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Investigating the Training Needs of Music Teachers in Primary Education: A Greek Case Study

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Abstract

The purpose of the current research is to examine the views of music teachers that work in primary education, regarding their training needs. With the investigation and emergence of their training needs, useful data occur for the design of effective training programs that focus on the coverage of the special training needs of these teachers. In this context, a quality research was designed and conducted in a sample of fifteen (15) music teachers in the Achaia district. The research data was derived from semi-constructed interviews and the results were analyzed with the method of thematic analysis. The sample music teachers wish to be trained to improve new technologies that refer to the music subject, their cognitive subject, in conducting the choir and the management of children with special needs. Music teachers are positive in creating a participatory pattern of organizing and conducting these training programs. As for the characteristics and the organizational parameters of the training, they prefer short training programs, live or distance learning, obligatory type that will be enriched with personalized and cooperative actions.

Keywords: Music Teachers, Music Teachers' Education, Training Needs

1. Introduction

The cultivation of musicality, the innate human capacity for artistic and creative expression contributes to the balanced and harmonious development of the child's personality and at the same time to the creation of a lifelong relationship with the art of sounds. Quality music education is the right of every child and the obligation of every modern educational system in order to nurture citizens who are not musically isolated, but appreciate the aesthetic experiences and through them build a healthy relationship both with their inner world and with the immediate environment in which they live and develop.

The Greek educational system, recognizing the contribution of the Music Education course to the integrated development of the child's personality, has included it in the program of primary education as an autonomous and distinct teaching subject since the 1990s. However, the current situation regarding the teaching of music in primary schools is not encouraging.

Problems such as the lack of material and technical infrastructure in the school units, the frequent changes of school units by teachers), the reduction of teaching hours etc. complicate the working conditions of music teachers and act as a deterrent to the effectiveness of the educational process (Stavrou, 2006). Respectively with the integration of music teachers and other specialties in the training programs of teachers, their special training needs are ignored in relation to their specialty, their differentiated initial education and their personal educational path (Sakkoulis & Vergidis, 2017).

The information and training of music teachers of primary education through training programs focused on their special needs are necessary up to an imposed basis of modern educational requirements (Keramida & Vaiouli, 2017). The systematic investigation of their training needs is the process that will provide essential information about the current views, attitudes and perceptions of the specific specialty in relation to the training, so that training programs of similar interest and high efficiency are designed.

Due to the need to support the demanding role of primary education music teachers, who are called to be both artists and educators, the investigation of their educational needs was chosen as a research topic and it was decided to carry out the present research.

2. The training of teachers

Teachers are those who provide young people with the knowledge and skills to respond successfully in the future as active citizens of society. Therefore, first of all, they must renew the knowledge of their initial education, follow the developments in their subject, learn the modern teaching approaches and integrate them into their teaching.

2.1 The concept of teacher training and its importance.

Teacher training is a multidimensional process that contributes to redefining the relationship between the teacher and his work and promotes his individual, social, academic and professional development (Mavrogiorgos, 1999). Training as a continuous and integral part of a teacher's professional career is part of the wider context of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is a concept that includes all the educational activities that compose an educational continuum that is in constant interaction with the economic, socio-political and cultural characteristics of the respective (or of each) educational system (Vergidis, 2001; Nasainas, 2010).

However, the training along with its decisive contribution to the professional and personal development of the teacher is necessary for the modernization and service of the needs of an educational system (Doulkeridou, 2015).

In order to adequately cover the various educational interests of teachers, such as the heterogeneity of basic education, specialization, years of service, gender, etc. and the need to promote innovation and reform in education, modern education systems have organized an institutionalized framework of training programs. Thus, according to Mavrogiorgos (1999), training is defined as the set of activities and procedures related to the conception, design and implementation of special programs, which have as their main goal the enrichment and further development of the level of scientific, practical and personal knowledge and skills of teachers during their term of office.

