with the environment: “...action and relation questions between communities, groups, individuals...” either how human being intertwines with the processes of society: “...is examining social processes, processes in which society and human being intertwine.” It is also related to more specific interactions between social worker and client: “The social worker-client relationship.”</p> <p>First of all, it is related to human interaction in general and to human interaction with the environment: “...everything that</p>	<p><b>Interaction (SOCIAL)</b></p> <p>Interaction describes interactive, relationship-laden nature of social phenomenon: “Everything that is related to human interaction...” There are at least three levels or realms of interaction mentioned in this category – the realm or level of individual relationships, “...connection between human beings...”, the realm or level of relationships with groups and an immediate community. “Central issues are ... person’s relation to an immediate community...” and the realm or level of relationships in a broader societal structures “...related to the relations between people ... to a society”, “Dynamics between institutions and activators.”</p>

<p>is related to human interaction AND related to human interaction with the environment.” It is also related to more specific interactions between a person and social systems “...when this interaction that is communication between a person and social systems in the environment becomes problematic...” Another important aspect of the interactions is their often problematic nature – these are interactions resulting in some kind of problem that defines a phenomenon as social work.</p>	
<p><b>Stratification</b> Stratification defined a social work phenomenon as focusing on a certain person or group position in society “...focuses on position that a person or different group and population group have in community and society.” It is also opening the meaning of a different level: “The important thing is not that the level of analysis is human being or society but that different levels and their meaning are opened.”</p>	<p><b>Stratification (SOCIAL)</b> Stratification describes social phenomenon as related to social stratification or certain structures of society: “The structures of the society...” are also related to differences prevalent among people, “...space for the development in which the otherness of some people is produced.” Stratification is also related to the reaction of society towards differences: “...people can be repressed or glorified due to their dissimilarity.”</p> <p><b>Stratification (SOCIETAL)</b> Stratification describes the relation of a societal phenomenon to structures: “That it is related to the structures and processes of a society,” or related to the meaning of structures: “The meaning of structures also gets more highlighted.”</p>
<p><b>Problematic nature</b> The problematic nature of social work phenomena is emphasized. Problems are primarily understood as something resulting in interaction: “If... it is understood as social work problem, grounded in the context of interaction between a person and society...”, “...anything which happens in human to human or human to environment situations which we think need development or ‘repair’.” Problems are also understood as arising from malfunctioning social relations or from a phenomena that do not satisfy certain standards: “...when persons’ social functioning in society is malfunctioning,</p>	<p><b>Problem related (SOCIAL)</b> Problem related primarily stresses the relation of a social phenomenon to the problematic nature: “...alcoholism, drug addiction, abuse in families...”</p>

<p>as if the person is ‘falling out’ of society...”, “...would be social or psychological phenomena that do not satisfy certain standards or expectations.”</p> <p>The problematic nature of social work phenomena is emphasized. Problems are primarily understood as such “...the idea of issues’ problematic nature...”, “...anticipating problem,” “...social problem or thread of it...”, or describing causality of problems nature: “...health problems are often related to unfortunate life-situation, even from the beginning of the life,” “helplessness, vulnerability and alienation, disadvantaged or underprivileged...” Problems are also understood as arising from malfunctioning social relations “...different kind of humane and commune indisposition,” “The malfunction of the relation between society and individual...”</p>	
<p><b>Social policy</b></p> <p>Social policy emphasizes a social work phenomenon as related to social policy: “...are based on social care law and to a special legislation of disabled...”</p>	<p><b>Dimension of social policy (SOCIETAL)</b></p> <p>The dimension of social policy is related to phenomenon actualization in political ways: “It is possible to actuate a phenomenon on social political ways...”, to processes of legislation: “In the society, dissimilarity and acceptance of it becomes visible in the legislation” and social policy interpretations: “...social political solutions and interpretations.”</p>
<p><b>Ethic</b></p> <p>Ethic emphasized a social work phenomenon as related to the ethic: “phenomena, which are related to ...and ethics are important in social work...”</p>	<p><b>Ethic (SOCIETAL)</b></p> <p>Ethic describes attitudes formed through education: “Attitudes become also visible in upbringing and education...” how children accept others who look different from them.</p>
<p><b>Help and care</b></p> <p>Help and care describes a social work phenomenon as related to helping, caring or supporting: “...social work is taking care of the people who are in the most unfortunate situation and their issues,” “...different kind of humane and commune indisposition ... resolving.” Help and care emphasizes individual and community needs for help, securing individual</p>	<p><b>Help and care (SOCIETAL)</b></p> <p>Help and care describes the need for help (“The elderly require communal home care”) and the impact of services on people’s lives: “...as home services in forming and managing clients’ life situations...”</p>

