

Psychological and Managerial Aspects of Music Teacher's Social-Emotional Competence

Jelena Davidova Dr. paed.,
Daugavpils University, Latvia
jelena.davidova@du.lv

Abstract: At the present stage of education development, new competencies are being put forward, which requires serious changes in teacher training. In the context of holistic and social constructivist approaches to the process of the development of students' creativity and self-expression across musical activity, music teacher's social-emotional competence has become especially relevant nowadays, which, in turn, puts forward the need to revise and strengthen the psychological and managerial aspects in the content of the training of a future music teacher. Objective of the study: psychological and managerial aspects of music teachers' social-emotional competence. Aim of the study: to investigate psychological and managerial aspects of music teacher's social-emotional competence in the content of music teacher training programs according to social and emotional goals in modern music education. Analysing European documents and scientific works of the last decades, as well as data from focus group (11 music teachers) discussions in which Latvian music teachers participated, the main results of the study are: a) social and emotional goals in modern music education; b) psychological and managerial aspects in competence profile of music teacher. Author concluded that due to global changes in society, philosophy and humanitarian sciences, the field of education needs to be transformed, including the content and process of teacher training. For creation of a positive and supportive emotional environment in the classroom, it is necessary to include music teachers' curriculum a) live musical communication; b) building an understanding about the value of music as cultural heritage of family, community and the nation as a whole; c) psychological and managerial basis in support of cooperation between teacher and students as equal partners in musical, research and other kinds of activity.

Keywords: music teachers' curriculum, social-emotional competence.

Introduction

The development of the social-emotional sphere of the personality has become more and more important in the rapidly changing society, which requires solving various problems, acting in stressful situations and achieving integrated goals. In the 21st century, specialists of different areas (Mortiboys, 2005; Wakeman, 2009; Vila, Gilar-Corbí & Pozo-Rico, 2021) recognize the need to actively develop social and emotional intelligence due to the increasing need to collaboratively analyse human behaviour and work to discover practical solutions to complex societal problems. In this context social and emotional skills, such as perseverance, empathy, mindfulness and leadership have become topical on the education policy agenda and in the public debate. In this context teacher's social-emotional competence is especially vital, because educators must work to promote human's growth in accordance with the basic democratic values, allowing students to express their feelings in the learning process (Strike, 2006).

According to R. Putnam (2002), for realizing and using common purposes, experiences, cultural norms, focused and constant efforts are needed to create a cohesive social capital through which we can share experiences, ideas and innovation and build mutual understanding among groups with diverse experiences and interests. Just training students with technical or academic skills is not enough to achieve success, communication and well-being, no matter how hard they strive.

Following the ideas and philosophical basis of D. Elliott's (1995), praxial music educational thoughts music education in comprehensive school includes playing and teaching musical instruments and reading music, as well as teaching the basics of music theory. Particularly important was the idea of pupils taking more active and responsible position in learning process. This meant that a teacher became more as an instructor for learning, motivating learners and providing inspiring learning environment (Van der Schyff, Schiavio & Elliot, 2016), where the student becomes an active subject

of the pedagogical process. The core idea of praxial music education is to create environment for pupils' expressing themselves and learning in music, giving carefully planned and suitable musical challenges to pupils. These challenges are processed in continuous students' interaction and reflection across musical activity (Saarelainen & Juvonen, 2017).

In connection with the foregoing, the following problems/questions have become topical in preparing music teachers:

- What problems do music teachers highlight in the context of social-emotional competence?
- What knowledge and skills do music teachers need in the social-emotional field?
- What kind of changes in music teacher preparing are necessary in the context of music teacher's social-emotional competence?

The study objective: psychological and managerial aspects of music teachers' social-emotional competencies.

The study aim: to investigate psychological and managerial aspects of music teacher's social-emotional competence in the content of music teacher training curriculum according to social and emotional goals in modern music education.

The core social-emotional competence of music teacher

According to the social constructivist approach, pedagogical process has to be oriented towards the construction of collaborative meaning, social interaction of all participants of teaching/learning (Oldfather & West, 1999). P. Eynde, E. De Corte and L. Verschaffel (2006) note that affective learning is inherently a social construction, because "*emotions are social in nature and situated in a specific socio-historical context*" (p. 195). They emphasize that emotions are socially situated because they are formed from cognitive interpretations of social experiences, constructed on cultural beliefs, serve as a comparative appraisal of social situations and events, and ultimately subject to the unstable effects of ongoing social developments.

