

PRESCHOOL TEACHERS AND THEIR LEVELS OF INTEREST IN DEVELOPING MUSICAL COMPETENCIES

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Abstract. *As a contribution to creating a supportive environment in preschool institutions which could simultaneously foster the development of not only knowledge and skills, but also of the child's entire personality, it is expected that preschool institutions, with the assistance of creative, efficacious and highly motivated teachers, should provide for such an environment through their programs. The ongoing changes in the educational system are aimed at supporting various creative activities for children, and they require that the preschool teacher should daily conduct activities which stimulate the child's creative expression, performance, and research. Teachers play a primary role if we want to achieve so complex goals and tasks of preschool education with specific emphasis on the implementation of musical activities. This is why continuous professional training and improvement of musical competences are important for preschool teachers.*

By April 2016, in order to learn the degree to which preschool teachers are interested in improving the knowledge needed to implement the planned musical activities, the authors conducted a study concerning preschool teachers with various levels of professional experience and formal education. The goal of the study was to test to what extent preschool teachers were interested in professional improvement in the domain of music, and whether additional professional training provided them with more satisfaction in preparing and implementing musical activities. The conclusion is that preschool teachers are interested in professional advancement in music. Most think that they can further their skills and didactic competencies in the field through organizing professional seminars which could provide additional quality in early music education, strongly boosting further development of competencies with children.

Key words: *musical activities, musical competencies, professional advancement, preschool teacher.*

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INTRODUCTION

Starting from the fact that the preschool teacher – the one who organizes and implements various activities in preschool institutions – is expected to work with children using the maximum of his or her professional knowledge and skills, one should stress the need for continuous support for this teacher in order to develop pedagogical and methodological competencies. It is well known that the concept of competence has been used since ancient times, and that it has been interpreted in many ways, which accounts for the various definitions in use at present. Essentially, the concept of competence (lat. *competere* – befit, be in charge of, strive for) can be interpreted as the “presence of a disposition for successfully carrying out an activity” (Pedagogical Lexicon, 1996, 242). In the domain of general education, the competence concept has been used only in recent times. In this paper, competence is viewed in line with the definition of the National Education Council of the Republic of Serbia, which states that “competences represent the set of required knowledge, skills, and values held by the teacher.”¹ This means that the central role in education is played by the teachers, since they directly influence the process of learning and development in children. “The competences are determined against learning goals and outcomes and they should ensure professional standards about what kind of teaching is considered successful” (Standards of Competences for Teaching Professionals and for their Professional Development, 2011, 2). Although stress mainly falls on the general, subject-independent competencies, Svalina (2015) is of the opinion that it is important to simultaneously discuss specific competences pertaining to a particular field, i.e. narrow professional competences. Experience has shown that the given aspects are increasingly seen as equally important for the development of teaching competences. This means that, apart from the professional competence related to the particular subject, in the teaching process the teacher should equally employ his or her professional, pedagogical, psychological and didactic skills, i.e. the competence relating to the teaching methodology.

In the context of standardization of education, but also in the broader economical and social context, competencies have become “a new standard for drafting curricula and syllabuses of professional advancement” (Ćatić, 2012, 176). In order for one to strengthen professional competencies, Đurđanović (2015) stresses the importance of numerous seminars offered for professional advancement, the need to become actively involved in the implementation of these seminars, as well as in various research projects, which would undoubtedly provide a strong impetus to the emergence of a more innovative and interesting teaching process.

Professional advancement organized within various institutions is not only conducted in different ways, it is also differently regulated in the educational systems of various countries from a legal point of view. Keely (after Anđelković, 2015) finds the purpose of the teaching profession as being a constant objective in training and advancement, an obligatory element, regardless of the fact that the educational systems of some countries are not ready to support it. In his view, teacher advancement should be fostered throughout their careers. For this reason, it is also important to view teacher advancement from the viewpoint of improving the quality of the educational system (Pešikan, 2010), where one needs to start from the national strategy for teacher advancement, with clearly defined categories of seminars, in

¹ In Serbia, in preschool institutions the term used is *vaspitač* (literally, *educator*) rather than *nastavnik* (*teacher*).