<p>and community well-being in prevalent societal circumstances. Help could be understood as something direct: "...being a work which solves social problems", or as a supportive system: "...is one of the support systems, which is developed as a support for disabled."</p> <p>Help and care describes a social work phenomenon as related to helping or caring: "...related to ... help using various inner or external resources of a person towards fully functioning life." Help and care emphasizes direct help, reacting to human needs, help in facing personal challenges and in creating a fully functioning life in society.</p>	
<b>POTENTIAL SIMILARITIES</b>	
<b>SOCIAL WORK</b>	<b>OTHER SUBJECTS</b>
<p><b>Problematic nature</b>                  Problematic nature of social work phenomena is emphasized. Problems are primarily understood as something resulting in interaction: "If ... it is understood as social work problem grounded in the context of interaction between a person and society...", "...anything which happens in human to human or human to environment situations which we think need development or 'repair'." Problems are also understood as arising from malfunctioning social relations or from a phenomena that do not satisfy certain standards" "...when a person's social functioning in society is malfunctioning, as if the person is 'falling out' of society...", "...would be social or psychological phenomena that do not satisfy certain standards or expectations."                  Problematic nature of social work phenomena is emphasized. Problems are primarily understood as such "...the idea of issues' problematic nature...", "...anticipating problem ... social problem or thread of it...", or describing causality of the nature of problems: "...health problems are often related to unfortunate life-situation, even from the beginning of the life," "helplessness, vulnerability and</p>	<p><b>Social problems (SOCIAL)</b>                  Social problems describe the relations of social phenomenon to social problems: "...phenomena of social problems...", "focusing on people who live in a difficult situation..."</p> <p><b>Threatening to life (PSYCHOLOGICAL)</b>                  Threatening to life defined psychological phenomenon as related to worries and problems affecting to life: "...separate worries and problems which arise from inner or past or from experiences which affect life..." and as concerned with intervention in crisis and risks threatening to survival: "The crisis and risks that are threatening survival which may be inner, between the people or groups or also communities when the point of view and tools to intervene have a major role..." and it includes anxiety and depression in life: "...anxiety and depression in participants' life."</p>

<p>alienation, disadvantaged or underprivileged...” Problems are also understood as arising from malfunctioning social relations: “...different kind of humane and communal indisposition,” “the malfunction of the relation between society and individual...”</p>	
<p><b>Marginalization</b> Marginalization emphasized that the relation to marginalization defines a social work phenomenon: “...it is related to processes which displace [marginalize] people.”</p>	<p><b>Social problems (SOCIAL)</b> Social problems describe the relations of a social phenomenon to social problems: “...phenomena of social problems...”, “focusing on people who live in difficult situation...”</p>
<p><b>Social policy</b> Social policy emphasizes a social work phenomenon as related to social policy: “...are based on social care law and on a special legislation of disabled...”</p>	<p><b>Macro phenomenon (SOCIAL)</b> Macro phenomenon describes social as a primarily group phenomenon “... situation related to ...groups that can be determined in time and space” and also as phenomenon-related to wider structures and processes of society: “... related to society as a separate reality (its structures and processes)...”</p>
<p><b>Social context</b> Social context described a social work phenomenon as the understanding of a person in a specific context: “...societal dimension is included and the aim is to understand not only interaction phenomena but also a person in the context,” segregating macro and micro context: “...it combines the macro and micro, i.e. features a human being in his societal contexts.”</p>	<p><b>Collective (SOCIAL)</b> Collective emphasizes the broader nature of a social phenomenon – the fact that it is not an individual but rather a group phenomenon: “...isn’t (only) individual level phenomenon,” “...is attached to several people in collective level...” It is also recognized that social phenomena are collective in a societal way: “...in straight connection to a society...”, “the societalness of a matter.”</p> <p><b>Community (SOCIAL)</b> Community emphasizes the relation of a social phenomenon to the phenomenon of community: “...a sense of community...”, “...sociality in the positive meaning of word; a sense of community...”</p>

<p><b>Giving voice</b> Giving voice defines social work phenomenon as an act of giving voice to certain persons or certain groups of people. This may raise awareness: "...as gives voice to the most silent groups" or even fight for the rights: "...then you try to 'fight for' or raise sensitivity to specific people's rights."</p>	<p><b>Power issues (SOCIETAL)</b> Power issues are related to empowerment: "The local-levels trying to take a power for themselves " or the forms of using power.</p> <p><b>Individual level (PSYCHOLOGICAL)</b> Individual level described a psychological phenomenon as tightened on individual: "...is more narrowly tightened on individual..." and focused on an individual's personal thinking, history and experiences: "...when the focus is mainly on individual's personal thinking, history and experiences."</p>
<p><b>Theorize</b> Theorize defined social work phenomena as the theoretical assumption of the occurrences: "...a phenomenon is possible to take over with theoretical ... of social work."</p>	<p><b>Scientific (PSYCHOLOGICAL)</b> Scientific describes psychological phenomenon as defined by the science of psychology: "...determined by the science of psychology." It is described as a science about individuals and the phenomena of human mind: "...as a science about human mind, patterns and processes in it...", also as a science about different states of human being.</p>
<p><b>Research</b> Research emphasized social work phenomenon as researching construction of the experiences or the interaction between a social worker and a client: "... the interaction between a profession and a client ... and to research and to develop it..." or the specific meaning of relations or behavior: "...meanings they are relating to their use..."</p>	<p><b>Scientific (PSYCHOLOGICAL)</b> Scientific describes psychological phenomenon as defined by the science of psychology: "...determined by the science of psychology." It is described as a science about individuals and phenomena of human mind: "...as science about human mind, patterns and processes in it...", also as a science about the different states of human being.</p>

DIFFERENCES

EVIDENT DIFFERENCES

SOCIAL WORK

**Related to justice** emphasizes that a social work phenomenon is defined by the relation to social justice: “Social justice makes phenomenon social work on.”