Central to the concept of emotional intelligence is emotional awareness, which allows individuals to make accurate assessments about their strengths and limitations in relation to the world that surrounds them and informs an individual's sense of self-worth (Panju, 2008). Emotional awareness includes a) the ability to be self-aware by recognizing both the emotional patterns and emotional shifts in one's self, which is referred to as intrapersonal intelligence; b) the ability to be socially aware through the recognition of signs and patterns of emotional behaviours in others (Elksnin & Elksnin, 2003).

J. Moon (2004) discussed emotional intelligence in the context of learning and recognized the importance of many other factors in contributing to effectiveness that go beyond the traditional notions of pure cognitive ability (p.46). According to C. Wakeman (2009), the 'new' forms of assessment, student presentations, co-operative learning submissions, role play and the like, make huge demands on the student's emotional capacities, particularly in the areas of self-confidence, self-control and general emotional awareness (p.44).

For the successful formation and development of the above-mentioned competencies in music study process it is necessary:

- Teaching/learning process, which is based on a positive role model;
- Recognizing signs of student's emotional problems and teacher's skills to help him/her;
- Development of students' peer competence in interactions with peers: how pupil defines and solves the fundamental challenges of initiating and sustaining interactions with peers, resolving conflicts and building friendship with peers (Kemple, 2004).

According to holistic music education (Juvonen & Anttila, 2008), the main goals in music education are

- Developing knowledge and skills in music, self-concept, self-esteem, motivation and information processing skills;
- Regarding social requirements (like common values and atmosphere in learning environment);
- Connecting music to pupils' culture.

At creating a supportive, responsive and respectful environment during the music teacher training process today, focus should be on the following aspects:

- Musicianship and educator skills should be wide, stable, situational and flexible;
- Capability of placing learning in authentic practical situations, having knowledge of multiculturalism and managing to act artistically among these music cultures;
- Understanding of the student's point of view;
- Competence in music material and pedagogy on a level that can contribute to student's musical development;
- Formal educator skills can be learned verbally, but all the other dimensions of educator skills require learning in reflective action;
- Music educator skills require expert-level of both musicianship and educator skills;
- Achieving expert-level requires procedure of all aspects of musicianship and educator skills, which is possible only in reflective analysis and action in pedagogical situations;
- Musicianship and educator skills are interdependent, which forms music educators' professional competence (Saarelainen & Juvonen, 2017).

According to E. Bucura (2020), music educators have to find ways not only for learners' control and development of learning motivation, but also ways to demonstrate value for them in- and out-of-school musical life and experience, as well as relevance of deep reflection, self-directed and -determined learning.

Characterising the impact of a new approach to teaching and learning music T. Ernits (2020) stresses that group instrumental lessons create a favourable social learning environment for the children and contribute to the development of children at cognitive, affective and psychomotor levels. The research of T. Daugherty, Chr. Thompson, J. Papin, C. Chojnacki, Q. Gant and H. Netzer (2020) provides evidence consistent with the positive impact of using a projective story-telling task on the developing social cognition and skills, which help to remain engaged, constructively focused in flexible collaboration. Projective story stems have been reliably and validly used by J.L. Robinson (2007) with young children when cognitive limitations prevent the use of objective measures.

The CASEL Collaborating States Initiative Team in Pennsylvania elaborated five core competencies for promoting social-emotional learning (Sample Teaching Activities to Support the Core Competencies of Social and Emotional Learning, 2017):

- *Self-awareness* (the ability to recognize one's own feelings, thoughts and values and how they influence behaviours, assess one's interests, strengths and limitations, as well as possess a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism and 'growth mind-set') includes identifying emotions, accurate self-perception, recognising strengths, self-confidence and self-efficacy.
- *Social awareness* (the ability to take the perspective of and empathise with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures, as well as to understand social and ethical norms for behaviour and to recognise family, school and community resources and supports) includes perspective taking, empathy, appreciating diversity and respect for others.
- *Responsible decision-making* (the ability to make constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms, as well as the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of well-being of oneself and others) includes identifying problems, analysing situations, solving problems, evaluating, reflecting and ethical responsibility.
- *Self-management* (the ability to successfully regulate one's emotions, cognitions, and behaviours in different situations, effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself, as well as to set and achieve personal and educational goals) includes impulse control, stress management, self-discipline, self-motivation, goal setting and organisational skills.
- *Relationship skills* (the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individual and groups, communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed) includes communication, social engagement, relationship building and teamwork.

