DEVELOPING SOFT SKILLS OF MUSIC TEACHERS THROUGH INVOLVEMENT IN STUDENT PROJECT OFFICE ACTIVITIES

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ABSTRACT
The aim of this paper is to analyze the results of soft skills development of music teachers through involvement in student project office activities. The content analysis of normative and legal documents regulating professional training and professional activity of a music teacher resulted in the following soft skills content for this category of employees: communicative competences, self-management skills, critical thinking, and managerial competences. The study of music teachers' soft skills development in the process of their involvement in project activities was carried out through a pedagogical experiment. 76 students (3-4 years) of the Institute of History and Culture, 15 teachers and 12 social partners took part in the research. The conducted research confirmed the effectiveness of developing soft skills of future music educators in the process of involving students in project management. The implementation of this activity began with the creation of student project office, which is a necessary tool to organize project management in the student environment.

Keywords: Higher education. Soft skills. Music teachers. Student project office. Project management.

DESENVOLVIMENTO DE HABILIDADES LEVES DE PROFESSORES DE MÚSICA POR MEIO DA PARTICIPAÇÃO EM ATIVIDADES DO ESCRITÓRIO DE PROJETOS ESTUDANTIS

RESUMO
O objetivo deste artigo é analisar os resultados do desenvolvimento de soft skills de professores de música por meio do envolvimento nas atividades do escritório do projeto estudantil. A análise de conteúdo de documentos normativos e legais que regulam a formação profissional e a atividade profissional de um professor de música resultou no seguinte conteúdo de soft skills para esta categoria de colaboradores: competências comunicativas, habilidades de autogerência, pensamento crítico e competências gerenciais. O estudo do desenvolvimento de soft skills dos professores de música no processo de envolvimento em atividades do projeto foi realizado por meio de um experimento pedagógico. Participaram da pesquisa 76 alunos (3 a 4 anos) do Instituto de História e Cultura, 15 professores e 12 parceiros sociais. A pesquisa realizada confirmou a eficácia do desenvolvimento de soft skills de futuros educadores musicais no processo de envolver alunos na gestão de projetos. A implantação dessa atividade começou com a criação do escritório de projetos estudantil, que é uma ferramenta necessária para organizar a gestão de projetos no ambiente estudantil.


DESEARROLLO DE HABILIDADES BLANDAS DE LOS PROFESORES DE MÚSICA A TRAVÉS DE LA PARTICIPACIÓN EN LAS ACTIVIDADES DE LA OFICINA DEL PROYECTO ESTUDIANTIL

RESEÑA
El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar los resultados del desarrollo de habilidades blandas de los profesores de música a través de la participación en las actividades de la oficina del proyecto estudantil. El análisis de contenidos de documentos normativos y legales que regulan la formación y la actividad profesionales de un profesor de música dio como resultado los siguientes contenidos de habilidades blandas para esta categoría de empleados: competencias comunicativas, habilidades de autogerencia, pensamiento crítico y competencias gerenciales. El estudio del desarrollo de habilidades blandas de los profesores de música en el proceso de su participación en las actividades del proyecto se llevó a cabo a través de un experimento pedagógico. En la investigación participaron 76 estudiantes (3-4 años) del Instituto de Historia y Cultura, 15 profesores y 12 interlocutores sociales. La investigación realizada confirmó la eficacia del desarrollo de habilidades blandas de futuros educadores musicales en el proceso de involucrar a los estudiantes en la gestión de proyectos. La puesta en marcha de esta actividad se inició con la creación de una oficina de proyectos estudantiles, que es una herramienta necesaria para organizar la gestión de proyectos en el entorno estudantil.

INTRODUCTION

The development of students' soft skills is among the priorities of modern education. This line of educational innovation may be explained by the blurring of the very idea of profession that manifests itself in mobility, flexibility, communicativeness, and stress-resistance dominating over narrow professional competences (ZEYER, 2017; ZEYER and SYMANYUK, 2017). The difficulty in solving this problem lies in the fact that the pedagogical community is not ready to convey massively the ideology of soft skills. This point is confirmed in the study of M.S. Dobryakova, O.V. Yurchenko, and E.G. Novikova (DOBRYAKOVA et al., 2018). Similar results appear in the studies conducted by D. S. Yermakov (2020), L. N. Stepanova, and E. F. Zeyer (2019).

A high level of teacher's soft skills development is a prerequisite for the implementation of modern educational programs. The Federal State Educational Standards of General Education consider not only discipline-related results (correlate with hard skills) but also meta-disciplinary and personal results (correlate with soft skills). Most modern educational practices are aimed at achieving hard skills through soft skills. This assumption is convincingly proven in the research of J. J. Heckman and T. Kautz (2012).