The existence of planned training activities is very important in our time, because, due to the unemployment of teachers, it often takes several years from the completion of their basic studies to their appointment in education. In addition, the multicultural composition of the student population, the tendency for school under-performance, the speed of aging of knowledge, the need for differentiated teaching, the democratization of education through the promotion of school autonomy and other modern pedagogical issues diversify daily working conditions of teachers (Lainas, 2000). Also during their educational course the teachers have to understand and apply

successive changes in the curricula, in the textbooks, in the way of the exams, the teaching methodology, to take positions of responsibility etc. (Nasainas, 2010).

All the above make it clear that the training in the sense of informing the teachers in the current developments of the sciences of Education (or of the Educational studies) is necessary, as it contributes to the continuous upgrade of the quality of their work in school and to the efficiency and modernization of the whole educational system (Mavrogiorgos, 1999).

2.2 The training of music teachers.

The training of primary school music teachers after their appointment and after they have completed the compulsory program of Introductory Training at the Regional Training Centers (PEK) is limited.

During the school year in each Directorate of Primary Education, there are one to two scientific-pedagogical meetings of the music teachers with their School Counselor. These meetings take place during the teachers' morning hours.

In Stavrou's research (2006) it is particularly emphasized that the level of cooperation of music teachers with the competent School Counselor does not satisfy the teachers, as the majority of them characterize it as insufficient. The problem of the small number of School Counselors (one in Athens and one in Thessaloniki for both levels of education) is clearly highlighted and the objective difficulties faced by School Counselors in offering scientific assistance and support to their teachers are evident. It is worth mentioning that today, 15 years after the aforementioned research, the institution of the School Counselor has been replaced by the institution of the Educational Project Coordinator (Government Gazette 4299) with responsibilities for the organization of training programs, the strengthening of cooperation between schools, the promoting educational innovations in its schools of responsibility and the advisory guidance and scientific support of teachers. Now the positions for Educational Project Coordinator for the specialty of Music Education for the two levels of education are ten throughout Greece. For the regions of Western Greece and Central Greece, i.e., for a total of eight prefectures, only one position of Coordinator of the Educational Project of Music Education has been appointed.

Characteristic of the "poverty" of the educational biography of music teachers is the fact that the only educational program that was done nationwide under the approval of the Ministry of Education and the Pedagogical Institute for the most effective use of teaching and pedagogical approaches of the music books for A' and B' grade of elementary school duration of 50 hours took place in June 2010 in Piraeus and strictly provided for the participation of only 100 teachers (PE16 training in the teaching package of Music Education for primary and secondary school, 2010).

Also in 2010, the Ministry of Education assigned to the Teacher Training Organization (OEPEK, 2010) the training of Aesthetic Education teachers (visual arts, theater and music) who moved from secondary to primary education and taught in 800 primary schools.

The above training programs concern the main trainings offered by the state mechanism to cover the professional needs of primary education music teachers in the last decade. The lifelong education and training of these teachers beyond depends on their own initiative, desire, willingness and financial ability to attend training programs, organized by associations such as the Association of Primary Education Music Teachers (EEMAPE), the association of primary education teachers of Northern Greece (SY.K.P.E.B.E.), the alumni associations of the University Music Departments and other private entities.

3. The investigation of educational needs and its importance

Giannakopoulou (2018) holds that educational needs are the realization of the lack of specific knowledge, skills and attitudes, which an individual or a group needs to adequately, perform a task or activity. Karalis and

Papageorgiou (2012) summarize by defining educational need as any deficit in the level of qualifications in relation to individuals, social groups, organizations and systems, the coverage of which may be the subject of targeted educational intervention.

Also the educational needs in terms of their level of awareness by the target group can be divided into conscious and unconscious or latent (Vergidis, 2008). In some cases the target group is aware of its educational needs and openly expresses the need to satisfy them, but other times it hesitates to express them or formulate them indirectly and with implication. There is also the case that the target group has not even realized the lack of knowledge or skills it has in relation to the execution of a task and is thus not aware of the requirements of the social and economic environment and the possible changes that occur in it.