These tasks need serious targeted training of music teachers, in which, in addition to musical and pedagogical aspects, psychological and managerial competencies are especially important.

Summarizing the above, it must be concluded that due to global changes in society, philosophy and humanitarian sciences, the field of education needs to be transformed, including the content and process of teacher training. Transformation must begin with changes in the social and emotional spheres: therefore, the issues of human creativity and the development of the emotional sphere are especially relevant.

Methodology

Focus group discussions (FDG) were undertaken for the aim to answer three study questions:

- What problems do music teachers highlight in the context of social-emotional competence?
- What knowledge and skills do music teachers need in the social-emotional field?
- What kind of changes in music teacher training are necessary in the context of teacher's social- emotional competence?

Four focus group discussions (FDG) were conducted with Latvian music teachers to explore their views and they were held at Daugavpils University on 03 - 24 February 2020. As a tool for analysing the data of FDG, keywords-in-context analysis was used. Due to the results revealing personal experiences, the results cannot be generalized.

Participants: The targeting group was selected as a discretionary sample. The idea was to find music teachers who know as much as possible about the purpose of the study and have extensive experience in this field.

11 music teachers (9 women and 2 men) participated at the focus group discussions: four primary school music teachers work in classes 1-4 and seven – in classes 5-9. Their ages ranged from 28 to 61 years, and six from 11 participants had worked as music teachers from 22 to 31 years (in this case they are experts in music education field).

Data collection: An invitation to the FGD was sent to participants; the research was shortly introduced in the invitation. The FGDs lasted between 50-80 minutes. During four meetings, the moderators (author and expert in the music education field with researcher's experience), first facilitated a general discussion with participants. For discussion purposes, disclosure items were grouped in the following keywords (categories):

- Knowledge and skills of music teacher in the social-emotional field;
- Primary school students' characteristics in the social-emotional context;
- Students' problems in the social-emotional sphere;
- Psychological and managerial aspects of social-emotional competence of music teacher;
- Concrete pedagogical situation in the social-emotional context;
- Music teachers' problems in the social-emotional sphere;
- Necessary changes in music teacher preparing in the context of teachers' social- emotional competence.

The discussions were audio recorded to ensure accuracy in preparing the notes for analysis. Members of the focus group team analysed notes to identify themes and then summarized them for the report. The data was then transcribed to 62 pages of text.

The analysis of the data: Analysing the data in the frames of the constant comparative strategy, we used the following criteria:

- Frequency (How often was a concept mentioned?);
- Extensiveness (How many different people mentioned the concept?);
- Intensity (How much passion or force was behind the comments?);
- Specificity (How much of detail was provided by respondents?);
- Internal consistency (Did individual participants remain consistent in their views?);
- Participants' perception of importance (Did participants cite this as an important concept?) (Analyzing Focus Group Results, 2015).

Due to the fact that in this study the focus group method was chosen to discuss music teachers' ideas, opinions and thoughts about psychological and managerial aspects of music teacher's social-emotional competence, the author used qualitative data analysis, which is, according to S. Wilkinson (2004), traditional way for focus group research.

Speaking about the analytical techniques that allow to FGD data in this study, keywords-in-context analysis was used (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Onwuegbuzie, Dickinson, Leech & Zoran, 2009). The purpose of keywords-in-context is to determine how words are used in the context with other words. According to Fielding and Lee (1998), the contexts within words are especially important in focus groups because of the interactive nature of focus groups: keywords-in-context involve a contextualization of words that are considered central to the development of themes and theory by analysing words that appear before and after each keyword, leading to an analysis of the culture of the use of the word.

Using keywords-in-context analysis, the knowledge of music teachers about these issues is elucidated: their importance in judgments, which opens up new ways of thinking according to the above categories.

Reliability and validity: Reliability and validity are associated with the objectivity of information, which means the researcher's interest in the discussion, his/her ability to understand and sincerely hear what the participants say. The research is a) reliable because it is built on the experiences which the music teachers have told about in FGD, b) valid because it has examined the issues it is directed to. The validity is also confirmed by the FGD as a research method and the choice of participants who are experts in music education.

