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THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE CHOICE OF MUSIC
TEACHER'S PROFESSION

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Abstract

The article analyses the factors that influence students when choosing the profession of a music teacher. Nowadays, the modern competitive labour market situation has resulted in many difficulties which require the younger generation to adapt to compare to other age groups. People who are seeking employment require more qualifications which is why it is very important to highlight those factors, which are related to the choice of profession. Choosing a profession is an important and complex process which makes a tremendous impact on the person's life. This study investigated preservice music teachers' views on the music teacher's profession and possible changes in them in the years of study. This research reveals would-be music teachers' priorities and possible changes in the study programme that could be made. The most conspicuous factors are: the desire to major in music, go in for musical activity, and acquire a better professional knowledge in musical education. The factors related to professional purposefulness are also extremely important i.e. ability and skills in music, enjoyment of working with children. Also aspirations for a higher education, a desire to improve oneself and communicate with others are important, too. The research analysis has proved to be useful in improving of music teachers' training.

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Keywords: Professional choices, music teacher, factors, teacher training.



1. Introduction

Choosing a profession is an important and complex process which makes a tremendous impact on the person's life. A successful professional career is possible on condition the person realizes his ambitions; his profession corresponds with personal interests and likings (Spittle & Spittle, 2014). Choosing a profession is a continuous, long-lasting process. It starts with the years of study but it may continue on completion of studies and starting the working career. Thus it is an erroneous view to consider one's professional decision as a single act because both the person and profession content keep changing (Mizell, 2010). So the phenomenon nature changes – from one occasion into a continuous process. So we can state that choosing a profession is predetermined by 2 basic factors: the outer necessity i.e. by environment requirements and the person's inner motivation, determination, conscious perception in choosing and planning one's profession.

2. Problem Statement

Present-day competitive labour market situation makes it more difficult for the young to find work. As people looking for employment meet higher requirements, it is very important to select the factors related to professional choices. It is the motive that influences every activity and its success. Scientists point out that it is highly important to know the motivation factors so as to regulate and direct them because the activity and cooperation purposefulness as well as the intensity can be changed by changing the motives (Richardson, Karabenick, & Watt, 2014). The problems of factors in choosing professions were analysed by Green and Greive (2007), Watt, Richardson and Wilkins (2014), Gore, Holmes, Smith, and Fray (2016) and in other research articles. Biggs (1987) and Jovaiša (2009) had laid the theoretical models of the factors analysis in choosing profession. The problems of professional self-determination among the young have been analysed by scientists like Struyven, Jacobs, and Dochy (2013), Fokkens-Bruinsma and Canrinus (2014).

A music teacher's profession is exceptional because the young usually make a decision to go in for music at an early age. Gifted for music children usually start playing musical instruments, singing by choosing musical training activities or specialized musical schools. Music requires much devotion and hard work. Music studies are generally recognized as a specific subject in higher education. Unlike other professions, future music students enter a University having acquired high standard skills in musical training. Candidates have to take entrance exams during which professional musicians' board examine their special musical abilities and skills and select the best. Also, candidates take a test in motivation which has been included in order to perfect teachers' training. Besides special personal character qualities experience, goals and expectations are also important for the music teacher in his future pedagogical work. Thus, a desire to major in music teaching as a profession means one's determination to study the inexhaustible field which is wide, rich, complex and complicated. Questions on professional training of music teachers had been analysed by Rauduvaitė and Ramanauskienė (2010), Della, Bidner, and Devaney (2010) and others. The factors for choosing music teacher's profession have been fragmentarily analysed in different countries (McPherson & O'Neill, 2010; Schnare, MacIntyre, & Doucette, 2012). Research articles on the factors for choosing music teacher's profession as a speciality aspect in universities of Lithuania have not been found.

These are the essential conditions aiming at the factors influencing students on choosing music teacher's profession. Thus, carrying out research on the choice of the factors, it is important to investigate students' views on music teacher's profession and possible changes in them in the years of study. This sort of research reveals would – be teachers' of music priorities and so possible changes in the study programme could be made.

3. Research Questions

The main question of this research is: What are the factors that influence the choice of music teacher profession?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of study is to investigate the factors that influence the choice of music teacher's profession.

The study wants to define the factors for choosing music teacher's profession in bachelor of Music Education study programme, to understand major expectations of Lithuanian preservice music teachers from teaching.