According to the above, the educational needs are divided into:

- Conscious and explicit.
- Conscious and implicit.
- Unconscious or latent needs.

The operation of multiple levels in the formation of educational needs makes their investigation a particularly complex process. Karalis and Papageorgiou (2012) consider that the investigation of educational needs is a systematic research process that determines the content of an educational intervention in relation to a specific target population and aims to cover its shortcomings in terms of the defined frame of reference.

The detailed identification of the real training needs of the target group contributes to the improvement of the quality and the effectiveness of the educational intervention and utilizes to the maximum the available financial resources (Sipitanou, Salpiggidis & Platsidou, 2012).

Especially in the case of teachers, the investigation of their training needs is crucial, if we take into account the heterogeneity of the trainees (personal interests, motivations, needs, initial education, previous service, specialty, etc.) and the diversity of the social context that may belong (social, economic, cultural geographical environment, etc.) (Vergidis, 2008 ; Rogers, 2009).

4. The training needs of music teachers. Literature review

In his research, Bowles (2002) develops a questionnaire to determine the interests and educational preferences of experienced music teachers. The topics highlighted by the responses of 406 teachers from the northwestern states of the United States of America (USA) in order of priority are the following: the use of technology, the evaluation, the choral and orchestral repertoire and the improvisation.

Bauer (2007) focuses on identifying the training needs of experienced music teachers (with more than 12 years of service) and attempts in a literature review to summarize the research data to date. He concludes that teachers of music, primary, secondary and musical instruments, prefer long-term in-school or out-of-school training and that they are mature enough to develop the musical skills and knowledge of their primary education and adapt them to the needs of their students.

Koner and Eros (2018) in their literature review on the professional development of experienced music teachers argue that as the years pass and mature professionally music teachers specify their training needs and vigorously claim opportunities to supplement and renew their knowledge, which promote their professional growth and development. However, it is a common finding of the above researchers (Bauer, 2007 ; Koner & Eros, 2018) that future research on the educational needs of music teachers should be specialized according to the level they teach, the specialty of these teachers and their professional experience, as their differentiation is very likely.

In a corresponding synthetic study, which summarizes the findings of research on the training needs of experienced music teachers, Hammel (2007) concludes:

- General content trainings are carried out, but in the design of the specific training programs neither the specializations of the teachers, nor their years of service, nor the special needs and the characteristics of their school units are taken into account. Music teachers are interested in taking an active role in planning and organizing trainings aimed at their professional development.
- Regarding the characteristics of the training, the music teachers find the long-term training programs more effective, as they are focused on specific goals and are carried out with experiential methods and active participation techniques of the trainee adapted to his personal desires and needs.

In the research of Van Weelden and Whipple (2014) on the perceptions of music teachers about their music education and their support in managing students with special needs, music teachers (1128 in total from all 50 US states) express their need to be trained in special education. Less than 25% of survey participants, while teaching students with disabilities, have attended special education programs.

Bautista, Toh and Wong conducted quantitative research to identify the motivations, needs, and preferences of primary school music teachers in Singapore (2016). First in the selections of the 406 teachers of the sample is the training in issues of music teaching and especially in the learning of the music pedagogical systems Orff, Kodaly and Dalcroze and the use of digital software for the teaching of music. The participants in this research showed a particular preference for short-term programs.

The views of music teachers regarding their participation in distance learning programs are explored in their qualitative study by Kos and Goodrich on behalf of Boston University in 2012. The results of the interviewees' responses showed that most teachers from their participation in the distance learning program acquired knowledge and skills that improved their teaching practices, reviewed their perception system and became members of an online community of colleagues in which friendly and professional relationships were established. The conclusions of international research generally converge with the results of Greek researchers on the research subject of the educational needs of music teachers.