The works of St. Appel (2004), L. Stecher, H.-H. Krüger (2011) analyze the full-day school model implemented in general education institutions in Germany. In the framework of the existing model the emphasis is shifted from the study of school disciplines to project activities, which helps develop students' competences in communication, solving complex problems, media literacy, critical thinking, and creativity. These educational results correlate with the content of soft skills. As the authors note, the high level of soft skills of teachers allows implementing this model to the full extent. On the one hand, there is a clear contradiction in the need for modern education to achieve such educational results, which include soft skills in addition to hard skills. On the other hand, there is a lack of motivation or professional competence to develop soft skills among some teachers.

This situation gets complicated by the fact that there is still a discipline inequality in Russian schools: for various reasons, students and parents consider some of the disciplines to be significant, and some to be insignificant or even useless. This is evidenced by the results of a survey among students and parents conducted by the Levada Center in 2018 (RATING OF PROFESSIONS AND SCHOOL DISCIPLINES, 2018), as well as articles in popular online pedagogical sources (BUKSHA, 2018). As a rule, music, art, and basics of life safety are at the very end of the rating of academic disciplines. The main complaints of students and parents about these subjects are that they are either detached from practice or purport to drive the sphere of leisure into narrow, controlled limits (it is no coincidence that music and art are usually in demand in the aspects of self-development, identification and self-expression in students).

These circumstances significantly reduce the social status of teachers of several subject areas, and above all the "Music" discipline. This problem is also caused by the gap between the orientation of professional training of future music teachers, pedagogical activity of music teachers on hard skills in the subject area and the needs of modern school to move from the paradigm of knowledge transmitter to the field of social design, which requires application of soft skills in educational activities. The federal project "Teacher of the Future" from the national project "Education" (ABRAMOVSKII, ILYINA, KOPTELOV, MASHUKOV, 2020) is aimed at bridging this gap. In the process of professional training of teachers hard skills development dominates over soft skills development. There are several options to harmonize this situation: strategy of open learning (development and implementation of specialized academic disciplines), strategy of contextual learning (use of hidden curriculum mechanism), and strategy of involvement formation. According to A. Astin (1999), R.A. Dolzhenko, A.V. Nazarov, and A.A. Pankova (2019), the latter is one of the most effective strategies for forming students' soft skills.

Speaking about the strategy of students' involvement, it is necessary to distinguish social and academic involvement, as well as individual and institutional involvement (MALOSHONOK, 2014). Academic institutional involvement plays a significant role in the development of students' soft skills, which is based on creating necessary conditions for students to gain experience in communication, self-management, application of critical thinking and management skills in academic environment. As R. A. Dolzhenko, A. V. Nazarov, A. A. Pankova (2018), N. A. Kamenskikh (2019) S. I. Osipova, N. V. Gafurova, E. A. Rudnitsky (2019), J. S. Vogler, P. Thompson, D. W. Davis, B. E. Mayfield, P. M. Finley, D. Yasseri (2018), and etc. point out, the involvement strategy for students' soft skills development is most effectively implemented through the project approach, which implies students' involvement in project activities and project management. If in technology, programming, engineering, and other areas, project management in the academic environment has a rather massive experience of application, then in the field of teacher education project management is used relatively infrequently. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the results of soft skills development of music teachers through involvement in student project office
activities. The research objectives are formulated as follows:

- to determine the soft skills of future teachers-musicians;
- to form a diagnostic toolkit for determining the levels of soft skills of future teachers-musicians;
- to design and implement the student project office in the academic environment;
- to carry out the entrance and final diagnostics of soft skills formation of the future teachers-musicians;
- to form conclusions and suggestions for correction of student project office functioning model.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Many scholars point out the inadequacy of university education for the formation of a competitive professional personality. Graduates are deficient in communication skills and self-management skills [Callier, Singiser, Vanderford, 2014; GRUZDEV, KUZNETSOVA, TARKHANOVA, KAZAKOVA, 2018; KABURISE, 2018; STAVJANIČKOVA, 2015]. These meta-discipline skills are identified in science as soft skills. The issue of their essence and content has been considered by scientists since the middle of the XX century, although the research of soft skills became especially important at the beginning of the 21st century (TSALIKOVA, PAKHOTINA, 2019). In Russian and foreign science there is a tradition of soft skills classification that describes four groups of meta-discipline skills and competences are distinguished, namely communicative competences, self-management skills, critical thinking, and managerial skills [BULLINGER, MYTZEK, ZELLER, 2004; KAMENSKIKH, 2019; OSIPOVA, GAFCROVA, RUDNITSKI, 2019; SHIPILOV, 2018]. This model of soft skills in the present study was taken as the basic one.