**Intervention** defines social work phenomenon as intervention with a person experiencing certain social phenomenon in the centre: “...‘work’ or practice with the main focus on the person experiencing social phenomenon (2.10).” Intervention defined social work phenomenon as planning a better response to the need of people” “...planning care-interventions for the users’ needs would be better than response...”.

**Challenging situation** defines social work phenomenon as a certain challenging situation. A challenging situation is understood as very intense and/or harmful to welfare and disorganizing: “...many situations ... people who experience very intensive life situations (crisis, illness and death);” “Situation when conditions ... create disorganization of the environment, improper behavior or harm human welfare.”

**Giving voice** defines social work phenomenon as an act of giving voice to certain persons or certain groups of people. This may raise awareness” “...as gives voice to the most silent groups” or even may fight for rights: “...then you try to ‘fight for’ or raise sensitivity of specific people’s rights.”

**Marginalization** emphasized that a social work phenomenon is defined by relation to marginalization: “...is related to processes which displace [marginalize] people.”

**Services describing** a social work phenomenon emphasize services: “The service system; the practices of service [helping] work” or describes specific area of the services “...services which are directed to the disabled...”

**Social context** described social work phenomenon as the understanding of a person in a specific context: “...societal dimension is included and its aim is to understand not only interaction phenomena but also a person in the context” segregating macro and micro context: “...combines the macro and micro, i.e. features a human being in his societal contexts.”

**Theorize** defined social work phenomena as the theoretical assumption of the occurrences: “...a phenomenon is possible to take over with theoretical ... of social work.”

**Research** emphasized social work phenomenon as a researching construction of the experiences or the interaction between a social worker and a client: “...the interaction between a profession and a client ... and to research and to develop it...” or the specific meaning of relations or behavior: “...meanings they are relating to their use...”.

**Object/ Aim** emphasized a social work phenomenon as a way to study specific object or to have certain aim: “...is about turning man to his own life as a subject...”

POTENTIAL DIFFERENCES	
SOCIAL WORK	OTHER SUBJECTS
<p><b>Challenging situation</b> Challenging situation defines social work phenomenon as a certain challenging situation. A challenging situation is understood as very intense and/or harmful to welfare and disorganizing: “...many situations ... people who experience very intensive life situations (crisis, illness and death)”, “situation when conditions ... create disorganization of the environment, improper behavior or harm human welfare.”</p>	<p><b>Problem related (SOCIAL)</b> Problem related primarily stresses that a social phenomenon is related to the problematic nature: “...alcoholism, drug addiction, abuse in families...”</p> <p><b>Social problems (SOCIAL)</b> Social problems describe the relations of social phenomenon to social problems: “...phenomena of social problems...”, “focusing on people who live in difficult situation...”</p> <p><b>Threatening to life (PSYCHOLOGICAL)</b> Threatening to life defined a psychological phenomenon as related to worries and problems affecting life: “...separate worries and problems which arise from inner or past or from experiences and which affect life...” and concerned with the intervention in crisis and risks threatening to survival: “The crisis and risks that are threatening survival which may be inner, between the people or groups or also communities when the point of view and tools to intervene have a major role...” and includes anxiety and depression in life: “...anxiety and depression in participants’ life.”</p>
<p><b>Marginalization</b> Marginalization emphasized that a social work phenomenon is defined by relation to marginalization: “...is related to the processes which displace [marginalize] people.”</p>	<p><b>Collective (SOCIAL)</b> Collective emphasizes the broader nature of social phenomenon – the fact that it is not an individual, but rather group phenomenon: “...isn’t (only) individual level phenomenon”, “...is attached to several people on collective level...” It is also recognized that social phenomena are collective in a societal way: “...in straight connection to a society...”, “the societalness of a matter.”</p> <p><b>Community (SOCIAL)</b> Community emphasizes the relation of a social phenomenon to the phenomenon of community: “...a sense of community...”, “...sociality in a positive meaning of the word; a sense of community...”</p>



