Management of musical education at early ages

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Abstract. The paper presents a model of management in the musical arts domain for children at early stages of development. It is common knowledge that performing arts, including music, are an important part in children's harmonious development. This type of education may start even in the prenatal period. The studies confirm that those children that are beneficiaries of a classical musical education had better results as compared to those without that type of education. Our study presents a scientific reason to educate children from their first stages of development in musical arts as well as the benefits of such a project, together with a management project for a musical nursery school.

Keywords: performing arts, music, education, children, musical nursery school, harmonious development

JEL Codes: I21, I22

1. Introduction. The management of performance in musical art

Musical education can become an essential factor in the harmonious development of children of early ages when it is implemented with a scientific vision where the managerial elements are harmoniously combined with elements of professional art, taught in a way that is appropriate to a specific age group. This implies not only very good management knowledge, but also a total involvement of the elements that are specific to art: talent, musicality, the will to have good results, discipline, personal and public fame.

In the past 20 years we have witnessed a significant reduction in introducing professional elements in the case of young or very young children, where the musical element is essential and the child’s good results are considered as stroke of genius sometimes too soon. Broadcast competitions rewarded with high prizes have sometimes encouraged parents to evade a normal gradual education and sometimes adopt their children’s paranoid desire of achievement. Sometimes the very limits imposed by the children’s age, tiredness and degree of overwork have been overlooked, the only motivation being the desire of achievement.

On the other hand thousands of people have no chance to develop the musical talent they were born with, even if at times they prove to be very talented.

This is why we think that the present study is a balanced, normal and decent proposition regarding the need of performance of a child who is born with musical talent. By implementing the principles presented in this study we consider that a harmonious, beautiful, decent and why not professional development of young and very young children is possible.

In the literature some musical education methods are known such as those belonging to musical education systems such as: Orff, Willems, Kodaly, Suzuki.

In all these systems the classical instruments such as the piano and the violin, the percussion instruments, blockflote, regarded as musical toys and later as serious means of musical education, are found as basic principles. There are national institutions that implement these methods and which have improved their educational services over the years.

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The present management plan is not based on any of these methods, but it is an original idea, based on the contemporary Romanian reality, on the educational resources and the financial power of a family with an average income and with parents that have a general education that helps them want their own children’s normal performance and quality education.

The pre-school education in Romania is one that has a special dynamic. Due to the changes that have occurred in the past 20 years, the society tends more and more to bring the educational model closer to the European one. Thus, various private nursery schools have appeared as an alternative to the traditional “state” nursery school.

The Montessori, Waldorf or Step by Step educational methods are only some of the educational alternatives that the parents of nursery children can choose. Still, there is need of a preponderantly cultural alternative, in which music and musical education is the basis of educational training together with the national curricula imposed by the Ministry of Education. Thus musical training centres have appeared on the market (for instance the DoReMi centre in Timișoara) where children can discover the mysteries of musical instruments or learn about the history of music, in other words to learn music through games.

1.1. The need of an early musical education

For many of us musical education seems to be a field of activity without a bright future. Contemporary society is invaded by low quality musical products which have taken music to derisive areas, without any bright perspective. Sometimes the remarks made about music are so ridiculous that they cannot be referred to as a civil perspective and throws us into the morbid “manelism” of the 21st musical century. The causes are multiple and irreversible for whole generations of young people educated by the TV and with musical knowledge acquired at weddings and baptism receptions. Even so, at the opposite end there is a small core of young people who want musical achievements. The groups in which these people activate are religious groups, intellectual groups where music is considered to be an element of personal values. Within such an environment the children’s presence represents a reason for creativity and joy. The children’s choirs, musical competitions for children, concerts for children are moments when parents are thrilled with the artistic performances of their own children. This is why the present project addresses mainly such an environment that is favourable for performance and the children’s balanced education.

Beyond musical education we think that there is need of a harmonious, cultivated and balanced environment in which new concepts of equilibrium between activity and rest are thoroughly implemented. At the same time we introduced a new concept regarding healthy eating, using the best bio quality food, that helps to the development of native intelligence, and individual performances. We tried to put into practice a old Latin proverb mens sana in corpore sano (a healthy mind in a healthy body).