which, given time, teachers themselves would find the ways to define their own advancement paths. Likewise, Hrvatić and Piršl following Lončarić & Pejić Papak, 2009, 485, state that “the profession of a teacher should be viewed as a continuum that includes both initial education and further professional advancement, based on the principles of lifelong learning”. It is therefore important to create an environment supporting the strong need for constant teacher training and advancement, such that it should continuously encourage teachers to take up new endeavors that would in their turn increase desire to gain new knowledge and improve current capacities. These targets would in the end satisfy the primary goal of such professional advancement. Teacher training cycles (Kostović, 2008) additionally draw attention and raise awareness of the problem, supporting positive changes in teachers’ thinking and behavior. According to a study conducted in Serbia (Kundačina & Stamatović, 2012), teachers are mostly motivated to voluntarily participate in professional training programs.

MUSIC ACTIVITIES IN PRESCHOOL INSTITUTIONS

The modern preschool institution is expected to provide a favorable environment in which every child will feel confident, free, and accepted. At the same time, it should be an environment in which children can cooperate with peers and adults, they can communicate with one another, and they can also become active in an environment supporting and cherishing their different capacities and creative potentials.

To adapt working with children to conditions in which teachers act, and to children’s needs and capacities, each preschool institution makes its own preschool program, based on the *General Preschool Curriculum Requirements*.² This program “enables one to introduce more creativity, flexibility, and spontaneity into educational activities and to make these activities more versatile and adaptable to children in the given environment” (Kamenov, 2007, 13). If teachers add a personal touch to their work it will result in their increased satisfaction, and in turn provide a sense of additional confidence and respect among colleagues. At the same time this provides for a favorable atmosphere resulting in good cooperation among the personnel of the preschool institution. It also represents a good starting point for cooperation beyond the limits of the single institution, an environment where colleagues feel the need to exchange experience and support one another to participate in various forms of additional professional training.

Full coverage of contents available in the syllabus, as well as the simultaneous fostering of various skills – among them musical skills – in preschool curricula is the primary task of preschool teachers. This means that through these teachers’ professional involvement, and high-quality work children’s musical dispositions and skills can be highly improved. In preschool institutions, the teacher is the first person whose skills, knowledge, positions, attitude to music and valuation of music can contribute to the child’s musical learning and development, as well as to forming the child’s attitudes towards music, singing and playing. Finally, it will contribute to the child’s developing a habit to listen to music. Children are encouraged to respond to musical stimuli by dancing, to observe pre-conceived motion to music. These experiences put the children into new situations in which they get familiar with music and start exploring it in an active way. As an integral part of all daily activities, music

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not only contributes to pedagogical goals, but also represents a source of pleasure and positive emotions for the child (Radoš, 2010). Therefore, we expect that future preschool teachers should act as professionally trained individuals who will successfully guide children toward various musical activities. These activities can contribute to the development of both aesthetic experience and musicality in general.

In order for the music teacher to enable the child to establish their own criteria for assessing music and discovering the richness of various sounds, and in order for the teacher to support the child's natural dispositions for participating in various musical activities and to ensure preconditions for the development of the child's musical sensibility, this teacher needs capacities, skills, knowledge, and possession of musical competences. Training that students, future preschool teachers receive during their initial education, in terms of either professional skills or teaching methodology, typically does not include courses providing competencies to recognize, identify and work with potentially musically gifted children. This fact additionally illustrates how necessary it is to provide conditions for excellent and continuous professional advancement of preschool teachers through which these individuals would also be professionally trained to recognize the signs of potential musical talent, and through which they could improve their musical skills for preschool work.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As a particular domain, music education consists of numerous creative activities that contribute to shaping the child's identity, to boosting their self-esteem, and to developing cultural awareness. In order to successfully carry out musical activities, preschool teachers need to be musically literate, and also need to have gained certain singing and playing skills during their initial education. In addition, they need to have continuously improved these skills during their professional careers.

Following a research interest in the topics above, the present study has the goal to look into the attitudes of preschool teachers – to see whether they are interested in additional professional advancement in the domain of music, and whether additional professional training provides them with more satisfaction in the preparation and implementation of musical activities. The subject of our interest has also been to determine whether, during the implementation of musical activities, there are differences in the interest in professional advancement in the domain of music between preschool teachers with significant professional experience and “beginner” preschool teachers.

