Specific Features of Social Competence Development in the Future Music Teachers Working at Universities

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ABSTRACT
This paper aims at analyzing specific features of social competence of future music teachers and the development of specialized techniques in order to improve the quality of motivational and cognitive components of student social competence. The sample involved 660 undergraduate students. The authors used a number of research methods, such as pedagogical experiment, discussion, testing and monitoring, which provided the possibility to monitor the degree of social responsibility and the development of social competence in the future music teachers. The study specified three levels of social competence development, along with analyzing the conditions of implementing social competence of students engaged in creative specialties in a holistic teaching and learning process in higher educational institutions. The results of the experiment showed that in order to prevent social immaturity of future music teachers, along with improving their social skills such as constructive behaviour in a conflict situation, the ability to defend personal viewpoint, independent thinking and decision-making, one needs to involve students in active interaction with the social environment outside the psycho-emotional comfort area. The analysis of the control stage data indicate that the developed method has improved the ability to analyze and to use the mechanisms of social interaction in a social group at the micro, meso and macro levels, and provided practical skills of decision-making under modern creative environment.

Introduction

The present educational environment demands young specialists as key bearers and supporters of all kinds of innovative resources and technology, as subjects of social change (Barry & McArthur, 1994; Holgersen & Burnard, 2016; Karlsen & Väkevä, 2012).

The impact of music on the public consciousness can create and transform social values and life orientations (Rentfrow, 2012; Swanwick, 2012; Hargreaves & North, 1999; Eerola & Eerola, 2014). However, this demands successful

socialization of music teachers, development of their creative activity, motivation to perform socially meaningful activities (Hibbard & Conway, 2015; Jennings, 2014; Southcott & Joseph, 2010; Juchniewicz, 2014; Bouij, 2004).

As shown by practice, graduates of the specialty "musical education" largely experience significant difficulties in social adaptation in the course of professional activity due to weak social motivation, inability to communicate with the social environment (Thorgersen, Johansen & Juntunen, 2015). The reason for their weak psychological readiness for social interaction is the lack of a focused and controlled process of social competence development in higher educational institutions (Burnard, 2016; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004).

Moreover, by virtue of the neurophysiological, personal and psychosocial characteristics, the creative personality of a music teacher needs intensive and purposeful development of social competence; in addition, the period of maximum efficiency of this process coincides with acquiring professional skills (Kelly, 2015; Hancock, 2016). Therefore, development of social competence in the future teachers of music is directly linked with the development of conscious social communication skills and should become the subject of further research.

Literature Review

Social competence is a complex and interdisciplinary concept, which determines various approaches to its interpretation (Allsup & Shieh, 2012; Arifin, 2015; Burnard & Murphy, 2013; Colwell & Froehlich, 2015; Gerich & Schmitz, 2016).

The analysis of research papers provided by neuroscientists suggests that specific features of social competence development of any creative person is associated with his/her specific development and determined by the following prerequisites:

1. Biological background: neurophysiological brain structure that determines predominance of internal conditionality over the external one (De Bono, 1976);

2. Psychological conditions: distancing as a condition of social interaction (Shadrin, 2009; Hallam, Cross & Thaut, 2016);

3. Intrapersonal background: in contrast to the students of other specialties, the future music teachers have a strong creative dominant (Hancock, 2016).

Scientists also point out that, unlike other students, students of creative specialties usually do not identify their social and professional future with the acquisition of socialization skills (Juchniewicz, 2010; Leon-Guerrero, 2008). However, practice shows that teachers-musicians have to face difficulties in the process of acquiring life and professional experience. These difficulties are caused not only and not so much by various social arrangements as their own lack of understanding and acceptance of these mechanisms as part of the interaction, including professional, which is reflected in the low initial level of social competence development (Walter & Walter, 2015; Hallam, Cross & Thaut, 2016).

Analyzing a number of works devoted to the concept of social competence of music teachers, it can be generally defined as an integrative professional and personal quality, which includes the interest of the individual to interact with the community in the process of professional and creative self-realization,

knowledge of different social mechanisms, as well as the abilities and skills providing expression of personal social attitudes by means of music, revealed in the socially active pedagogical activity (Hargreaves & North, 1999; Allsup & Shieh, 2012; Jennings, 2014; Kelly, 2015).

As noted by A. Leon-Guerrero (2008), as opposed to students studying applied, economic and technical specialties, seeking to fit the model of socio-economic relations, students of creative professions, as a rule, have a tendency to unaccountable distancing from active social attitudes.