In Koukoutsis's research (2014) the majority of primary school teachers state the need to be trained in how to teach, explain and analyze musical concepts and meanings to their students, but also in how to organize and direct the school choir. The music teachers also considered important their training on how to cover the content of school textbooks and achieve the goals of the curriculum in a one-hour lesson in parallel with the preparation of school events for national holidays, cultural programs, etc.

Regarding the very important fields of learning difficulties and special education, we draw remarkable findings from the qualitative research of Keramidas and Vaioulis (2017) on the views and concerns of primary education music teachers in relation to differentiated teaching in music. Primary music teachers in the interviews conducted as part of the research state that they do not have the knowledge and skills to teach their students, who have special learning difficulties and other educational needs. In the conclusions of this research, teachers expressed their interest in acquiring knowledge that will help them manage the special cases of students they face every day in their classroom.

An important parameter in determining the training needs of music teachers is the investigation of their views on their training in issues of utilization and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in their course. Angelidou's (2016) research, which explored the views of music teachers in primary and secondary education on the teaching practices they use and the difficulties they face with emphasis on new technologies, presents important data on the use and utilization of ICT by music teachers. According to the results of the research, 60% of the sample states that they systematically or often use new technologies in their lesson, using a computer or video projector and utilizing material from digital repositories such as "Efterpi," "Fotodentro" etc.

Similar results are recorded by Lympelopoulou (2019) finding that 77% of music teachers who participated in the survey state that they use a computer for the needs of the course. In addition, in the research of Koukoutsis (2014) and Sakkouli and Vergidis (2017), the interest of teachers for ICT training is particularly high.

Regarding the views of music teachers on the design, organization and implementation of their training programs, important data emerge from the research of Zosi and Bagakis (2014). The results of the research show that the trainees evaluated the collaborative atmosphere, which was enriched with experiential activities and constructive discussions, as the most successful element of the seminar.

In Sfontouri's research (2019) on the views of Aesthetic Education teachers of primary schools on their problems and training needs, the results showed the great desire of teachers for training, as their subjects are evolving and they are willing to be informed about the new pedagogical trends and developments. Aesthetic teachers are also positive in their active participation in the design of programs for their specialty, preferring the face to face meetings and the optional nature of the training. They appear satisfied with the supportive and educational role of the Educational Project Coordinators, however they consider it necessary for them to communicate more often with the teachers.

Similar results were shown by Dimitraki's qualitative research (2019) for the training needs of the educational musical instruments of the Music schools regarding the teaching of students with learning difficulties. The teachers of the sample want to create a participatory training model adapted to their specific needs and not the hetero-defined training in the absence of investigation of their training needs that is valid in recent years.

From the review of the relevant literature we find that music teachers have diverse and complementary training needs. Both their differentiated initial education, as well as the updating of the knowledge of their subject matter, in combination with the evolving educational reality, make necessary their scientifically organized professional information. It is something that, as it seems, the teachers themselves have realized, as they clearly express that they want support in many areas of their educational work through training in order to teach their students quality and harmonized with the requirements of modern Music Education.

5. Research Methodology

The research question posed is: What are the training needs of music teachers working in primary education according to the views of the sample?

The type and characteristics of the research problem led to the selection of a flexible research design according to the standards of the qualitative approach. The semi-structured interview type was used as a data collection tool, which is a popular way of collecting quality data, because it enhances interaction, signifies verbal and non-verbal communication and contributes to the discovery of new aspects of the research field under study (Flick, 2017). The research was conducted during the period March-April 2020 in the prefecture of Achaia. The available sample of the research consisted of 15 primary school music teachers, twelve women and three male music teachers, aged 38-55 years with teaching experience from 14 to 29 years. During this period, lessons in schools across the country were taught by the method of distance learning because of measures to limit the spread of covid-19. Due to the extraordinary social conditions, the scheduled interviews were conducted by telephone. The conclusions of the research provided interesting data, however they cannot be generalized, because they are based on the views of a portion of music teachers working in primary schools in the prefecture of Achaia.