	<p><b>Societal context (SOCIETAL)</b>          Societal context describes particular examples of societal phenomenon: "... may be the air pollution, the individualizing of human beings, how eager people are to watch television or read magazines, the Internet world, brands, societal newcomers; for example, punk-music is a societal phenomenon" and unemployment is emphasized: "Unemployment as a societal problem..."</p>
<p><b>Object/Aim</b>          Object/Aim emphasized a social work phenomenon as a way to study a specific object or having a certain aim: "...it is about turning a man to his own life as a subject..."</p>	<p><b>Holistic (SOCIAL)</b>          Holistic describes a social phenomenon as dilemmatic and complex phenomenon: "The integration of cultural factors, societal structures and human interaction...", "The essential thing ... is the wholeness ... the bandages and connections."</p> <p><b>Societal context (SOCIETAL)</b>          Societal context describes particular examples of a societal phenomenon: "...may be the air pollution, the individualizing of human beings, how eager people are to watch television or read magazines, the Internet world, brands, societal newcomers; for example, punk-music is a societal phenomenon" and unemployment is emphasized: "Unemployment as a societal problem..."</p> <p><b>Wider viewpoint (SOCIETAL)</b>          Wider viewpoint describes a societal phenomenon as related to a broader viewpoint of the human, group or processes in the society: "A human being is seen as an actor in his relations and in the structures of society", or even considers a wider globalization perspective: "The relation between the everyday life of a human being and societal developmental course – all the way to the globalization of finances." Not only human but structures and services are viewed from this broad perspective: "...home services are understood as a part of the welfare state politics."</p>

<p><b>Social context</b>                  Social context described a social work phenomenon as the understanding of a person in a specific context: "...societal dimension is included and its aim is to understand not only interaction phenomena but also a person in the context" segregating the macro and micro context: "...combines the macro and micro, i.e. features a human being in his societal contexts."</p>	<p><b>Inner (PSYCHOLOGICAL)</b>                  Inner defines psychological phenomenon as related primarily to a person's inner world: "At first ... comes into my mind – something inner." It includes inner experiences and their manifestations: "...related to manifestations of memory, emotions, thinking and other inner experiences of a person," and manifestations of the features of the inner world: "...related to manifestations of inner experiences," and a person's inner communication: "...related to ... his (person's) inner communication, that is to subjective meanings and how a person submits to experience, internal and external phenomena."</p>
<p><b>Stratification</b>                  Stratification defined a social work phenomenon as focusing on a certain person or a group position in society: "...focuses on position that a person or a different group and population group have in community and society." Also opening meaning of a different level: "The important thing is not that the level of analysis is a human being or society but that different levels and their meaning are opened."</p>	<p><b>Mental (PSYCHOLOGICAL)</b>                  Mental described psychological phenomenon as mental phenomenon: "A number of mental phenomena ... encountered in social work (including emotions etc.)." A psychological phenomenon is defined as something related to psychical aspects of a human being: "...related to a psychical aspect ... of a human being or a group of human beings...", that includes the person's mental growth, personality and capabilities: "The questions related to the person's mental growth, personality and capabilities ... are typically psychological phenomena," and emotions "... related to peoples' mind, emotions and generally psychical processes..."</p>
<p><b>Theorize</b>                  Theorize defined social work phenomena as the theoretical assumption of the occurrences: "...a phenomenon is possible to take over with the theoretical ... of social work."</p>	<p><b>Experienced (SOCIAL)</b>                  Experienced is related to a different kind of experiences of social phenomena. First, social phenomena are related to fright and insecurity: "...that is perceived and experienced often as frightening," "Insecurity as a general human experience ... and searching for safety from other people..." Social phenomena are considered as recognized, learned and cultural: "...individually or collectively recognized," "What is social is also learned and cultural."</p>

	<p><b>Individual level (PSYCHOLOGICAL)</b>          Individual level described a psychological phenomenon as tightened on an individual: "...is more narrowly tightened on an individual..." and focused on the individual's personal thinking, history and experiences: "...when the focus is mainly on individual's personal thinking, history and experiences."</p>
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5<sup>th</sup> step

In this step, the combined material of the two above-mentioned studies was carefully read in order to prepare meta-categories and comparative meta-categories for the three final steps. Careful reading, mutual testing and validating between the unities, consisting of meaning unit, verbatim description and the named category were made. As a result, the categories were grouped vertically separately under each subject (social, societal, social work, psychological) according to their similarities. Simultaneously, the groups of categories were horizontally set according to their similarity to or difference from other subjects. Similarity and difference hereinafter mean both evident and potential similarity and difference that were verified.

**TABLE 4. SUBJECT-RELATED GROUPS OF CATEGORIES ACCORDING TO SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FOUR SUBJECTS**

SOCIAL	SOCIETAL	SOCIAL WORK	PSYCHOLOGICAL
	Help and care (35) Ethic (33)	Help and care (3) Ethic (10) Services (9) Intervention (4) Related to justice (4)	
Problem related (22) Social problems (27)		Problematic nature (1) Challenging situation (6)	Threatening to life (41)
Stratification (23) Macro phenomenon (19)	Stratification (30) Dimension of social policy (32)	Stratification (12) Social policy (11)	
	Power issues (34)	Marginalization (8) Giving voice (7) Social context (13)	
Interaction (17)	Connectivity (29)	Interaction (5)	

		Theorize (14) Research (15)	Scientific (36)
Collective (25) Community (26)			
Holistic (24)	Wider viewpoint (28)		
Experienced (20) Perceived (21)			Inner (37)
External to mind (18)			
	Societal context (31)		
			Mental (39)
			Individual level (40)
			Behavioral (38)
		Object/Aim (16)	

6<sup>th</sup> step – answering to the first research question

The meta-categories of each subject were constituted based on the organization of categories described in the previous step. From 41 categories we formed 25 *meta-categories*. They are the core for answering to the first research question: what are the general structures of social, societal, social work and psychological as phenomena.