It goes without saying that the presented project does not conceive only a musical education system, but it also includes the programs in the curricula of a general education nursery school. Even so the main objective of the present project is the natural and balanced performance in the field of music.

We conceived a project to set up a Musical Nursery School where, together with the national curricula the children can benefit from a different type of education, the musical education, everything in a natural environment. A different, warmer, more cheerful, more welcoming but still more competent nursery school than the one my children attended.

Below I will present the management project of the future Musical Nursery School. As you will notice, the main impediments are, like in most cases, the financial resources. Once solved, the parents, the children and implicitly the entire society will be able to benefit from the offer of a nursery school where music, games, creativity, self-control and a healthy lifestyle will hold an important place.
2.1.1. Object of activity

“I want to play” Ltd provides for musical and social training to pre-school children, in a safe, professional and natural environment

Human resources (number of employees – leading job, execution job)

Total 5 employees with certified competences
- 1 music teacher with a volunteer contract
- 1 employed nursery teacher
- 1 economist, with a volunteer contract
- 1 cook with a volunteer contract
- outsourcing: 1 doctor (self-employed), 1 psychologist with collaboration contract

2.1.2. Material resources

Registered office of 120 square meters within personal property of 870 square meters, 1 „Nocturno” Viennese piano, 1 „Yamaha” electronic piano with Hammer mechanism, 3 personal computers, 3 licensed software, 1 Canon multifunctional, storage space of 5 square meters, 1 playground provided with swing, slide and sandpit of 1,5 square meters, food store of 4 square meters, bathroom provided with 3 toilets and 3 washbasins adapted for children and a bathtub, furniture specially designed for children

2.1.3. Financial resources (main income sources)

- own resources amounting to EUR5700
- personal needs credit amounting to EUR5000

2.2. The SWOT analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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</table>
| - personnel with certified competences, under volunteer contract  
- little competition in the field, due to the services offered, including a vegetarian menu, transport from and to the nursery school, extended program on request and at weekends, providing the necessary vegetables from own garden  
- eligible for accessing structural funds | - insufficient capital for building and equipment  
- lack of partnerships with the mass-media  
- location on the periphery  
- the inexistence in the neighbourhood of a station for a means of transport  
- the impossibility to pay the instalment for the personal needs credit, due to the market volatility |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| - the parents’ tendency to offer a musical education to their children  
- the tendency of society to have a healthier and a more natural lifestyle  
- the parents’ tendency to have a longer program at work at weekend | - the poverty of the population  
- the decrease of birth rates at a national level (2002- 21,6 mil. inhabitants; 2011-19,0 mil. Inh., out of which 5 mil. are children) and at a local level (1992- 700.033 inhabitants; 2002- 677.926 mil. inhabitants)  
- law changes regarding the security of children, curricula, and public catering |

2.3. The organization’s main objectives from the present management plan, during the future year of activity, as a result of the analysis above
The firm’s/organization’s/department’s etc objectives for the future year of activity are:

a. Attracting new funding sources by accessing non-repayable grants, through the Minimis Program carried on by the Ministry of Finance, for furniture, musical instruments and solar panels (maximum value of 200,000 euros)

b. Partnerships with the media, the „Renasterera banateana” newspaper and Radio Vocea Sperantei radio station, 89.7 FM

c. Reducing the food costs by using vegetables from own garden

d. Attracting at least 7 new clients

e. Training the human resources for marketing

2.4. Expected results and the key performance indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Expected results</th>
<th>Key performance indicators</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective a.</td>
<td>Accessing non-repayable grants</td>
<td>Receiving EUR15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective b.</td>
<td>Signing a partnership agreement with „Renastera Banateana” and „Radio Vocea Sperantei” for advertisements and banner ads</td>
<td>One and every 2 days on the 3rd page of „Renastera Banațeana”, one commercial per day between 9-11 p.m. at “Radio Vocea Sperantei”, 1 banner with the logo and the contact details of the nursery school at the registered office of the radio station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective c.</td>
<td>Growing vegetables, onions, lettuce, radishes, potatoes and cucumbers in own garden</td>
<td>The possibility of buying half of the necessary vegetables from own garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective d.</td>
<td>Negotiated contracts</td>
<td>7 signed contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective e.</td>
<td>Taking professional development courses</td>
<td>2 employees take a course at SNFM Timisoara</td>
</tr>
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2.5. Funding sources (attracting the necessary capital for setting up the company/organization/etc within the following year of activity)