5. Research Methods

The research was done using a written questionnaire. The researcher developed the questionnaire specifically for the research with items dealing with the importance of factors in choosing music education studies. The open and closed questions given to Bachelor's students was devised on the basis of theoretical conceptions and teacher's profession models (Holland, 1959; Biggs, 1987; Jovaiša, 2009; Richardson et al., 2014), supplementing them with statements about music teachers profession as a speciality aspect.

The quantitative data was analyzed using "MS Excel" program and descriptive statistics (absolute and percentage frequencies were calculated).

The 1st research stage lasted from 2013 to 2014 in which 125 Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (LUES), the 1st and 2nd year students, preservice music teachers, bachelor of Music Education study programme took part. The 2nd research stage took place from 2016 to 2017, 114 3rd and 4th year students doing the course of study of Music Education participated.

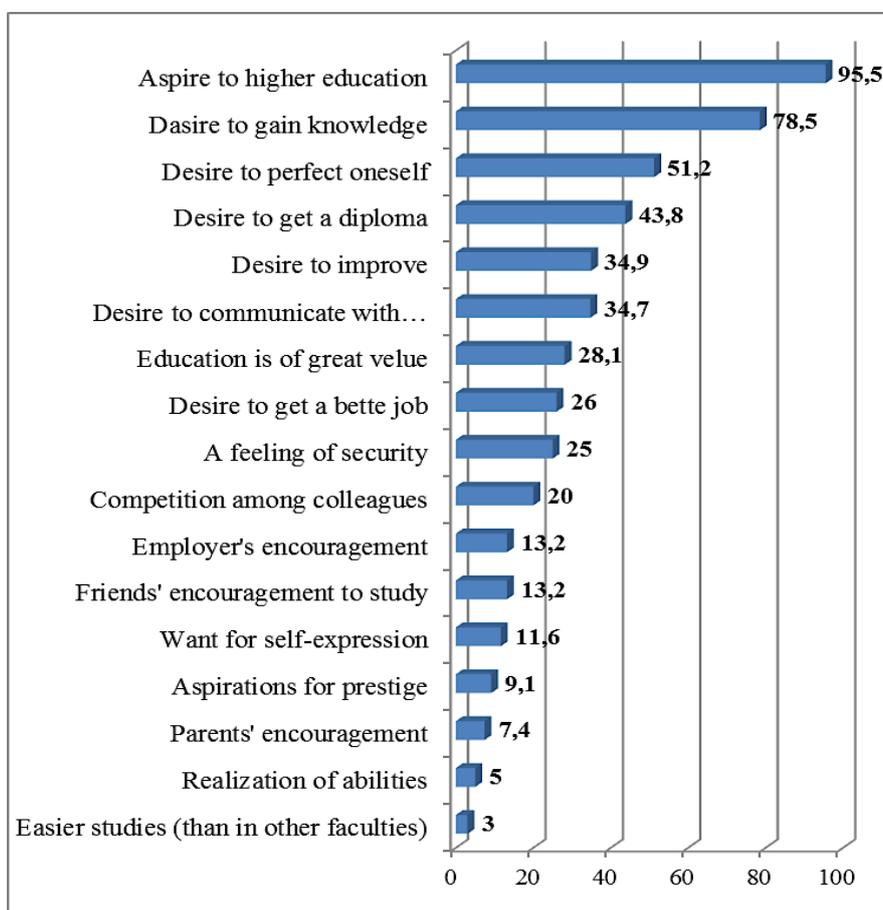
The research ethics was grounded on the principles of goodwill, voluntarism, confidentiality, explicit informing and respect for the dignity of an individual. Students agreed with carrying out of the research in particular university.

6. Findings

Figure 1 displays respondents' from correspondence music education learning factors which encourage them to study.

The data in figure 1 show that the most important respondents' learning factors are: aspiration for a higher education – 95.5%; desire to gain knowledge (78.5%). Almost half (51.2%) of the respondents

believe that a desire to perfect oneself and get a diploma (43.8%) encourage them to study hard. Desire of students to gain the diploma is an important factor and the fact had been proved by A. Zulumskytė (2003). The stated that the main motive in teachers' study course was a diploma which enabled all-age groups of teachers to get the right place in the society. She also said that university diplomas could help the teacher make his position in the society, the working team and so feel much more secure at work. Almost one third of the respondents proved that they were encouraged to perfect themselves (34.9%), desired to communicate with others (34.7%), education was a value (28.1%). Almost one fourth of the respondents proved that they were encouraged to study because education gives a feeling of security, competition with colleagues and aspiration for better employment. Music education students are least influenced by friends' encouragement, employer's incentives, need for self-expression, aspiration for prestige, parents' encouragement, easier studies.



