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***THE ATTITUDE OF THE FUTURE TEACHING STAFF TOWARDS THE SUBJECT  
MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION***

The basic doctrine for the music education in most of the countries in the world supports the fact that, starting with the youngest age, it contributes for the development of the children and better results in the other areas of the educational system. These opinions emerge from a great number of interdisciplinary researches that stress the benefits from the music education for the development of the personality of the young population, as: IQ, cognitive abilities, spatial-visual perception, motor abilities, verbal abilities, etc. (Forgeard, Winne, Norton, Schlaug 2008, Hick 2007, Dorcshester 2006). This is why, all the theses are an important driving force for the modification of the system for transferring the knowledge for a more functional music education in the frameworks of the overall educational system.

This is why, the contemporary standpoints in the developmental psychology of the music stress out the need for a greater musical activity of the child in the educational institutions. In this sense, the task of the educational system is to “meet” the developmental and musical needs of every child, through planning of the musical activities, by supporting the development at its optimal level (Radoš 1996: 179).

The children’s development in the process of the education in general, and this way the musical as well, represents a series of stages which appear in a determined developmental order. The speed of the transfer from one stage to another is individual and conditioned by internal factors (the level of the quality of the musical dispositions) and external factors (development through stimulation by the environment). Although the musical gift, as a segment of the internal factors is an important potential, still it is not overriding for the musical development. As more important components we consider the external factors, as for example: the social-economic and cultural conditions and the system of education, i.e. the support by the teacher and the organization of the educational work in the school.

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The music education has its own benefits in the frameworks of the broader cultural conditions, which we perceive as: contribution for the development of the general and musical abilities of the students; a basis for a further work with music (as amateur or professionally); the creating of an educated audience and a possibility for a quality spent free time.

This knowledge directed the discourse of our interest towards the observation of the music education through all of its components: the teaching plan and program, the teaching staff and the conditions for realization of the education. This way, important carriers are the students, as a target group whose needs emphasize the way of transferring of the music education. From the mentioned links in the process of music education, we observe the students as recipients who do not have a direct influence on the shaping and directing of the concept and the process of learning in the music education.

The system of the music education in the Republic of Macedonia is directly conditioned by three modalities. They are carried out in the frameworks of the formal and informal music education. The formal education encompasses the institutions which implement a compulsory and standard teaching plan and program verified at the Ministry of education in all the stages of the compulsory education: the primary and the high school education and the specialized musical schools.

The informal educational forms do not abide by the legislative norms since they are a free choice and are realized in the way of: private lessons, private music schools, cultural-art groups, cultural centres, etc.

We focused our attention on the Music education in the elementary education mainly because it represents the first stage of compulsory education where the child begins with a systematic learning of this subject. On the other hand, this subject is taught by a teacher that is not specialized in the musical area. These facts present a topic for many polemics in many countries about the competences of the elementary education teacher with respect to this subject.

In the general education primary schools, the music education is being learned as a compulsory subject. In the elementary education (according to the old program grades I-IV) this subject was present with 1 lesson (grades I-II) i.e. 2 lessons per week (grades III-IV). The teaching program contains the following topics: Singing; Playing children's musical instruments

(Orpheus instruments); Listening to music; Basics of the musical literacy and Children's musical expressing and creating (Radevski 1989). With the reforms in the education for the implementation of the nine year primary education (in 2007), a new teaching program was implemented with a new content – *Music and movement*. In the elementary education, 2 lessons per week are planned for all the grades (I-V), and in the primary education (VI-IX) the number of lessons is lowered from 2 to 1 lesson (Kolarovska, Vitanova, Vasic 2008).

The latest research carried out in order to observe the treatment of the subject Music education in the elementary education in the state schools for general education in Skopje, show that the teaching topics of this subject receive insufficient attention by the teachers (Gmirja 2008, Peneva 2009). This thesis led us to conduct a research that will give us a clear image for the reasons that lead to this condition, especially bearing in mind the fact that the teaching program, which is realized in the course of the studies, completely satisfies the needs for the realization of the education of this subject. The question is why in the practice the attitude of the teaching staff is unsatisfactory towards the subject Music education. For this purpose we prepared a questionnaire with 16 questions through which we aimed to find out the future elementary teachers' attitude towards the importance of the music art in the education.