The future music teachers are not capable of forming well-developed social competence, since they are not always aware of its importance and role in the formation of a harmonious existence model (Aróstegui & Ibarretxe, 2016). At the same time, considering the hierarchy of social needs, it is possible to detect that primary needs of the future music teachers fall within the most characteristic features of intellectually and morally developed personality (Gross, 1999; Juchniewicz, 2010; Juchniewicz, 2014).

In terms of social psychology, the attitude of students-musicians to creation and beauty has always been the value-based landmark and backbone principle of creative development, as an expression of structure, functionality and appropriateness of this process, value orientations revealing the essence of professional ethics that embody the universal life laws (De Bono, 1976).

Definition of social competence involves a wide range of approaches and original techniques that can be divided by the authors' belonging to the sphere of public knowledge and by the categorical approach to this problem:

1. Laying the emphasis on the social component as the basic one in terms of defining the concept "social competence" (Sergienko & Vetrova, 2009; Sergienko et al., 2010.);

2. Laying the emphasis on specific responses to public orientations as the level of social competence development (Teslenko, 2009);

3. Laying the emphasis on the ability to apply skills and knowledge in collaboration with other members of society and the awareness of the importance of professional activity (Finney, Laurence & Brindley, 2013; Burnard & Murphy, 2013).

Based on the analysis of personality development, one can conclude that music students are largely left to their own devices in terms of personal development; they are not always sufficiently straightforward in the external manifestation of responses to the social impact (Otacıoğlu, 2016; Salvador, 2010). However, social impact usually provides the unpredictable and long-lasting effect on the internal system of social attitudes that are formed through the prism of experiences and creative adaptation (Hargreaves & North, 1999; Eerola & Eerola, 2014).

Research purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide experimental verification of specific features of social competence development in the future music teachers, and to create (with regard to the obtained data) a technique that will improve the level of social competence development in students of the specialty "Musical education".

Research questions

There are two main research questions:

1. What are the criteria for the elementary level of social competence development in students of the specialty "Musical education"?

2. What psychological and emotional factors influence the development of their socialization skills?

Methods

The authors of this study used theoretical and empirical methods – theoretical analysis of research papers, pedagogical experiment, mathematical statistics, observations and interviews.

The authors also used psychological analysis in order to monitor the level of social responsibility and development social competence in the future music teachers.

The pedagogical experiment was carried out among students of the specialty "Music education", studying in universities located in Almaty: Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Kazakh State Female Pedagogical University, and Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory.

The sample involved 660 undergraduate students. Total number of students made 660 people, including 596 students of the specialty "Musical education" (experimental group) and 64 students of the specialty "Pedagogy and psychology" (control group).

Stages of experiment are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Stages of experiment aimed at the development of social competence in the future music teachers

Stages	Purposes	Methods
Determination of the initial level of social competence development in the future music teachers	Determination of criteria for the initial level of social competence	Psychosocial diagnosis by testing and monitoring
Experiment with students	Raising the level of social competence development in the future music teachers	Action plan containing specific measures related to teaching and extracurricular activities
Definition of results	Assessment of changes in the level of social competence	Psychosocial diagnosis by testing and monitoring

The analysis of experimental results was carried out by testing and monitoring, at the beginning of the ascertaining and after the formative experiment, using the specially developed methodology with the view of assessing the level of social competence development in students of the specialty "Musical education".

The ascertaining experiment showed weak development of several social competence components, such as motivational (determined by the detected low importance of social motives in the motivation system), reflective-activity (inability to adapt to rapidly changing conditions and to organize group work), cognitive (inability to make constructive use of the situation, and defend personal attitude), creative (inability to use creativity to solve social interaction

problems and difficulty in manifesting the propensity for analysis and synthesis in different situations).

In order to improve social competence development, the authors of this research developed specialized methodology. Its main features include the following:

1. Development of social competence by the crosscutting principle throughout the entire learning process.

2. Consideration of psycho-emotional and social characteristics that influence the learning process of creative specialty students.

3. Consideration of specific age and personality characteristics of students: the need to consider both personal characteristics inherent only in creative specialty students and general features typical for all young people.

4. Implementation of conditions required for social competence development during extracurricular activities under teachers' supervision.

5. The inclusion of specialized thematic modules in all disciplines to be studied.

The purpose of this methodology is to form and to develop student abilities to analyze and to use social interaction mechanisms in a social group at the micro, meso and macro levels, to give the necessary knowledge regarding the basic principles of social life and personal management of social, economic and professional activities, as well as to provide practical decision-making skills under in the context of modern creative activities.

The methodology included analysis of social competence components according to the three-point grading scale corresponding to the competence development level: from low (1) to high (3). In addition, the summary indicator was determined: arithmetic mean of all eight indicators, and the ratio of their values to the average group values. The experimental work was carried out within the framework of classroom and extracurricular activities. The experiment ended in re-testing of students included into the experimental and control groups.