TABLE 5. SUBJECT-RELATED META-CATEGORIES

SOCIAL	SOCIETAL	SOCIAL WORK	PSYCHOLOGICAL
Collective	Wide viewpoint	Ethical work for other people who are in need	Individual as a focus
Experience	Relations	Service system of social work	Mind of an individual as an abstraction
Interaction	Ethical attitude	Focused on certain object or aim	Substance of the mind of an individual
Process of socialization	Structures of society	Interest in problems as challenges	The way of an individual to appear outside himself
Connection to society		Interaction	Related to threats to life
Problems associated to human relations		Related to positions of persons or groups in society	The tradition of psychology as a science
Holistic, integrative		Multi-layered	
		Theoretical understanding	

In the following, the subject-related meta-categories are described literally as four *general structures*. In these results related to the first research question it is adequate to focus on each general structure as itself, not to compare four general structures according to their similarities or differences.

#### General structure of social

Collective, experience, interaction, process of socialization, connection to society, problems associated to human relations and holistic or integrative form the general structural constituents of social. As *collective*, social manifests itself in the relations and connections of people, in sociality. As collective, social means the possibility to have the sense of community. Groups and their actions as well as the otherness as a part of collective belonging are in the core of social. Social appears as similarities and dissimilarities of people in which the non-belonging is produced. As an *experience*, social manifests itself as subjective and individual. It means that social is realized in conscious experience. Simultaneously, everything that individual is experiencing, is basically social. In more detail, individual's emotions that occur in interaction between persons are social. As *interaction*, social manifests itself in the mutual relations between individuals, groups, communities and societal structures. Relations can consist of various dynamics and form networks or processes. As the *process of socialization*, social manifests itself as human actions that construct the culture, and what is learned through generations. As *connection to society*, social manifests itself as a relation to structures and its processes. Per se, social is actualizing external to subjective mind. In specified sense, social manifests itself as *problems associated to human relations*. As *holistic integrative*, social manifests itself as integration of different aspects, such as cultural factors and human interaction. Social may cover all wholeness that can be imagined.

#### General structure of societal

Wide viewpoint, relations, ethical attitude and structures of society form the general structural constituents of societal. As *wide viewpoint*, societal manifests itself as a broad perspective, which means an extensive context of the issues. Societal ranges from listening music to globalization when it is broadly contextualized. As *relations*, societal manifests itself as aspects between individual life and society. Societal means linking these multi-layered levels. Societal shows itself as an action between culture, structures of society, groups of people and human beings. Being actualized in these relations, societal generates the partnerships, human rights and positions of the groups of people. As *ethical attitude*, societal manifests itself as atmosphere that is rising up during education and that is realized in help and care practices that society is serving. Societal means that someone needs services and the needs have to be fulfilled because of the ethical principles. As *structures of society*, societal manifests itself as the whole system of services and furthermore as the idea of politics and legislation.

### General structure of social work

Ethical work for other people who are in need, service system of social work focused on certain object or aim, interest in problems as challenges, interaction related to the positions of persons or groups in society, and multi-layered and theoretical understanding form the general structural constituents of social work. As ***ethical work for other people who are in need***, social work manifests itself as a practice grounded in values of social justice and ethics. These values justify the presence of social work. As ethical work, social work supports and takes care of people by responding to their personal needs. Thus, social work means giving voice to and maintaining the rights and well-being of people who are in need. Social work is realizing this by making interventions to people's lives in the frame of social care law. As a ***service system of social work***, social work manifests itself as social work practices of help and care that are independent tasks in societal services. As such, social work participates in societal systems and politics. As ***focused on certain object or aim***, social work manifests itself as natural consequence due to its societal task as well as to its ethical urge to respond to people's needs. As ***interest to problems as challenges***, social work manifests itself as being interested in the variety of problems or a thread of problems dealing with human life and welfare. Problems can appear as issues that do not satisfy certain standards. Instead of viewing the problems as such, social work means repairing or developing the issues that it defines as problems. Therefore, social work means considering problems as challenges. As ***interaction***, social work manifests itself as interaction itself, including relationships between a client and social worker. As interaction, social work appears as its work practice but also as an interest in any kind of relations between humans, groups, communities and their associations to society or environment. As interaction, an interest in difficulties or disconnections in relations characterizes social work. As ***related to positions of persons or groups in society***, social work manifests itself as more stable relations between persons or groups and society. Social work appears as both focusing on those positions and being in those positions. The special interest is in the processes that displace people in society. Social work is about questions of underprivileged people and people in societal contexts in general. As ***multi-layered***, social work manifests itself as being open simultaneously to different levels, such as personal, social and societal. Social work is not only connected to these levels but the multi-layered character is also built in it. As ***theoretical understanding***, social work manifests itself as issues included in the theoretical understanding of social work,