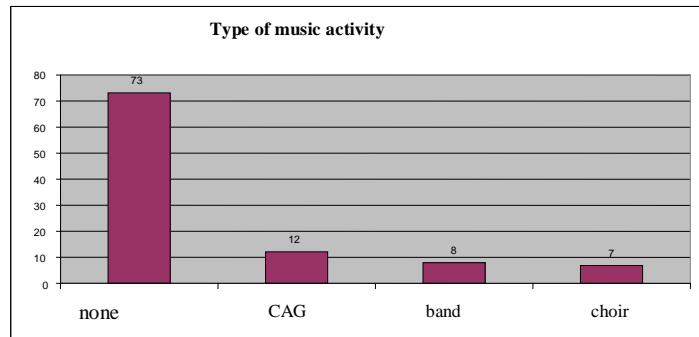
The research was carried out in March 2009, with elementary education students from the Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish language groups at the Faculty of Pedagogy St.Kliment Ohridski in Skopje which is the only institution that produces teaching staff in the capital city. The questionnaires were taken by the 3<sup>rd</sup> year students, when the learning of the music education subjects actually starts. This survey covered a sample of 100 respondents which we consider a representative sample, having in mind the fact that it is a stable number of students who have, for the most part, attended the lectures of this subject.

The questionnaire was consisted of three wider areas which give results about the: social-cultural background, affinity to musical genres and concert activities as well as the attitude towards the subject Music education.

### *Results from the research*

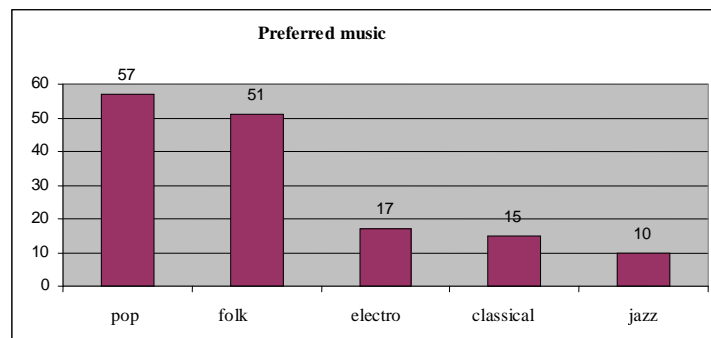
From the total number of respondents 60% finished high general school education, 40% come from other specialized high schools, for example: economic, technical, medical and

building. According to the degree of education of the parents, 79% are with high school and 21% with higher education. The distribution of the music activity in the past has shown that 26% of the respondents have played some instrument in primary school, and 27% are musically active at the moment. These students participate in: cultural-art groups 12%, musical groups (band) 8% and choir 7%.



*graph n.1*

The following questions gave us an answer about the type of music they listened to and if they had visited a musical event at all. From the most generally accepted genre division we got the following preferences: pop-rock 57%, folk music 51%, electro 17%, classical 15% and jazz 10%.



*graph n.2*

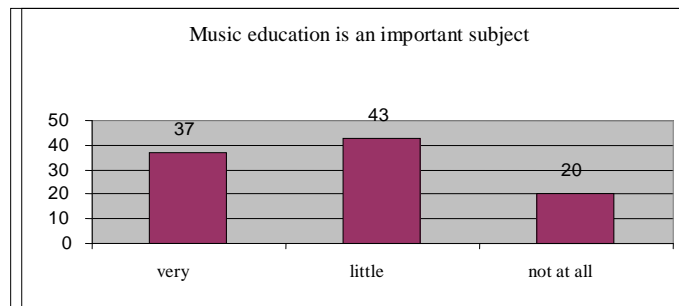
With respect to the attendance at musical events, the respondents answered the following way: 64% had visited pop-rock event, 51% DJ performances, 32% folk music. We expected that the visit of a symphony concert, opera and ballet, as well as jazz performances would be present with a small percentage. This was also confirmed by the answers to the question about the visit of musical events in the ongoing 2008/9, which gave us identical results which corresponded to their genre preference (with minor statistical deviations, for example: 62% pop-rock, 50% DJ and 34% folk music).

The main reasons for such interest of the respondents are due to lack of time 39%, bad information about the musical life 37% and financial conditioning 22%.

On the question that referred to the venues of the concerts of classical music in Skopje, 60% of the respondents answered that the venues were unfamiliar, and this confirms their indifference for a visit of a concert of this genre.