For the most efficient management of the quality data that emerged, the method of thematic analysis was chosen, which facilitated the condensation of the content of the interviews and through correlations and comparisons led to the interpretation of the participants' views and the final report and analysis of the data (Creswell, 2011).

6. Results

This section presents the results of the research.

In the context of exploring their training needs, music teachers were initially asked if their training needs had increased in recent years compared to the first years of their school work and if this is the case, why they think this is happening. All fifteen (15) teachers in the sample answered positively to this question.

Ten (10) teachers in the sample state that they have an absolute need for renewal and feedback of their knowledge for their personal professional development after so many years in education.

Interview 15: "I have been in this job for 20 years. I make my own move to find something new, to look for something to renew me professionally. Of course I need more training as the years go by."

Eight (8) teachers state the need to enhance their digital skills in order to meet the needs of the digital classroom and distance education.

Interview 3: "... Today in the age of the coronavirus it is obvious that our digital knowledge and skills need immediate reinforcement to meet the needs of distance education."

Six (6) teachers consider that they have an increased need for training in order to be informed about modern music pedagogical methods and to keep pace with the normal development of society.

Interview 4: "As the years go by, because everything around you changes and you have to stay a child, that is, to think with the mind of the children in front of you, with the result that in this case you need to train according to needs of a changing society..."

The finding that they face more difficult pedagogical issues than in the past is expressed by five (5) teachers in the sample.

Interview 13: "We now face more pedagogically complex issues that require knowledge of intercultural education. We also need training to better meet the needs of children with learning disabilities."

The teachers then answered the question on what topics they consider useful to be trained.

It is striking that the majority of the teachers in the sample, twelve (12) out of fifteen (15) answered that they consider that they need to be trained in new technologies and the ways of their utilization in the music lesson. It is worth recalling that the research was conducted in March and April 2020 when teaching in all schools was done by the method of distance learning due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Interview 7: "I think in the utilization of new technologies and in the development of skills for the application of distance learning which the key issue of the days is."

Interview 9: "I believe that due to the situations we are experiencing, it would be good to have an education for everyone about the e-learning and how it can be set up."

Five (5) teachers express interest to be trained exclusively on their subject, such as e.g. music pedagogical methods, music-motor education etc.

Interview 2 "... in some music pedagogical methods or even good practices that have proven useful and effective in practice."

The interest for training expressed by music teachers in the direction of the school choir is important.

Interview 12: "... I would also like to train in the school choir, which is a favorite part of my job and I am constantly happy to improve."

Four (4) teachers of the sample submit their need to be trained in issues of special education.

Interview 12: "I believe that I definitely need training in special education..."

There is a special need expressed by four (4) teachers to be trained in the proper use and organization of their teaching time. This need arises as a result of the various teaching obligations of music teachers in relation to the proportionally little teaching time they have.

14.9: "I would like to train in the management of teaching time based on the current conditions prevailing in schools. Let someone more experienced show us how to use one teaching hour a week and to meet the expectations of our students and their special needs and to cover the material of the books and to prepare the school events." Two (2) teachers wish to be trained in pedagogical issues.

Interview 15: "... And in terms of pedagogy I would be interested in some training, we need a renewal of knowledge and in this regard because we are dealing with children."

Also two (2) teachers state that they are interested in training in matters of intercultural education.

Interview 1: "... In my cognitive object upstairs clearly and in some intercultural issues."

Continuing, the teachers were asked to express their preferences in matters of planning their training programs. They were initially asked if they prefer short- or long-term training programs. All but one of the sample teachers stated that they prefer short programs, because they immediately satisfy their training needs without requiring many hours of monitoring and study.

Interview 13: "I prefer short programs, because if a training lasts 2 to 3 days you have better mood to attend it..."

Teachers were asked to answer the same question if they prefer optional or compulsory training programs. Seven (7) teachers emphatically stated that they want compulsory training. They consider that it is more appropriate for the trainings in their specialty to be obligatory at the given time on the one hand, in order to inform everyone about the modern developments in the teaching of music education on the other hand, because that way they will take it more seriously and organized.