Results

The data of this study update the music teacher's reflective analysis of music teaching/learning situations, which is in line with the study results of J. Saarelainen and A. Juvonen (2017) as well as E. Bucura (2020).

In the context of the social and emotional goals of music education, especially essential are psychological and managerial aspects in music teacher's competence profile: participants of FGD noted that music teacher's knowledge and skills at developing pupils' self-esteem, self-confidence, enjoyment, mutual understanding and support in group music learning process are required to be on a very high level. As to the psychological aspect in competence profile, music teacher needs a high level of emotional intelligence, reflective activity, musical thinking, and creative activity including improvisation in a wide context (pedagogical and musical improvisation).

The managerial aspect in music teacher's competence profile has to include the organisational competence: he/she needs to organise pupils' individual and group creative musical activity, projects and socially significant events, self-development, cooperation in research activity.

Analysing the data of FGD, this study has brought to the foreground changes in music teacher's training in the context of music teacher's social-emotional competence. Participants of FGD identified the following psychological aspects which need to be included in music teachers' study programs:

- Social and emotional skills, which predict students' cognitive, educational and social outcomes in the music study process, as well as their general well-being (for example, How malleable are social and emotional skills and how do they differ across children of different ages? What are the social and emotional skill gaps according to children's gender and socio-economic background, and what are their likely causes? How have these skills been affected by a combined influence of biological and environmental factors, life events, and changes in self-perception? Can systematic interventions change the social skills of students in desired directions?);
- Family musical culture and traditions in a multicultural context (for example, parental musical priorities, as well as possibility to predict children's social and emotional development across different kinds of musical activity);
- Building an understanding about the value of music as cultural heritage of family, community and the nation as a whole;

- Psychological basis in support of cooperation between teacher and students as equal partners in musical, research and other kinds of activity;
- Psychological basis of learning (for example, students' learning styles, age peculiarities and technologies in music study process; students' characteristics in the social-emotional context);
- Creation of a positive and supportive emotional environment;
- Live musical communication, i.e. students' active social and emotional participation in communities' cultural events (not only as listeners, but active participants in organizing these events);
- Development of music teacher's reflective activity as an important tool of teacher's competence (for example, concrete pedagogical situation in the social- emotional context; analysis of music teacher's problems in the social-emotional sphere).

In the opinion of FGD participants, managerial knowledge and skills of music teachers should be wide, stable, situational and flexible, which means that a teacher needs to

- establish and work toward the achievement of positive and realistic goals;
- analyse how current decisions may impact goal achievement;
- teach students to identify what is known about a lesson topic or objective and to identify what they need to know to understand the lesson objective, then how to set a goal to achieve that learning;
- help students recognize responsible social media use;
- have discussions about positive, age-appropriate ways we can express our feelings (e.g., put our feelings into words, draw a picture or write about how we feel, create an art or media project, show our feelings through dance), as well as how to use their awareness of emotions to guide decision-making;
- help students think through and suggest alternatives when students encounter challenges;
- persevere by expending additional effort, extending timeframes, identifying alternative paths to goal achievement, and/or seeking help from others;
- hold a discussion in which the teacher asks questions that encourage students to reflect on barriers they may encounter and that also help them think about ways they can overcome them.

Conclusions

Music teacher today must be essentially a multiply skilled person in the wide field of music, not just a one-direction professional. Versatile music skills, pedagogic know-how and social-emotional competence assure the educability and help to manage in the music teacher's profession. Along with the main (classic) goals members of the focus group set the following goals in the social-emotional field of music teachers:

- Cooperation across the participation in group musical activity;
- Building a positive attitude;
- Developing musical, psychological, pedagogical and managerial skills through joint practice, participation in goal setting and evaluation for learning in music;
- Entrepreneurship and participation.

The above goals represent wider educational ideals about what kind of music teacher competencies are needed for the society of the future, and are aimed at achieving different categories (aspects) of curriculum, in which students' creativity and developing self-expression are the core of musical activity:

- Creation of psychological conditions for freedom and a wide range of students' musical expression in music learning process;
- Taking into account the interest of students' group in choosing a musical repertoire in accordance with their cultural values;
- Building an understanding about the value of music as cultural heritage of a nation;
- Using music technology in composing and expressing creative musical ideas, as well as a variety of different music styles and genres in a collective music making;
- Focusing on making music as a member of a group;

- Self-expression in music and movement in collective music making;
- Using improvisation in compositions, movement, instrumental and vocal performances;
- Using music in different social context.