### General structure of psychological

Individual as a focus, individual mind as an abstraction, substance of the individual mind, individual way to appear outside herself related to the threats to life and the tradition of psychology as a science form the general structural constituents of psychological. As ***focusing on an individual***, psychological manifests itself as anything concerning individuals. As ***individual mind as an abstraction***, psychological manifests itself as more specified focusing on the inner individual world as a conceptual whole, which can get the form of an idea or concept such as psyche, person or

mental. As *substance of the individual mind*, psychological manifests itself as a content of the abstract inner individual worlds that is realized as action. The substance of the mind is realizing itself as relations to and focuses on something, for instance, as perceptions, self-images, attitudes and understandings. As such, psychological appears as experiences. As *individual way to appear outside herself*, psychological manifests itself as behavior. As such, psychological combines behavior as a concrete expression or action and an individual in the environmental context. Being psychological individual aims to adapt to environmental changes. Adapting becomes personal during the individual development. As *related to the threats to life*, psychological manifests itself as problems when problems arise from the individual mind and are affecting a personal life. As such, problems are individual experiences such as worries. Simultaneously, problems are risks rising outside of an individual but still experienced as threats. As *the tradition of psychology as a science*, psychological manifests itself as all the issues defined by the science of psychology. The science of psychology means an interest in an individual and her mind.

7<sup>th</sup> step – answering to the second research question

To answer to the second research question (what is the common structure of social, societal, social work and psychological as phenomena?) it is necessary to go back to the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> steps, where mutual testing and validating between the unities that consist of the meaning unit, verbatim description and the named category was made. A continuous reflection on the 5<sup>th</sup> step was especially crucial for the analysis to stay maximally rigorous and systematic. In the 7<sup>th</sup> step, the level of examination was more general than in the previous step. The examination concerned the *common structure* based on the comparative analysis beyond the singular subject.

In this step of analysis the focus was on similarities between the subjects in all their combinations. These results named as the *comparative meta-categories* are concluded as follows:

TABLE 6. COMPARATIVE META-CATEGORIES OF SIMILARITIES BEYOND THE SUBJECTS

SOCIAL	SOCIETAL	SOCIAL WORK	PSYCHOLOGICAL
Contextual	Contextual	Contextual	Contextual
Interactional	Interactional	Interactional	Interactional
Multi-layered	Multi-layered	Multi-layered	
Problem-related		Problem-related	Problem-related
	Positions	Positions	
	Ethical work	Ethical work	
Experienced			Experienced
Holistic	Holistic		
		Theoretic	Theoretic

The comparative structural constituents featured by *similarities* beyond the singular subjects manifest the *common structure* that exceed the subjects as distinct phenomena and describe them as the relational phenomenon. The result of the second research question is described as one common structure.

The common structure of social, societal, social work and psychological

Social, societal, social work and psychological appear as **contextual**. As contextual, social manifests itself as connected to society in a way that society is a context of social. Consistently, societal manifests itself as an extensive context itself. Social work as contextual manifests itself as being interested in people in their societal contexts. Psychological is contextual as individual behavior in the context. Social, societal, social work and psychological appear as **interactional**. As interactional, social manifests itself as realized in individual or group relations and emphasizing the dynamics of the relations. Social work shows itself as an interaction between people, groups or communities especially in work practices. As interactional, societal means primarily relations between levels and structures, but also between humans. As interactional, psychological shows itself as the substance of the mind that is related to something. Social, societal and social work appear as **multi-layered**, and psychological does not. As multi-layered, social manifests itself as consisting of social layers or different groups of people. Societal shows itself as multi-layered by connecting structural levels, and social work, by dealing with several levels at the time. Social, social work and psychological appear as **problem-related**, and societal does not. As problem-related, social manifests itself as being interested in any troubles in human relations. As problem-related, social work emerges as challenges with the aim to solve problems. In psychological, problem-related means problems because they are threats. Societal and social work appear as **positions**, and social and psychological do not. As positions, societal manifests itself as an interest in groups and in using power in relation to them. As positions, social work manifests itself as persons or groups of society and as an interest in marginalization. Societal and social work appear as **ethical work**, and social and psychological do not. As ethical work, societal manifests itself as a general attitude and as social services that respond to any needs. As ethical work, social work emerges as practices that respond to the needs people have. Social and societal appear as **holistic**, and social work and psychological do not. As holistic, social manifests itself as including everything. Societal appears as holistic in having a wide viewpoint and holistic context. Social work and psychological appear as **theoretic**, and social and societal do not. As theoretical, social manifests itself as an experience that takes place in individual mind especially in human interaction. Besides, social work means theoretical understanding of itself. Psychological emerges as theoretical in experiences which are individual minds' relations to external objects. Besides, psychological means the tradition of psychology as a science.