Interview 13 "...Certainly the trainings should be obligatory, because in this way we are more formal and more correct towards them."

In the second subcategory that emerged from the qualitative analysis of this question, five (5) teachers expressed the view that they have no problem with whether or not a training program will be mandatory and believe that the subject matter of the program should determine the nature of the training.

Interview 6: "...Some must be mandatory and some optional. That is, the vocal placement must be compulsory training." Three (3) teachers expressed the desire that the training programs be optional.

Interview 5: "I would like optional training lasting 2-3 months. Two to four hours a week."

Music teachers were then asked to express their views on how the training programs were organized.

Seven (7) teachers want their training to be carried out in the traditional way, i.e. through face to face. They believe that a better climate of communication and mutual feed is achieved when you have direct contact with the trainer and the colleagues-participants in the program.

Interview 11: "I believe that face to face training is better, because there is communication with colleagues and everyone expresses their views, their difficulties, their concerns and there is a result..."

Four (4) teachers prefer to attend distance training programs, because they are relieved of the space-time commitments that the live-giving meetings have.

Interview 4: "... I personally like distance programs, because they give you a comfort and an opportunity to watch them without spoiling your family routine."

Also, four (4) participants in the research consider that it would be ideal for distance education to be combined with two to three live meetings, proposing in some way the blended model of training.

Interview 6: "Because I have experience from distance education, I consider distance education to be a good solution, but in some cases live face to face meetings are also needed."

The music teachers of the research were asked the same question about how the training is organized and which teaching methods they prefer in their training.

Thirteen (13) teachers answered that due to the nature of their subject matter they prefer the trainings that use collaborative and experiential actions in their teaching methods.

Interview 15: "... Because we have attended presentations very much, I would like very experiential and collaborative actions. I think they help a lot and you can bring all this to the classroom with more enthusiasm."

Two (2) teachers expressed the opinion that it is good to combine teaching methods.

Interview 11: Now in terms of methods, I believe that a variety and a combination is needed in the use of all methods."

Then the music teachers were asked which elements they evaluate as positive and which as negative in a training program.

Seven (7) music teachers answered that they evaluate it positively, when a training program is designed and organized to meet the specific training needs of their specialty only.

Interview 2: "I evaluate positively the fact that the program is adapted to the school reality and the special educational needs of each specialty."

The correct organization in terms of topics, coordination and adherence to the schedule is positively evaluated by five (5) teachers.

Interview 7: "On the positive side I will put a satisfactory structure in a seminar, a proper coordination, a nice learning atmosphere with the right choices of activities."

The feedback of knowledge made through learning activation and communication with colleagues of the same specialty is evaluated as a positive element of a training program by four (4) music teachers.

Interview 6: "The positives are when in a program you get feedback of your knowledge, you activate your learning role and surely no matter how many flaws a program has, something positive will leave us."

Three (3) teachers report as a positive element of a training program it's staffing with experienced trainers.

Interview 9: "I evaluate a positive element when the trainer has set goals that they follow in a series that makes sense for the trainee. They must have organized his time so that the part of the introduction, the theoretical one, is so small and bigger that the part that will give a result. To have a flow and organization of time in order to understand the object of their teaching."

The integration of experiential actions is also evaluated as a positive element in the structure of a training program by three (3) teachers.

Interview 10: "I think a positive element is the experiential and for me it is the most basic."

In relation to the negative elements of a training program, many music teachers (7) when attending a training program evaluate negatively the continuous theoretical presentations.

Interview 4: "... As for the negatives, I believe that the use of the theoretical presentation inactivates the trainees and affects the effectiveness of the program."

As they mentioned as a positive element, the content of the training should be addressed to the needs of their specialty, so in the opposite case, when this does not happen, that is, the music teachers evaluate it negatively. More specifically, five (5) teachers point out:

Interview 3: "Primary school teachers do not all have the same training priorities and needs. Personally, I have not participated in an organized training, only for musicians. So the subject matter of a program that is not relevant to my training needs, I would evaluate it negatively."