The content analysis was used to study the regulatory documents governing the professional training and professional activities of a music teacher [Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Education for Bachelor's degree program 44.03.01 Pedagogical education; 44.03.05 Pedagogical education (with two training profiles)], as well as the professional standard “Teacher (pedagogical activity in the field of preschool, primary general, basic general, secondary general education)”. The content of soft skills for this category of educators has been specified in detail. The communicative competences of a music teacher include:

- skills to communicate in a positive manner with students in the course of academic and extracurricular activities, to identify their musical interests, aptitudes, and needs;
- skills to initiate communication with students and colleagues and to listen actively;
- persuasive and reasoning skills in communicating with students and colleagues;
- self-presentation skills;
- skills of presenting a musical work, musical style, direction, and musical instrument.

The music teacher should have the following self-management skills:

- goal-setting and planning both current pedagogical activities and professional and personal self-development;
- managing one's emotions, a high level of development of emotional intelligence in general;
- adequate interpretation of emotions of participants of educational relations;
- time-management;
- professional reflection.

The critical thinking of a music teacher includes:

1 Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation “On approval of the federal state educational standard of higher education for Bachelor's degree 44.03.01 Pedagogical Education” of 22.02.2018 №121.
2 Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation “On approval of the federal state educational standard of higher education for Bachelor's degree 44.03.05 Pedagogical education (with two training profiles)” of 22.02.2018 №125.
• skills of working with a variety of information, including search, selection, analysis, monitoring, classification, and interpretation of information in the musical, pedagogical and personal spheres;
• the ability to perform pedagogical and personal assessment of students, as well as objectively interpret the data obtained;
• the ability to make balanced decisions in such professional spheres of activity as the choice of the content of music education, methods and technologies of training, strategies of communication with the participants of educational relations.

The managerial competences of a music teacher include:

• skills to motivate students to receive music education, improve musical taste in educational, extracurricular and leisure activities;
• skills to manage conflict between participants of educational relations;
• skills and abilities to organize teamwork of students in class and extracurricular activities, including project activities;
• skills to manage students’ project and research activities.

To determine the levels of formation of soft skills of teachers-musicians (high, medium, low), the study formed diagnostic tools in accordance with the components:

1. Communicative competences: "Assessment of self-control in communication" (M. Snyder) (DRESHKIN, 2018) "Assessment of professional orientation of teacher's personality" (ROGOV, 1999), "Do you know how to listen?" (DRESHKIN, 2018), and the method of expert evaluations of a music lesson according to a checklist developed by the authors.
3. Critical thinking: "Studying the Person's Attitude towards Innovations" (LEBEDEVA, TATARKO, 2009), the method of expert assessments of students' case solutions.
4. Managerial competencies: method of expert evaluations of students' project presentations.

The study of soft skills development of future teachers-musicians in the process of their involvement in project activities was carried out by means of pedagogical experiment. I. A. Bunin Yelet State University was the experimental base of the research. The study involved 76 students of the Institute of History and Culture, studying in the 3-4 years; 15 teachers; 12 social partners (music teachers); teachers of additional education; and representatives of non-profit public organizations. The time frame of the experiment is 2019-2021. The control group consisted of 34 students, the experimental group consisted of 42 students. For statistical processing of the input and final diagnostic data of the formation of soft skills of music teachers, methods of chi-square mathematical statistics, as well as factor analysis were used.

RESULTS

The diagnostics showed that the level of soft skills development among the respondents of the control and experimental groups is identical, which indicates the equality of starting conditions: 12% of students in the control group and 11% of students in the experimental group demonstrated a high level, 47% and 48% respectively demonstrated the medium level, while 41% and 41% respectively demonstrated the low level. The communicative competences among the studied soft skills are the most highly developed: 19% of the control group students and 22% of the experimental group students show high level, 52% and 51% demonstrated the medium level, while 29% and 27% demonstrated the low level. The least developed are self-presentation skills and active listening skills.

The high level of self-management skills were shown by 7% of students in the control group and 10% of the experimental group, 39% and 35% demonstrated the medium level, while 54% and 55% demonstrated the low
level. Students have the greatest difficulties with time-management and professional reflection. Critical thinking skills are formed at a high level in 19% of students in the control group and 18% of students in the experimental group, 29% and 33% demonstrated the medium level, while 56% and 49% demonstrated the low level. The problem areas of students are the ability to carry out pedagogical and personal diagnostics of students, to objectively interpret the data obtained, and the ability to make informed decisions in such professional areas of activity as the choice of teaching methods and technologies.