8<sup>th</sup> step – answering to the third research question

To answer to the third research question – what is the unique structure of social, societal, social work and psychological as phenomenon? – we went through the methodical procedure parallel to the second research question. Its dissimilarity to the previous step was that here we focused on differences between the subjects, not on their similarities. We looked for a unique structure by grasping what was exclusive for social, societal, social work and psychological in all combinations between them.

TABLE 7. COMPARATIVE META-CATEGORIES OF DIFFERENCES BEYOND THE SUBJECTS

SOCIAL	SOCIETAL	SOCIAL WORK	PSYCHOLOGICAL
Communal Socialization		Aim-oriented	Individual-level Mind-abstraction Behavioral

The comparative structural constituents featured by *differences* beyond the singular subjects manifest the *unique structure* that exceed the subjects of social, societal, social work and psychological as distinct phenomena and describe them as relational phenomena. The description of the unique structure is the following.

The unique structure of social, societal, social work and psychological:

Social appears as communal and as socialization, social work emerges as aim-oriented, and psychological, as individual-leveled, as mind-abstraction and as behavioral. Societal does not appear as unique comparative meaning constituents. As *communal*, social manifests itself as the sense of community and belonging to groups. As *socialization*, social manifests itself as constructing culture beyond generations. As *aim-oriented*, social work manifests itself as work with goals. As *individual-level*, psychological manifests itself as anything concerning an individual. As *mind-abstraction*, psychological manifests itself as concepts referring to an inner world. As *behavioral*, psychological manifests itself as person's concrete ways to act in the environment.

## Conclusions and Discussion

We have claimed earlier that the general features of social work in the global frame can be apprehended better by regarding identity as representations rather than as understood (see Perttula, Väänänen, Godvadas, Malinauskas & Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė 2009). In this study, we presented another standpoint towards the disciplinary identities including the identity of social work. Our presupposition was based on phenomenological theory, according to which, understanding is experience of an object followed by an intentional structure

of consciousness. Intentionality means that consciousness is always directed towards something (Husserl 1995).

If so, a person, social worker, for example, has experiences of the global socio-cultural views of what social work is. It means that an ongoing active discussion about the global features of social work identity (e.g., Lyons 2000; Par-ton 1996; Payne 1996) is relevant not in a contextual sense but as a reflection of social work as a phenomenon. In other words, people may have experiences of social-cultural meanings, for example, the global views of social work, and these experiences are formed as understanding because of reflective conscious acts. Hence, socio-cultural features related to subjects like social work, social, societal and psychological appear as the structural constituents of them as phenomena. Consequently, focusing on subjects as phenomena, it is possible to open the views on the disciplinary identities detached from contextual definitions and conceptualizations.

The results interestingly show that all four phenomena are contextual even outside contextual approach. Besides, all of them appear as interactional. These findings demonstrate that psychology, social work, social sciences and societal sciences as phenomena have a common core. The results imply that four subjects are *the same* fields or disciplines, too. In addition, the common meta-categories entail the ways of manifestation of their sameness. They are all together contextual-interactional disciplines; in other words, the research questions expressing contextual or interactional interests are relevant whether the discipline is called psychology, social work, social science or societal science. To conclude, contextual and interactional constituents of the research interests form the interdisciplinary ground for these disciplines.

It should also be mentioned that besides contextual and interactional, social work and societal have three common meta-categories – multi-layered, positions and ethical work – and psychological and societal do not have any. In other four pairs – between social and social work, social and societal, social and psychological, and social work and psychological – there are two additional common comparative meta-categories. It may be unexpected that the common structure between social work and societal is more multi-faceted compared to all other relations between the subjects. It can be explained by the close link between social work and social policy in Finland (see Satka 2005). The societal position of social work has also been vividly discussed worldwide (e.g., Adams, Dominelli & Payne 2005).

The review of the meta-categories common to whichever two phenomena is fruitful for grasping the disciplinary identities. There is no common meta-category for social work and social. Hence, there is no exclusionary reason to call social work a social science or vice versa. Instead, social work can be called societal science because both appear as ethical work and as positions. Furthermore, social work is psychology, and psychology is social work because both manifest themselves as theoretic, unlike social and societal. Similarly, social sciences are

societal sciences because of their holistic structure. Psychology is not only like social work but similar to social science in its interest in experienced issues. In addition, table 6 implies several features that four phenomena and the related disciplines do not entail. For example, experienced issues are not fundamental for social work or problem-related questions for societal sciences.

The notable discovery in the table 7 is that societal does not have any unique structural constituent. This might be expected result in English speaking cultures in which the difference between social and societal is vague. In Finland, the words are used separately though the difference in their meaning in everyday language is not clear-cut. Based on the results of the study, there is no reason to call any phenomenon only societal phenomenon. The same concerns societal science or societal discipline.

By counting the unique meta-categories, psychology as a study of psychological has the most distinct identity. Focusing on individual and conceptualizing the inner world or being interested in concrete behavior in the environment makes a phenomenon psychological and thereafter the discipline of psychology. Social also has clear implications: a sense of community, belonging to groups, and constructing a culture beyond generations make phenomena explicitly social phenomena, and science, particularly social science. The one and only reason for social work being just social work is its focus on work that has goals. This finding confirms our previous conclusion that social work is fundamentally more social *work* than *social* work (Väänänen, Perttula, Malinauskas, Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė & Godvadas 2009). This finding verifies the general expectation that social work research should make social work practices transparent and observable (e.g., Dominelli 2005; Karvinen, Pösö & Satka 2000).