In order to improve the social empathy and social motivation, students of the experimental group were involved in a charity concert activity. Sand therapy was used with the view of removing the identified aggressive manifestations in student behavior, including the auto-aggressive behavior. In addition, a number of individual interviews aimed at identifying psychological barriers to the inclusion in the educational process was used in working with individual respondents who had very poor test results.

Successful implementation of the experiment also demanded preparedness of the teaching staff to participate in the formation and development of social competence in students of the specialty "Musical education". It was necessary to consider the fact that teachers working at creative universities were also creative people. Therefore, on the one hand, there should be mutual understanding between students and teachers; at the same time, many teachers may face difficulties in controlling the development of social competence among such students in those aspects that are difficult to understand for teachers themselves. Hence, a series of interviews was conducted with teachers who work with students-musicians with the view of forming a clear understanding of

importance of social competence development, motivating them to perform rigorous verification of relevant syllabi and individual work programs.

Data, Analysis, and Results

The results obtained during the pilot phase of this experiment, demonstrate effectiveness of work performed to improve social competence of students getting their musical education.

One should emphasize the distinct emotional and motivational effect of the conducted experiment. The initial stage was characterized by the lack of motivation for the purposeful development of social competence in the very students – future musicians, however, at the end of the experiment, these people showed a clear interest in this issue.

When testing the initial level of social competence, the students did not show interest in the test material, along with some dissatisfaction regarding the need for diagnosis. Repeated testing led to genuine interest of students in its results by the students themselves along with active readiness to provide most objective information. The experiment showed increasing involvement of students into the process of social competence development expressed in the form of active engagement in selecting the content of extra-curricular practice, the presence of interesting and creative proposals regarding the content of case studies and presentations.

Obviously, the above activities had a positive impact on the development of social component in the system of future music teachers' motivation. The authors of this study believe that student participation in various social projects such as charity concerts in orphanages, nursing homes and hospitals had the most vivid impact, since they were able to feel the possibility to implement their creative potential through participation in social life and involvement in solving socially important problems.

The result of the formative experiment showed that the experimental group demonstrated visible positive changes in the social competence level, as compared with the control group, which had not been involved in special classroom and extra-curricular activities.

This proved the effectiveness of purposeful social competence development in students of relevant specialty within the framework of academic and extra-curricular activities.

The experimental results showed that student involvement in active interaction with the social environment outside the psycho-emotional comfort area was required in order to prevent social immaturity of future music teachers, to improve their socialization skills such as constructive behavior in a conflict situation, the ability to defend their viewpoint, to develop independent attitudes and decision-making.

Changes in social competence development in the experimental and control groups revealed by the experiment are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Changes in social competence development in the experimental and control groups

Name of indicator	Initial value	Average value in the experimental group	Average value in the control group
Social motivation	1,7	2,3	1,8
Social empathy	1,3	2,3	1,8
Communication skills	2	2,3	1,8
Social and psychological adaptability	1,8	2,3	1,8
Communication and organizational skills	1,8	2,3	2
Achievement need	2,3	2,3	1,8
Social creativity	2	2,4	1,8
Special abilities to be engaged in spontaneous social interaction	1,2	2,4	2
Overall performance	1,7	2,4	1,8

Thus, taking into account the fact that development of social skills occurs during natural development of the personality, one should note the difference in the overall performance values characterizing positive impact of the experimental work with the students of the experimental group (Figure 1).
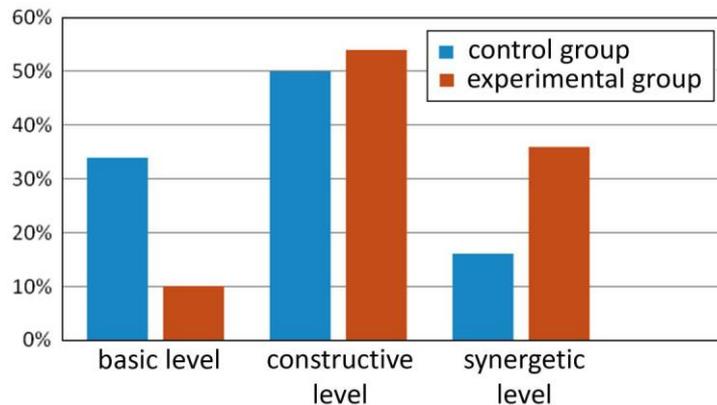

Figure 1. Changes in performance values after the experiment with students of the experimental group students.

In order to prove statistical significance of the obtained data, the authors analyzed results in the control and experimental groups by Fisher's test and determined Spearman's rank correlation coefficient.