The activity within the first 6 months will be supported from the personal needs credit and from owner’s equity, and then a percentage from the estimated rate of turnover.

2.6. Financial resources to cover the advertising costs as well as the established advertising and marketing strategy
The firm addresses the parents in Dumbravita and the north-western part of Timisoara who have pre-school children and earnings above the average. The firm will provide musical training observing the obligatory national curricula to children aged 2-7, in a natural environment with limited pollution. The food offered to the children will be chosen from a normal, vegetarian or vegan menu. The firm will offer the children’s transport to and from the nursery school. The price will be EUR200/month/child, in proportion with the prices on the market and the services provided. There will be programs of attracting new clients (in the case of families with two children, the second child will benefit from a 30% discount) and keeping the existing clients (the possibility to pay for two months in advance with a 10% discount; the possibility to pay a part of the fee or the entire fee by means of Barter incomes; after uninterrupted attendance for six months, the payment for the instrument classes will be deducted from the total fee). The payment for services will be made in cash, bank transfer or on-line. The firm will have its registered office on a private property, with parking lot, a waiting lot for parents and a surgery. In the beginning the marketing budget will be a sum of money allocated from owner’s equity and later, a percentage from the rate of turnover will be used for marketing. The firm will organize promotion concerts in hypermarkets in the neighbourhood (Selgros, Real), in the nursery concert hall, on the stage at Food-Court-Mall and the „Lyra” hall in Timisoara during each semester, in order to maintain the parents’ and the children’s interest, to prepare the children for stage appearances and to attract new possible clients. There will also be a stand where the clients will be offered additional information. The firm will be present at fairs with a stand, with representative audio-visual material which will be projected on a screen behind the stand.

2.7. Investment in technology and equipment
- musical instruments: 1 professional stool for piano, 5 drums, 3 rattles,
- means of transport: 1 van

2.8. Resource management

2.8.1. Training programs for the team that will implement the management plan
- developing human resources by taking management course at SNFM Timisoara by the nursery teacher specialized in the obligatory national curricula and the psychologist with certified competences.
- taking part at national and international nursery fairs
- offering financial incentives, once the envisaged target has been achieved
- workshops on educational and personal development themes
- biannual team-building

2.8.2. Ensuring a friendly and motivating working environment
- the firm’s registered office will be in a natural, pleasant environment with modern equipment, musical instruments, PCs, playing ground for children and leisure activities for the employees.
- the employees will have free meals and a monthly season ticket for the gym.

2.8.3. The use and control of material and financial resources
- making a budget organized monthly and on budget lines
- the contracts will be renegotiated periodically with the suppliers
- the stationery and the raw materials orders will be centralized
- there will be a use regulation and a service instruction in the case of the equipment and periodically an
inventory will be drawn up

2.8.4. The protection of the environment at work
The waste will be sorted so that the biological waste be used for compost for the vegetable garden of the
nursery school. The information will be stocked mainly in the virtual environment. There will be eco-
friendly light bulbs and movement sensor in order to save power.

2.8.5. The equality of opportunity at work and fighting against discrimination
The firm will offer equal opportunities to education to all the children and the employees, irrespective of sex,
ethnicity or religion. There will be a similar payment for a similar volume of work.