Note: Respondents could choose some

Figure 1. Respondents' learning factors (%)

In the second stage of the research third and fourth year students' factors for choosing music teaching studies were revealed. Profession choice is a complex phenomenon which is predetermined by various motives. It (profession choice) is the choice of a particular professional activity which is closely related to the person's interests, abilities, possibilities and labour market demand (McPherson & O'Neill, 2010). On the basis of other researchers' work (Jovaiša, 2009; Eren & Tezel, 2010) six groups of factors have been

picked out like: factors related to professional goals, higher education, cognitive factors, personal factors, other people's influence and others.

Three fourths of the respondents (see figure 2) find cognitive factors highly important: desire to study music (74.8%), desire to be engaged in musical activity (73.9%), and desire to gain music teaching knowledge (72.2%). Rodzevičiūtė (2008) states that educational motives enrich the person through his profession. Enjoyment of one's activity helps the person perfect continuously – the person is not satisfied with his knowledge and achievement, but keeps gaining knowledge which leads him to perfection as a personality. This can be proved by the fact that students desire to broaden their outlook and knowledge. The research data show that students' musical abilities and interests are very important (66.1%). Having no abilities and interests the person is unable to achieve the goals he was determined to do, that is why they help him in going in for certain activity. Constant and active interests are among the most significant preconditions to achieve success.

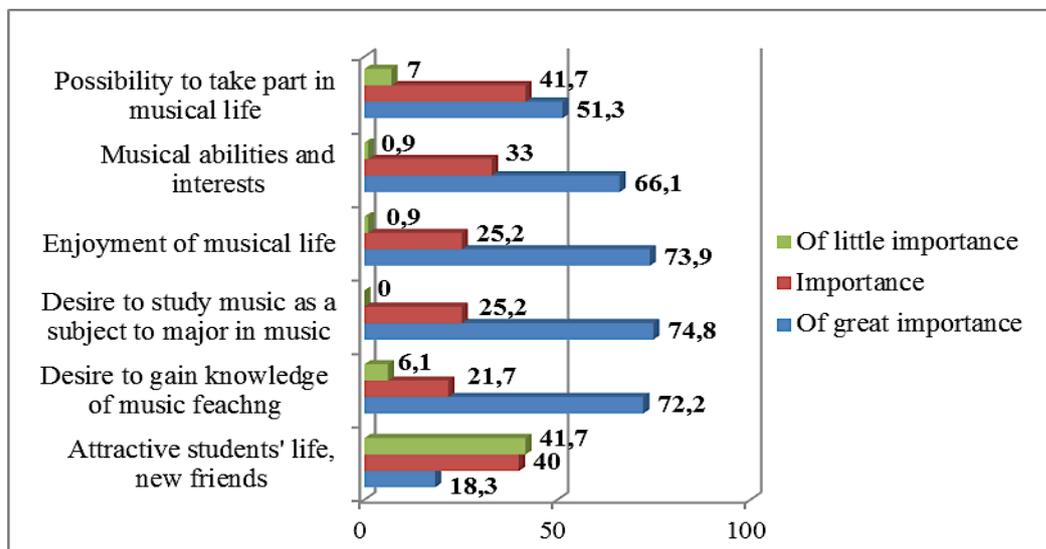


Figure 2. Educational and personal factors (%)

Analysing the factors related to professional purposefulness (see figure 3) we can state that musical abilities and skills motives are very important to students (54.8%). So is enjoyment of working with children (52.2%). We can also say that the motivation to become a teacher is rather strong because more than half of the students have a significant professional purposefulness having chosen music teacher's profession at LUES. Our research data are similar to those achieved by other and Lithuanian scientists' research (Whitbeck, 2000; Kontvainas, 2011) in which they say that the most significant factor for students who have chosen teacher's profession are: love for children, desire to work with them and desire to become a teacher. More than two thirds of the respondents said that aspiration for a higher education was of great importance (67.0%). In some scientists' research (Eren & Tezel, 2010) this factor is said to be the most important. This proves students' social status choice and place in social life.