Such a set up has resulted in several goals of the study, where we wished to determine:

- (1) the level of interest in implementing musical activities in the work with preschool children;
- (2) whether the participants need additional professional training in the domain of music so as to be able to implement musical activities;
- (3) to what extent the participants are interested in additional professional training in the domain of music;
- (4) whether the participants are happy to attend additional professional courses/seminars in the domain of music;
- (5) whether the participants use the knowledge gained in the seminars in preparing and implementing musical activities in preschool institutions.

The test hypothesis is the following: 'It is assumed that preschool teachers are interested in professional advancement in the domain of music. Likewise, additional professional training provides them with increased satisfaction in preparing and implementing musical activities.'

The paper used a descriptive-analytical method, with both quantitative and qualitative aspects. The instrument took the form of a Questionnaire³, while the data we have obtained have provided an insight into the current condition on the given sample and in the given location. The data have been processed using standard descriptive statistical methods, using the software package *SPSS Statistics 20*, statistical description and inference.

The research sample was random, and data have been collected from 147 participants from preschool institutions from the territory of the Republic of Serbia, as follows: Niš (119 or 81%), Belgrade (15 or 10.2%), Zemun (5 or 3.4%), Svrnjig (4 or 2.7%), and Paraćin (4 or 2.7%). In terms of gender, all participants were women (100% valid sample, or 147 persons). In terms of professional experience (Table 1), most participants have been employed for up to 10 years (75 or 51%, group 1), while fewest participants had more than 30 years of professional experience (13, or 8.8%, group 4).

Table 1 Participants viewed by the length of professional experience

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Up to 10 years	75	51.0	51.0	51.0
10 to 20 years	38	25.9	25.9	76.9
20 to 30 years	21	14.3	14.3	91.2
More than 30 years	13	8.8	8.8	100.0
Total	147	100.0	100.0	

The instrument contained 40 statements, and the participants were asked to decide how much they agreed with each, on a four-degree Likert scale: 1 - *Yes*, 2 - *Mostly yes*, 3 - *Mostly no*, and the total negation, 4 - *No*. For these claims, *Cronbach's Alpha* reliability coefficient has been calculated ($\alpha = .825$). It shows good reliability and internal coherence of the scale for this sample, thus satisfying the reliability criterion. The questionnaire was handed out to the participants. It was explained to them they what the purpose of the study was, and they were given formal instructions on the way to fill out the questionnaire. The procedure took fifteen minutes.

INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS WITH DISCUSSION

In the process of preschool education, conditions should be met, such that they can encourage the full development of the child. If one wishes to ensure unhampered and appropriate development of musical abilities, one should plan those types of musical activities that correspond with the psychological and physical development level of children, with the preschool education tasks defined in the syllabus, but also with the capacities of the preschool teacher. In the preschool period, musical activities are "related

³ The questionnaire was independently created by the authors of the present paper. For the purposes of the research, it was titled *Musical Activities in Preschool Institutions (MAIPI)*.

to other activities and domains much more than during any subsequent period, so that music is not only a source of musical images and reflections but also a means for developing a creative identity, providing the child with the prerequisites for cognitive, social, and emotional growth” (Vidulin, 2016, 225). It is therefore expected that contemporary music pedagogy should put its goals in concord with the developmental capacities of children and the features of a particular age group, so as to establish a system based on activities whose goal is to develop musical capacities, knowledge and skills (Cvetković & Đurđanović, 2014).

When asked whether they were interested in using musical activities in their daily work, and allowed to select one of the four responses - *Yes*, *Mostly yes*, *Mostly no*, and *No* - the participants answered as follows (Table 2):

Table 2 You are interested in using musical activities in daily work

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
No	2	1.4	1.4	1.4
Mostly no	8	5.4	5.4	6.8
Mostly yes	71	48.3	48.3	55.1
Yes	66	44.9	44.9	100.0
Total	147	100.0	100.0	

Most participants (137 or 93.2%) show an interest in the use of musical activities. To be more specific, 66 or 44.9% are interested, and 71 or 48.3% are mostly interested in using musical activities in their daily routine. The statistics shows that 8 or 5.4% participants are mostly not interested, while 2 (1.4%) participants are not at all interested in implementing musical activities in their daily work. To attain or encourage this type of interest, it is important that all preschool teachers have an opportunity to become practically and procedurally acquainted with the teaching methodology used for presenting musical contents.