Fisher's test provided the criterion, equal to 0.54, which indicated statistical significance in the pairwise comparison results in favor of the experimental group. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (0.04) also indicates statistical significance of matching values obtained in the experimental and control groups.

The following activities were performed to improve social competence of future music teachers:

1. Development of motivational and cognitive components of social competence within the courses "Sociology", "Music Education Methods", "History

and theory of music education" was provided through lectures on topics related to social responsibility and socialization problems of music teachers;

2. Practical interactive classes aimed at promoting independence and diversity of judgment and communication skills, including role plays, individual and group work related to case studies and presentations aimed at the development of cognitive, reflective-activity and creative components;

3. In order to raise the level of social empathy and student involvement in the social environment, the authors organized volunteer activities aimed at the development of motivational, reflexive-activity and creative components.

4. Individual work aimed at the development of cognitive and motivational components through psychotherapeutic methods, adapted to the purpose of this research.

5. The authors used techniques aimed at stimulating creative potential of students in social life in order to provide accelerated development of communication and reactive adaptation skills

The experimental results showed that specifics of personal prerequisites for social competence development in the future music teachers were determined by various psychological and neurophysiological factors, namely:

1. Active creative activities leading to early professional development, and (as a consequence) restriction of stable contacts;

2. In-depth self-sufficient enthusiasm, being developed into the dominance of creative ideas;

3. Very early formation of personal identity, dominating over social values;

4. Creative thinking and domination of social empathy.

Based on the analysis of psychological, social and adaptive properties of the individual bearer of the creative "ego", the authors developed the structural and substantive characteristics of social competence of the future music teachers, based on a number of components and their formation rates, namely: motivational (social motivation, social empathy); cognitive (communication skills, social and psychological adaptability); reflexive-activity (communicative and organizational skills and the achievement need need) and creative (social creativity and a special ability to be engaged in spontaneous social interaction).

The following levels of social competence development were identified:

1. Basic level, characterized by a limited understanding of social life, ways of self-fulfillment, inability to establish contacts in the process of creative interaction, lack of mature human values.

2. Constructive level: a student with a certain amount of knowledge and skills in the field of social life can interact constructively with others, often takes his/her own decisions and bears responsibility for them.

3. Synergetic level, which implies that the student has a certain amount of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values, experience of their use and the ability to analyze and to combine knowledge and skills for solving relevant tasks, which provides his/her successful social adaptation.

Discussion and Conclusion

The aforementioned experiment showed that a certain part of the future music teachers experienced significant difficulties related to social adaptation in

the course of their professional activity due to weak social motivation or inability to communicate with the social environment.

Similar test results were shown by 735 students of Finnish schools who were enrolled in specialized music classes (Eerola & Eerola, 2014). This confirms views of sociologists and psychologists related to the fact that music students (as a rule) are not always straightforward enough in the external manifestation of responses to the social impact.

It should be emphasized as well that definition of social competence is based on a number of original methods and techniques (Sergienko et al., 2010; Burnard & Murphy, 2013; Finney, Laurence & Brindley, 2013), but these methods are mainly focused on a specific category, so their use cannot provide a comprehensive study of specific features related to social competence development in students of creative specialties.

Research results found that correlation of the needs of the creative "ego" with social attitudes affecting self-fulfillment in a specific social context is the central component in the social competence development.

Social competence development of students in terms of a holistic pedagogical process in higher educational institutions can be defined as follows:

1. Development of social competence should be purposefully based on the interdisciplinary approach throughout the entire teaching and learning process.

2. Consideration of psycho-emotional and social characteristics that affect student learning specialty "musical education" is required.

3. One should consider both personal characteristics inherent only in students of creative specialties, and general features typical for all young people.

4. Implementation of conditions related to social competence development during extracurricular activities should be carried out under teachers' supervision.

5. The inclusion of specialized thematic modules in university courses is mandatory;

6. Purposeful stimulation of interaction with the least comfortable psychological and emotional environment for the accelerated development of communication and reactive adaptation skills of the future music teachers.

The experimental results showed that student involvement in active interaction with the social environment outside the psycho-emotional comfort area was required in order to prevent social immaturity of future music teachers, to improve their socialization skills such as constructive behavior in a conflict situation, the ability to defend their viewpoint, to develop independent attitudes and decision-making.

Implications and Recommendations

Research results showed that students of creative specialties tend to distance themselves from the active social attitudes and are not always capable of forming adequate social competence. Research work and testing of the proposed corrective techniques showed positive changes related to the development of professional and socialization skills. Therefore, research findings can later be used in modern teaching practices as the basis of subsequent

research in the field of social competence development in students of creative specialties.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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