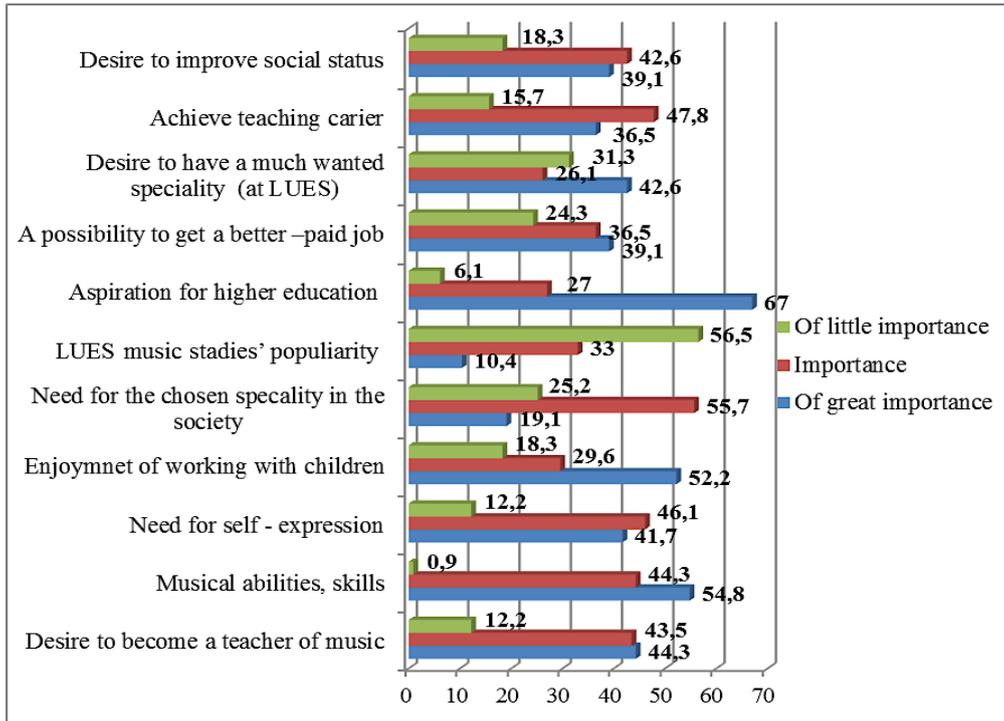


Figure 3. Factors related to professional purposefulness and aspiration for a higher education (%)

Friends' influence is the least important factor for future music teachers (see figure 4). 77.4 % of the respondents pointed it out as unimportant, 13.9 % - stated as important and only 8.7 % thought it to be very important. It turned out that 68.7 % of the students did not expect easier studies at LUES than in other higher institutions and a similar number of people did not try to enter other universities (60.9 %). More than half of the respondents found music studies popularity at LEU (56.5 %), information in media and on the internet, LUES Open Door Days (53.9 %), parents' and relatives' influence and family traditions (52.2 %) of little importance.

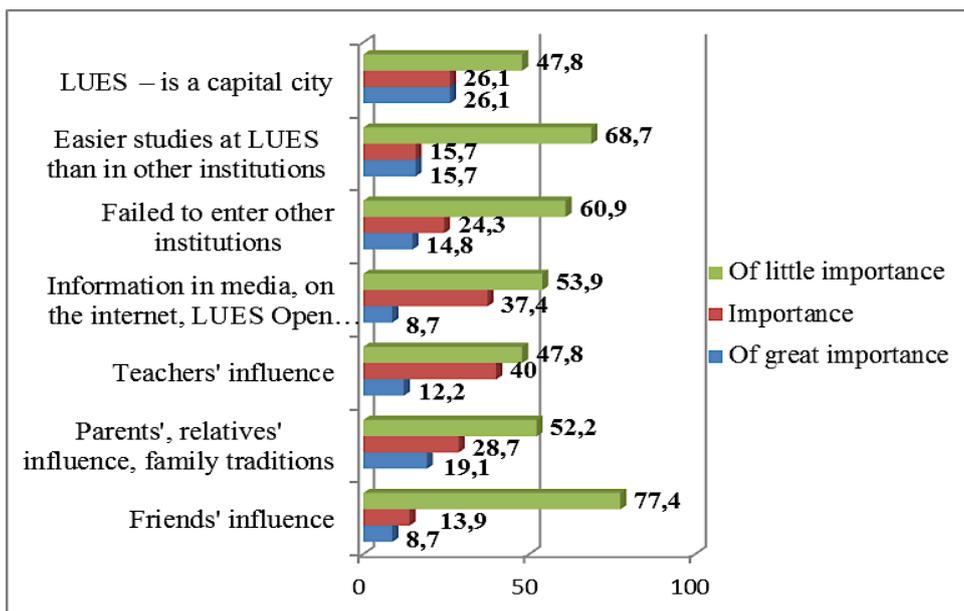


Figure 4. The factors related to other people's influence and other factors (%)