In Serbia, the new curricula for preschool teacher education contain numerous music courses. An overview of the contents of those courses reveals that most are aimed at getting explicit (at a declarative level) but not implicit (at a procedural level) knowledge. Some music courses have been conceived in a less than encouraging way in terms of the possibility to gain musical skills. On the contrary, some others contain elements of high quality, yet it remains an open question whether – due to the small number of classes – attending even such courses can ensure a sufficient level of musical competences for future preschool teachers.

Interest in the use of musical activities in daily work can be observed in isolation, i.e. viewed by various environmental factors, conditions and teaching aids available, levels of the preschool teacher’s professional competences, but also the length of his or her professional experience. As for the difference in terms of interest in using musical activities in daily work based on the duration of professional experience (Table 3), statistics suggests that in the first group of participants (up to 10 years of experience), most agree with this claim – 71 or 94.6%. A positive attitude and likewise high levels of interest in using musical activities has been shown by the participants from the second group, with 10 to 20 years of experience: 35 of them, or 92.1%. The same interest – in the use of musical activities – has been reported by 18 participants with an experience of 20 to 30 years (85.5%). Finally, all 13 participants (100%) from the fourth group – that with over 40

years of professional experience, agree with the statement. Based on the Chi square value obtained ($\chi^2 = 7.236$) there is no statistically significant difference in distributions of responses ($p = .613$). This entails that both participants with the shortest experience (up to 10 years) and those with the longest (more than 30 years) are aware of the advantages of the teaching process in which musical activities are used every day. Thus, the participants are happy to apply such activities in the process of preschool children’s education. The test results regarding the studied phenomenon suggest that there is no statistically significant difference in the levels of interest in using musical activities in daily work, based on the length of professional experience.

Table 3 Differences in Levels of Interest in Using Musical Activities in Daily Work, Viewed by the Length of Professional Experience

		You are interested in further professional advancement in the domain of music				Total	
		No	Mostly no	Mostly yes	Yes		
Work experience	Total	0	4	37	34	75	
	Up to 10 years	% Work experience	0.0%	5.3%	49.3%	45.3%	100.0%
		% You are interested in using musical activities in daily work	0.0%	50.0%	52.1%	51.5%	51.0%
		% of total	0.0%	2.7%	25.2%	23.1%	51.0%
		Total	1	2	16	19	38
	10 to 20 years	% Work experience	2.6%	5.3%	42.1%	50%	100.0%
		% You are interested in using musical activities in daily work	50.0%	25.0%	22.5%	28.8%	25.9%
		% of total	.7%	1.4%	10.9%	12.9%	25.9%
		Total	1	2	9	9	21
	20 to 30 years	% Work experience	4.8%	9.5%	42.9%	42.9%	100.0%
		% You are interested in using musical activities in daily work	50.0%	25.0%	12.7%	13.6%	14.3%
		% of total	.7%	1.4%	6.1%	6.1%	14.3%
		Total	0	0	9	4	13
	More than 30 years	% Work experience	0.0%	0.0%	69.2%	30.8%	100.0%
		% You are interested in using musical activities in daily work	0.0%	0.0%	12.7%	6.1%	8.8%
	% of total	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%	2.7%	8.8%	
	Total	2	8	71	66	147	
Total	% Work experience	1.4%	5.4%	48.3%	44.9%	100.0%	
	% You are interested in using musical activities in daily work	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of total	1.4%	5.4%	48.3%	44.9%	100.0%	

$\chi^2 = 7.236; df = 9; p = .613$

Based on a similar study conducted in Croatia (Vidulin, 2016), the author stresses that the most important condition for implementing musical activities, which simultaneously contribute to the development of children's musical skills, can be met by providing for a continuous development of musical competences on the part of preschool teachers. This author finds the room for improving teachers' competences in "carefully conceived professional seminars in music teaching methodology and musical art, which would become a constituent part of life-long learning", whose results would ensure "more confidence for teachers in playing music, knowing musical works, and promoting teaching methodological skills" (Ibid, 221). The fact that students with a lower level of musical capacities also enroll in preschool teacher training institutions is important when additional professional training is planned - both institutionally and individually.