The lowest results were found when diagnosing managerial competencies of students. The high level was observed in 5% of students in the control group and 6% of students in the experimental group, 28% and 25% demonstrated the medium level, while 67% and 69% demonstrated the low level. Among the pronounced deficits should be noted the skills and abilities to organize teamwork of students in class and extracurricular activities, including project activities, as well as management skills of project and teaching and research activities of students. To overcome the mentioned gaps observed in the educational activity the student project office was launched, which became the basis of the forming stage of the pedagogical experiment.

R. A. Dolzhenko, A. V. Nazarov, and A. A. Pankova (2019). A. Pears, A. Nylen, M. Daniels (2016) distinguish two organizational structures of project management: project office and project management office. The model of the project office involves the management of individual, unrelated projects, while the model of the project management office is closer to the commercial structures, which implies, in addition to supporting the project activities, the elaboration of the project development strategy. In this case the model of project office was taken as a basis, which was created according to the principle of temporary structure providing strategic and operational planning of all project works, their coordination and provision of resources (SAURENKO, 2011, p. 197). Students from among the most active ones under the teacher’s guidance acted as employees of the student project office. The project office staff underwent special training under the additional professional program "Project Management".

The students were involved in the project activities through the mechanisms of contextual motivation, non-material stimulation and inclusion of participation in project management into the forms of educational activities. Strategic sessions, foresights, practice-oriented seminars were conducted with the students of the experimental group, focused both on learning project management skills and on the development of relevant topics of project activities. During the first year (2019) of the project office’s existence, six projects were initiated and implemented. The first projects were mainly a continuation of educational activities, that is, they were initiated by teachers. In the second year (2020) of the project office existence 19 projects were realized including socially oriented ones (for example, "Bringing classical music to the masses", "Inclusion without Inclusion", etc.), moreover 9 projects were the result of students activity only. At the beginning of 2021, 7 projects have already been initiated.

As a result of the activities of the student project office, the students of the experimental group eliminated significant gaps in the formation of soft skills. The final diagnostics showed the following results: a high level was demonstrated by 13% of students in the control group and 36% of students in the experimental group, 51% and 54% respectively demonstrated the medium level, while 36% and 10% demonstrated the low level. The students of the experimental group in comparison with the students of the control group showed positive dynamics of development of all components of soft skills: the dynamics of development of communicative competences of the students of the experimental group was 5%, with only 4% for the control group. The dynamics of self-management skills was 38% and 6% respectively. The dynamics of critical thinking skills was 29% and 2%, while the dynamics of managerial competences was 49% and 4%. Effectiveness of positive changes was confirmed statistically (chi-square showed significance of changes in the experimental group and insignificance of changes in the control group). These results partially coincide with the data obtained by researchers earlier (OSIPOVA, GAFUROVA, RUDNITSKY, 2019; STEPANOVA, ZEYER, 2019).

**DISCUSSION**

S. I. Osipova, N. V. Gafurova, and E. A. Rudnitsky argue that the effective organizational and pedagogical conditions for the formation and development of students’ soft skills are:

- the duration of this process;
- wide range of students and forms of educational activities implemented in university: from classroom lessons to social practices;
• visualization of the results of this activity in the form of a separate plan or curriculum (OSIPOVA et al, 2019, p. 95).

The organization of student project office better meets these conditions. At the same time, based on the research of V.V. Yermolenko, D.V. Lanskaya, and A.E. Yakovlenko (2019, p. 131), and on the experience of student project office organization the following problems were found that hinder the implementation of this mechanism in university activities and scaling this precedent in the university ecosystem

• the non-acceptance by a part of faculty and students of the value of project coordination and management activities both in general and in the form of a student project office;
• difficulties in formalizing the structure of the student project office;
• formalization and non-binding procedures for project initiation, planning, control, and completion;
• blurring of boundaries between scientific, innovative and socially oriented project;
• insufficient technical support of the processes of control and planning of the projects;
• lack of development strategy of project management in the context of university ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

The study confirmed the effectiveness of developing soft skills of future music teachers in the process of involving students in project management. The mechanism of this activity implementation was the creation of student project office. Without the office it is almost impossible to organize project management in the student environment. According to the results of the research, this approach develops students’ soft skills through generalization of experience in co-management, self-organization and personal growth, scientific creativity and pro-social activities.

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