The persons involved in the academic social work in both Finland and Lithuania provided the research material of the study. They were not psychologists or social scientists. It could be assumed that social workers' understanding of social work is richer, sophisticated, varied and detailed compared to other three subjects. Besides, it could be held that social workers understand social, psychological and societal more categorically and stereotypically than social work. These assumptions appeared true at the beginning of the analysis, especially in the second step. These differences diminished during further steps of the analysis probably because its goal was to grasp the crucial and necessary structural constituents of the phenomena at higher and higher level of abstraction. Nonetheless, some diversity can still be observed in the length of the phenomena-based general structures. The general structure of social work is longer, though the levels of abstraction are similar in all four general structures. Only new empirical studies can validate if this difference is due more to the educational context of the research participants or the multi-leveled features of social work as the phenomenon itself (see e.g., Dworkin 2004). It will be very interesting to repeat the identical questions to the persons from the fields of psychology, social sciences and societal disciplines.

The results of the study provide multiple reasons to continue the reflection of the disciplinary classifications and borderlines. They offer the preliminary foundation for the phenomena-based disciplinary identities. Furthermore, the results suggest what divisions between the disciplines have phenomena-based arguments and what are based on external issues like conceptual definitions and a search for the institutional power.

Multi-professionalism and interdisciplinary research are current trends both in academic and practical settings. It is not rare that in everyday practices they remain only administrative and managerial demands. By performing phenomena-based studies for clarifying disciplinary identities in diverse fields, multi-professionalism and interdisciplinary research can gradually get true content. We are confident to state that there exist more named titles for the subjects and disciplines than different kinds of phenomena. Consequently, there is less cooperation between the subjects and disciplines than there could and should be.

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## Patirtinio disciplinų identiteto link: kaip akademinės sferos socialiniai darbuotojai supranta socialinius, visuomenės, socialinio darbo ir psichologinius reiškinius

### Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje pateikiamas tyrimas, analizuojantis, kaip per patyrimą atsiskleidžia socialiniai, visuomeniniai, socialinio darbo ir psichologiniai reiškiniai. Jie buvo tiriami ne kaip apibrėžiamos sąvokos, bet kaip realiai patiriami ir suprantami reiškiniai. Tyrimas remiasi fenomenologiniu požiūriu. Tyrime suformuluoti trys klausimai: pirma, kokia yra bendriausia patirtinė socialinių, visuomeninių, socialinio darbo ir psichologinių reiškinių struktūra? Antra, kokie bendriausios patirtinės struktūros elementai pasikartoja kiekviename tiriamame objekte (yra bendri visiems tiriamiems objektams)? Ir trečia, kokie bendriausios patirtinės struktūros elementai unikalūs kiekvienam tiriamam objektui (kuo tiriamų objektų patyrimas skiriasi)?

Tyrimo medžiagą sudaro rezultatai, gauti dviejuose ankstesniuose straipsnio autorių tyrimuose, kuriuose buvo aiškinamasi, kaip suprantami socialiniai, visuomeniniai, socialinio darbo ir psichologiniai reiškiniai Lietuvos ir Suomijos akademiniame kontekste. Tyrimo medžiagos metaanalizės procesą sudaro aštuoni metodiniai žingsniai, jungiantys tradicinę kokybinę turinio ir fenomenologinę analizę, kurie straipsnyje detalai aprašomi. Tyrimo medžiagos metaanalizės rezultatai atskleidė, kad visi keturi tyrimo objektai patirtine prasme yra tas pats reiškinys, kadangi jų patirtinė struktūra bei kontekstas yra susiję. Nepaisant visiems keturiems objektams bendros patirtinės struktūros, du iš jų – visuomeniniai ir socialinio darbo reiškiniai – yra artimiausi patyrimo aspektu. Socialinio darbo reiškinio patyrimui svarbesnė yra darbo, o ne socialinė patiriamo reiškinio sritis. Kalbant apie atrastas unikalias patirtinių struktūrų sudedamąsias dalis, labiausiai unikalumu išsiskiria psichologiniai reiškiniai. Tuo tarpu socialinio darbo reiškinį unikalumas patyrimo srityje atsiskleidžia kaip darbas, iškeliant tam tikrus tikslus. Visuomeniniai reiškiniai nepasižymėjo jokiais unikalios struktūros sudedamosiomis dalimis.

Tyrimo rezultatai aptariami atsižvelgiant į socialinių mokslų disciplinų identitetą, tarpdisciplininius tyrimus ir multiprofesionalumą. Remdamiesi tyrimo rezultatais straipsnio autoriai pažymi, kad socialinių mokslų disciplinų atstovai galėtų ir turėtų glaudžiau bendradarbiauti.