Bibliography

1. *Analyzing Focus Group Results* (2015). Sage Publications, Inc. https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/65005_book_item_65005.pdf
2. Bucura, E. (2020). Becoming self-directed and self-determined: Learning music pedagogically, andragogically, and heutagogically. *Problems in Music Pedagogy*, 19(10), 7-25.
3. Daugherty, T., Thompson, Chr., Papin, J., Chojnacki, C., Gant, Q. & Netzer, H. (2020). Capturing benefits of mentorship in vocal music pedagogy with projective story-telling task. *Problems in Music Pedagogy*, 19(10), 65-70.
4. Elksnin, L.K., & Elksnin, N. (2003). Fostering social-emotional learning in the classroom. *Education*, 124(1), 63-48.
5. Elliot, D.J. (1995). *Music Matters: A new philosophy of music education*. New York: Oxford University Press.
6. Ernits, T. (2020). "Touching a musical instrument" as a new approach to music lesson: The joint project of Tartu Hansa School, Descartes School and Tartu Second Music School, 2017-2019. *Problems in Music Pedagogy*, 19(10), 51-62.
7. Eynde, P., De Corte, E., & Verschaffel, L. (2006). Accepting emotional complexity: A socio-constructivist perspective on the role of emotions in the mathematics classroom. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, 63(2), 193-207.
8. Fielding, N.G., & Lee, R.M. (1998). *Computer Analysis and Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
9. Juvonen, A., & Anttila, M. (2008). *Luokanopettajaopiskelijat ja musiikki: kohti kolmannen vuosituhatannen musiikkikasvatusta, osa 4* [Class Teacher Students and Music: Towards the music education of 3rd millennium]. Joensuun yliopistopaino.
10. Kemple, K.M. (2004). *Let's Be Friends: Peer competence and social inclusion in early childhood programs*. New York: Teachers College Press.
11. Leech, N.L. & Onwuegbuzie, A.J. (2007). An array of qualitative data analysis tools: A call for data analysis triangulation. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 22(4), 557-584. doi.org/10.1037/1045-3830.22.4.557
12. Moon, J. (2004). *A Handbook of Reflective and Experiential Learning: Theory and practice*. London: Routledge Falmer.
13. Mortiboys, A. (2005). *Teaching with Emotional Intelligence*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203087794>
14. Oldfather, P., & West, J. (1999). *Learning through Children's Eyes: Social constructivism and the desire to learn*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
15. Onwuegbuzie, A.J., Dickinson, W.B., Leech, N.L., & Zoran, A.G. (2009). A qualitative framework for collecting and analyzing data in focus group research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(3), 1-21. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/160940690900800301>
16. Panju, M. (2008). *7 Successful Strategies to Promote Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom*. London: Continuum.
17. Putnam, R. (2002). *Democracies in Flux: The evolution of social capital in contemporary society*. Oxford University Press.
18. Robinson, J.L. (2007). Story stem narratives with young children: Moving to clinical research and practice. *Attachment & Human Development*, 9, 179-185.
19. Saarelainen, J., & Juvonen, A. (2017). Competence requirements in Finnish Curriculum for primary school music education. *Problems in Music Pedagogy*, 16(1), 7-19. http://pmp.du.lv/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/PMP_2017_01.pdf
20. *Sample Teaching Activities to Support the Core Competencies of Social and Emotional Learning* (2017). <https://www.casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Sample-Teaching-Activities-to-Support-Core-Competencies-8-20-17.pdf>

21. Strike, K.A. (2006). *Ethical Leadership in Schools: Creating community in an environment of accountability* (1st ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
22. Van der Schyff, D., Schiavio, A., & Elliot, D.J. (2016). Critical ontology for a native music pedagogy. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, 15(4), 81-121.
23. Vila, S., Gilar-Corbí, R., & Pozo-Rico, T. (2021). Effects of student training in social skills and emotional intelligence on the behaviour and coexistence of adolescents in the 21st century. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18, 5498. doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18105498
24. Wakeman, C. (2009). Emotional Intelligence: Towards a generic framework for the 21st century. *Educational Future*, 2(1), 40-56. https://educationstudies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/lpool_wakeman_final.pdf
25. Wilkinson, S. (2004). Focus group research. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative Research: Theory, method, and practice* (pp. 177-199). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.