2.8.6. Identify priorities or risk solution strategies
- eliminating the risk of food poisoning in the case of children and the employees
- reducing the risk of catching contagious diseases among children
- reducing the risk of accidents in the case of children on the playground
- initiating internal procedures regarding the way meals are served
- signing a contract with a doctor concerning health at work
- initiating internal procedures regarding the playground

2.8.7. Professional risk prevention
- checking whether the protection equipment (mask, uniform, cap, gloves) during cooking and serving meals.
- the children are obliged to have a daily check at the surgery, before entering the nursery.
- checking whether the playground is correctly used (special equipment, skidproof carpet, round corners,
safety nets) by the children and the nursery personnel.

2.9 Communication within the organisation
2.9.1. Methods and means of communication at work (internal communication)
Communication between the employees will take place, on the discussion forum with a moderator, through
an intranet network, specially designed for the firm, email and telephone. There will be periodical meetings
as well as „informal cafés”.

2.9.2. Ensuring the relationship with the exterior
Periodically there will be a clients’ tour, together with congratulations for the special moments of the
nursery, the parents and the children.
The parents will also be involved in extra-curricular activities, together with their children, being given the
occasion to be actively involved in their children’s development (birthdays, music and creative workshops,
trips, performances).
Possible clients or sponsors will be invited at certain events.
The parents will be able to access the discussion forum, the web page or, online, the charts presenting their
children’s progress.

2.10. Strategies of finding solutions to problems at work and in the relationships with third
parties
  a. “The day of the firm”, periodical meetings with the employees
  b. team- buildings
  c. the annual obligatory participation at psychological counselling meetings.

2.11. Evaluation of the way the envisaged objectives have been achieved
- by periodical analysis of the rate of turnover
- by market studies or questionnaires
- by interviewing the employees in order to quantify their degree of satisfaction regarding the work conditions and the satisfaction of their workload, including the training of two employees at SNFM Timisoara.
- by interviewing the parents in order to find out whether there is a concordance between the sum of money they pay for their children’s education and the state of things, these evaluations will take place every 3-6 months.
- the existence of new contracts signed with the parents for the coming year.
- by recognizing the firm as a player on the market, including 1 appearance every 2 days in „Renasterea Banateana”, for at least a month, a daily commercial at Radio Vocea Sperantei for 2 weeks and displaying a banner with the logo of the company and its contact details.

2.12. Attitudes for the management
2.12.1. Defining characteristics of the personal management style (strengths, weaknesses)

- An organized, punctual person sometimes with signs of compulsive behaviour. Motivated and motivating, children being in constant need of stimuli, support and encouragement, of continuous challenges in their progress.
- I communicate easily, this being a great advantage in working with children.
- A constant need to know and to learn and the urge to inspire the children that will attend the nursery school.
- Music oriented and creative, these being the defining elements of the „I want to play” nursery school.
- Resolute, with authoritarian tendencies.

2.12.2. Personal development objectives in order to improve the weaknesses
Developing patience. Accepting the differences in the perception of reality and the mentality of other people. Attending personal development workshops.

3. Conclusion
The present project can be implemented with ridiculously low sums of money as compared to the costs the society spends on social re-education. A child who has an early musical education will have not only musical but also other social good results which are favourable to school society. He will be used to discipline, taking into account the fact that in itself music disciplines. The future young person will be a sociable person in the sense that his performance will depend on his colleague in the children choir performance. There will be a bridge towards sensitivity, visual punctuality and psychological equilibrium. This will be a goal towards future school results and professional achievements. A child who has been musically educated will understand the harmony, the rhythm and the polyphony of the world around him, he will also understand and perceive that we cannot exist without beauty and that good results are obtained through hard work and intelligence.

This project is an open address to future sponsors who can help us implement this project de facto. The material resources invested in this project will help us have a Romanian implementation method of musical education. The result of the project will be visible after the first generation of children has graduated from the musical nursery school, after the first competitions that they have won. We think that the present paper is a generous and professional offer in a field in which our Romanian children are talented in the field of music.
For the sake of comparison the majority of the European symphonic orchestras have at least one musician of Romanian origin. The Japanese and the Chorean have also given a great significance to the field of music. This is why we think that the offer presented in this managerial plan is realistic, generous and appropriate for the present times for all Romanians.

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