Respondents were openly asked about their future expectations when they graduated. It has been noticed that the students' motives of decision-making about their profession are unchanged, they want to acquire this profession and stick to their firm belief: *"During the studies, the motives for choosing a profession have not changed. I am pleased with the study program, the qualifications of lecturers and the ability to teach my subject"*; *"My expectations have not changed. They are the same now, as before"*; *"I do not think that my desire to be a teacher will ever change"*; *"a greater willingness to work at a general education school, especially after a pedagogical practice"*; *"expectations have changed in the positive direction, especially after school practice"*; *"the motives after the practice became even stronger, I realized that I really want to be a music teacher"*; *"I joined with the goal of being a music teacher"*; *"both studies and practice only strengthened that desire"*; *"during the studies the motives for choosing a profession have not changed at all. I am satisfied with the study program, the qualifications of lecturers and the ability to teach my subject"*. However, he notes that patience is one of the essential qualities of the teacher's personality in everyday work: *"I think that I imagined somewhat lighter work, but this work requires a lot of patience"*. There is a perception that purposeful and conceptual pedagogical training at a university is meaningful, and therefore a need for it is formed: *"<...> yes. There is a need for better understanding of pedagogical subjects"*. A consideration of your work and full reflection has a great influence on professional development. It promotes the development of significance (*"it is important to make a firm decision for a pedagogical activity, it's an amazing mission and an extraordinarily difficult one"*), to understand specific circumstances (*"<...> in practice when you try to work by yourself the impressions and experiences changes"*), to critically evaluate (*"now I think differently, the first motives are viewed through the other side of the prism"*). The results of the research also showed that there is another group of researchers who have a lack of vocational orientation: *"<...> when I got into a pedagogical practice, I was thinking if my place really is here"* but people who are not self-assured have more doubts in different life situations than those who have confidence in themselves. During the research, the emergence of problems related to the application of knowledge in practice has also emerged: *"after the pedagogical practice, I realized that the studies provided knowledge, but are not taught how to apply them in practice"*, *"<...> during pedagogical practice my desires were shaken"*, *"< ...> I was expecting something else, more practice, less unnecessary things like economics and so on"*. It has been established that more sensitive personalities react emotionally to the lack of discipline: *"<...> now, I do not know whether I want to be a teacher because the children are terrible"*.

The analysis of the factors that influence the choice of music teacher's profession is only one in the context of professional training choice. The limitation of this research is that the non-probability sample was chosen and the obtained results cannot be generalized but they are useful disclosing the possibilities and variety of development of music teacher professional training.

7. Conclusion

LUES music teaching students chose their profession paying great significance to educational motives: desire to study music as a subject, desire to indulge in musical activity, and wish to gain more music teaching professional competence purposefulness are also important musical abilities and skills, enjoyment of working with children. More than two thirds of the respondents found aspiration for a higher

education of great importance. Other people – friends', parents', relatives' influence and family traditions were the least important motives. Also, there were less important motives like: LUES easier studies than in other institutions, failure to enter other schools and the popularity of music studies at LUES.

The research data shows that a greater number of the students have well considered the choice of their profession. The research data also proved that aspiration for a higher education was one of the most important factors and incentives. Other factors were: desire to gain knowledge, need for raising qualification and competence desire to perfect oneself, get a diploma and wish to communicate with others.

It was determined that during studies students' satisfaction (qualitative content analysis) manifests itself in the strengthening of vocational orientation, which is determined by the quality of studies, the fulfillment of expectations, emerged needs satisfaction and the usefulness of pedagogical practice. During their studies preservice music teachers find out the viability of their specialty, the meaning of working in pedagogical area and realizing themselves in communicating with children. They note that they are satisfied with the study program, the qualifications of lecturers and the ability to teach their subject. The research results also showed that there are students with a lack of professional orientation, which is associated with doubt, the emergence of problems and disappointment.

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