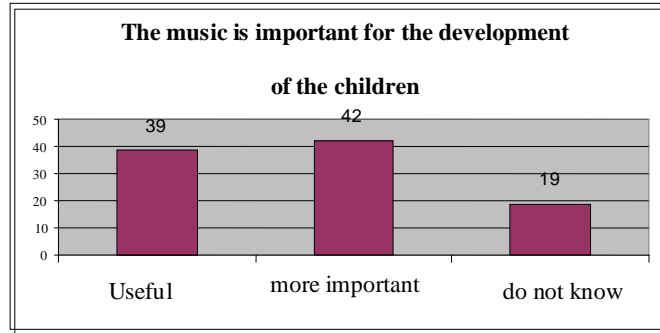
In order to find out the opinion of the respondents about the importance of the subject Music education in the elementary education, in the questionnaire we included questions about the meaning of the subject in relation to the other subjects covered by the teaching program.

According to graph n.3, only 37% of the respondents believe that Music education is an important subject.



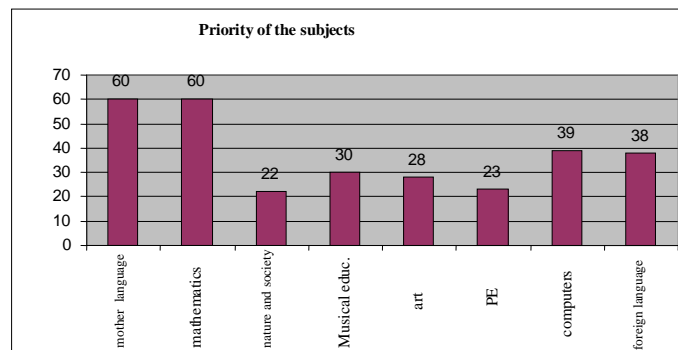
*graph n.3*

In order to clarify their attitude towards this question, we gave the following answering possibilities: *The music is useful for the development of the children* – 39%, *there are more important subjects* – 42% and 19% answered that they *do not know why this subject is important*.



graph n.4

The following graph confirms the attitude of the respondents about the priority of the subject Music education in relation to the other subjects covered by the program for the elementary education.



graph n.5

The received results (music education 30% as opposed to mother language and mathematics 60%, foreign language 39% and computers 38%) correspond with the previous answers of the respondents and confirm their opinion about the place of the subject Music education in the frameworks of the overall education. The results corroborate the thesis that this subject is given insufficient importance.

Given that under musical culture we understand an area of spiritual creation, a field of facts and a set of values and convictions that inform and enrich the individual and represent knowledge, then, the general conclusion of this research brings to a weakly developed general musical culture of the respondents, i.e. the future teaching staff. As a result, the attitude of this population towards the subject Music education is unsatisfactory which corresponds with the results from the previously conducted research work (for example, Gmirja 2008).

According to our knowledge gained through years of experience, this condition is parallelly influenced by the: weak basis of musical knowledge, lack of musical gift and/or interest of this population as well as the large number of students who enroll at this faculty. These factors represent an additional handicap in the mastering of several musical components (especially the musical intonation and the rhythm) that influence the self-confidence in the work with the students and may contribute to a reduction or a complete avoidance of this subject in the future practical work.

This is why, the profiling of the teaching staff should be directed towards: intellectual and professional development in the pedagogical, psychological and didactic – methodical education; development of the social component; communicational skills and skills for application of the knowledge and the skills (Koteva 2008). For this purpose, the Faculty of Pedagogy offers the following subjects: Basics of the music education with methodology, Musical instruments and Choir and orchestra (elective subject) which are in function of the practical realization of the teaching program in the elementary education. Several years backwards the education is being carried out by the use of contemporary methods for the teaching of the mentioned subjects through: practical playing of different musical instruments (individual and group education), technical aids – DVD and CD through which the students are introduced with the rich musical literature from the area of the classical music, adequate textbooks and manuals for enrichment of the musical knowledge. Experience has shown that this approach enables a practical music education and mastering of the musical skills. All this gives opportunities for elevation of the consciousness of the future teaching staff for the subject Music education, elevation of the general musical culture and gaining of greater self-confidence, all of which represent a prerequisite for an appropriate transformation of the musical knowledge into

practice as a very important segment in the development of the personality of the young population.

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