Three (3) teachers commented as a negative element, when during the training they realize that the content does not meet their expectations.

Interview 6 "As negative if the subject of the training is not what it really should be or you thought it would be then time is wasted."

Issues of poor organization of the training program, which may be related to the time and place of the event, the information and the management of the schedule, are evaluated as negative by three (3) teachers.

Interview 7: «I would say as negative the compressed schedule of a seminar many times, that is, the stressful time of conduct. Also in the negative I evaluate the difficulty of access to the seminar venue, as well as the lack of valid information for its conduct, since sometimes we learn it at the last minute."

Teachers were then invited to submit their views on the role of the Educational Project Coordinator in training and supporting their project. The majority of teachers in the sample (thirteen out of fifteen) stated that at the given time they have no guidance or pedagogical support from their Coordinator, nor they have participated in any training program organized by him. Many say that they do not know exactly the new responsibilities of the Educational Project Coordinator in relation to those of the former School Counselors, but they consider that no one is interested in their scientific support and pedagogical guidance anymore.

Interview 12: "I have understood that the responsibilities of the Educational Project Coordinators are different from those of the former School Counselors. It is more decentralized to say the role of the Coordinators, it seems to me somewhat. What is certain is that we need support and pedagogical guidance as a specialty and at the moment we do not have it."

Two teachers stated that they understand the increased professional responsibilities of the Music Coordinator and commented positively on the role of their Coordinator on the occasion of the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

Interview 10: "The important thing is that with the current situation created with closed schools due to covid 19, the Coordinator of our district was given the opportunity to send a variety of e-learning material and advices to his teachers, which helped our project."

In the last recapitulative question the teachers presented their views on what improvements they would suggest in the design, organization and implementation of the training programs of their specialty, if they participated in their design.

Nine (9) music teachers, suggest that the design of their training programs be based on their current training needs and that their topics be strictly focused on the content of their course.

Interview 3: "The main thing that would interest me is that they are designed by specialized music educators and are addressed exclusively to musicians of a specific level of education, e.g. only primary. I am tired of attending training programs together with philologists, teachers and other specialties."

Regarding the content of the training, five (5) music teachers propose to organize programs on the use of new technologies in the music lesson.

Interview 9: "I would like to be introduced to some programs to the extent that I could understand that they are related to digital form of the course."

Many teachers (five in total) also suggest that the training programs be staffed by experienced and renowned trainers.

Interview 2: "If I participated in such a planning I would suggest: To invite renowned and experienced music educators of primary education (and from other cities) to support our teaching."

Four (4) teachers suggest the use of experiential actions in the teaching methods of training to enhance communication between.

Interview 15: "I would suggest experiential seminars for musicians to exchange views..."

The distance learning of the trainings is wanted and proposed by two (2) teachers.

Interview 8: "I would definitely suggest the distance learning of the program..."

Also, two (2) teachers suggest that two to three trainings be done during the school year.

Interview 2: "Trainings should be done maybe three times during the school year (beginning-middle-end)."

7. Conclusions

The research question was about identifying the training needs of primary education music teachers according to the views of the sample.

The experienced music teachers of the sample show increased training needs compared to the first years of their work motivated by the personal need for knowledge renewal and professional development (Koner & Eros, 2018; Sfontouri, 2019). They highlight the training in new technologies and their utilization in the subject of music education as their primary training need in order to adequately meet the requirements of distance education (Bowles, 2002 ; Sakkoulis & Vergidis, 2017). Other needs mentioned are training in the cognitive subject (Bautista, Toh & Wong, 2016 ; Lymperopoulou, 2019), choir conducting (Bowles, 2002 ; Koukoutsis, 2014) and special education (Van Weelden & Whipple, 2014 ; Tiles & Vaiouli, 2017). They consider, although

they have several years of teaching experience, that they need training for the effective management of their teaching time in relation to the many and varied obligations of their school curriculum (Koukoutsis, 2014).

Regarding the organization of training programs, the teachers of the present research show a preference for short-term programs in contrast to the research of Bauer (2007) and Hammel (2007), because they can more easily combine them with their daily program and offer immediate feedback in the classroom (Bautista, Toh & Wong, 2016). In relation to the method of organizing the training programs, the experienced music teachers of the research equally support the traditional way and the distance method for different reasons. They want the programs to be carried out for life, because it serves the laboratory character of the course and satisfies their need for communication and strengthening of their fellow relations (Sfontouri, 2019). However, a significant part of the participants lean towards the preference of the distance education as more flexible and adaptable to their personal times (Kos & Goodrich, 2012), while the application of the blended learning is also supported as ideal with great pedagogical efficiency. A remarkable finding, as it is not often found in such research, is the desire of a large number of research teachers for compulsory training programs, as well as the view of many that the subject matter of training is the criterion that should determine its compulsory or optional nature. Experiential and collaborative activities, as highlighted in the literature review, are preferred by music teachers in the training program (Zosis & Bagakis, 2014) and short presentations are considered necessary only for a conceptual approach to the theoretical part.

The role of the Music Education Coordinator is considered crucial for the support and pedagogical guidance of the diverse educational work of music teachers. However, the teachers of the sample claim that they have not participated in any training activities organized by their Coordinator, nor is there any substantial two-way communication or a broader coordination of their work by him. With the above data and in combination with the fact that the Coordinators of the Music Educational Project have under their pedagogical responsibility school units of many times and two Regions, it is deemed necessary to review the institutional framework and provide increase of positions for Educational Project Coordinators for this specialty, so that they can respond to their pedagogical role substantially and not formally.

Research teachers are clearly frustrated with the implementation of the heterogeneous training model, which ignores their special training needs and groups teachers in attending general education programs (Hammel, 2007; Koner & Eros, 2018). They want to create a participatory training organization framework (Sfontouri, 2019; Dimitraki, 2019), which focuses on the systematic investigation of their training needs, the solution of specific problems they face in the classroom and the strengthening of their teaching practices.

Irrespective of the above explicit training needs, expressed in detail by the participants, and in relation to the difficulties they occasionally face in their relationships with colleagues and students, the cultivation of communication and interpersonal relationship management between members of school community emerge as an implicit training need of the music teachers of the sample (Hammel, 2007). The development of communication skills would strengthen the level of interpersonal relationships, cooperation and mutual understanding between the members of the pedagogical team and would significantly consolidate the position of the music teacher in it.

The present research effort highlighted useful data regarding the mapping of the current training needs of the music teachers of primary education of the prefecture of Achaia. As it turns out, music teachers in fact in recent years have not received any training always in relation to their specialty. They go on their own, essentially looking for ways to renew their knowledge through the use of resources from the internet, attending postgraduate programs, participating in seminars organized by private organizations, etc. Their educational support from the state is necessary, because it is a specialty with an important contribution to the formation of tomorrow's citizens with respect for humanitarian values and the ability to think critically and aesthetically, elements necessary for modern man to respond to the rapid pace of materialistic and transformative our society.

The data of the present research, as well as related educational research mentioned in the literature review, are useful to be used by official educational policy makers, such as the I.E.P., universities, etc., to create a database

with the topics in which music teachers want and need training. However, because the conclusions of the research come from the views of a portion of music teachers, who work in the primary schools of the prefecture of Achaia, they cannot be generalized. In order to generalize the results, it is advisable to carry out similar qualitative research in other prefectures or regions of our country and to combine, possibly with quantitative methodological approaches, in order to further cross-compare and compare the results in a wider geographical sample. In this way, the planning will be systematized and training programs will be organized, which will really help music teachers to meet any of their training needs in order to be creative, productive, proud of their teaching work and to feel equal members of the educational community.

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