Table 4 You need additional professional training in the domain of music

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
No	3	2.0	2.0	2.0
Mostly no	15	10.2	10.2	12.2
Mostly yes	68	46.3	46.3	58.5
Yes	61	41.5	41.5	100.0
Total	147	100.0	100.0	

The lack of confidence experienced by some preschool teachers in carrying out some musical activities comes from the fact they are aware of their insufficient musical competences. This in turn influences their positions on the need for additional training. Based on the statistical data (Table 4), we find that most preschool teachers (129 or 97.8%) who participated in the present study consider professional training in music necessary. This result is encouraging, yet it also suggests that there is a need to better interlink between the Council for the Promotion of Education, the local communities and every stakeholder involved with preschool education so as to provide for a more intensive organization of professional seminars in which preschool teachers could gain additional competences in music education. Only a small percentage, 12.2% or 8 participants, report that they do not need additional professional advancement in the field of music.

Table 5 You are interested in further professional advancement in the domain of music

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
No	4	2.7	2.7	2.7
Mostly no	12	8.2	8.2	10.9
Mostly yes	57	38.8	38.8	49.7
Yes	74	50.3	50.3	100.0
Total	147	100.0	100.0	

Given the fact that future preschool teachers may enroll in a preschool teacher training college and in the teacher training / education faculty (university-level teacher training academic program) even without appropriate formal music education, there is a need for their continuous advancement in the domain of music.

Most participants (131 or 88%, Table 5) state that they are interested in further professional advancement (74 or 50.3% selected *Yes*, and 57 or 38.8% *Mostly yes*). Numbers of participants not showing significant interest in continuing musical training are much lower. In all, 16 persons, or 10.9%, opted for responses showing that they are not interested in further musical advancement.

Table 6 You gladly attend seminars in the domain of music

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
No	5	3.4	3.4	3.4
Mostly no	18	12.2	12.2	15.6
Mostly yes	41	27.9	27.9	43.5
Yes	83	56.5	56.5	100.0
Total	147	100.0	100.0	

The future, i.e. desirable development of children's musical capacities during their preschool education, will depend on how happy the teachers are to gain new knowledge on the importance of planning, drafting, conducting, and valuating musical activities. One can only expect progress in implementing musical activities if, next to better work conditions and high quality programs, significant attention has been paid to encouraging preschool teachers to become involved in organized professional training programs. In the present study, 124 participants, or 84.4%, stressed they were glad to participate in educational music seminars (Table 6). There were still 23 persons, or 15.6% participants, who were not happy to attend music seminars. For this reason, it is important to organize strong promotional activities, but also to conceive of seminars professionally, and organize them with a high-quality profile. This will undoubtedly point at the increasing importance and foster the applicability of such seminars.

Having analyzed the interest in further professional music training by the length of professional experience (Table 7), we notice statistically significant differences on the level $p = .007$. From the total number of participants, those with the shortest work experience (up to 10 years) responded positively to the claim in as much as 96% of the cases (72 persons). The second participant group (those who have worked as preschool teachers for 10 to 20 years) expressed an interest in further professional advancement in 84.2% cases (32 individuals). Nineteen participants with the professional experience ranging from 20 to 30 years (group 3) also showed a positive attitude, by circling *Yes* or *Mostly yes* when asked about further professional advancement (90.5%). The fourth group of participants comprised preschool teachers with more than 30 years of experience, where a positive attitude was the least pronounced, as compared with the first three groups. Out of 13 participants in this group, only 8 (61.6%) were interested in further professional advancement in the domain of music. Based on the Chi square value $\chi^2 = 22.508$ there is a statistically significant difference on the level $p = .007$. Therefore, we conclude that there is a difference in the participants' level of interest in further training in the domain of music, viewed by the length of their professional experience.

Table 7 Differences in Levels of Interest in Further Professional Advancement in the Domain of Music, Viewed by the Length of Professional Experience

		You are interested in further professional advancement in the domain of music				Total	
		No	Mostly no	Mostly yes	Yes		
Work experience	Total	0	3	34	38	75	
	Up to 10 years	% Work experience	0.0%	4.0%	45.3%	50.7%	100.0%
		% You are interested in further training in the domain of music	0.0%	25.0%	59.6%	51.4%	51.0%
		% of total	0.0%	2.0%	23.1%	25.9%	51.0%
	10 to 20 years	Total	2	4	9	23	38
		% Work experience	5.3%	10.5%	23.7%	60.5%	100.0%
		% You are interested in further training in the domain of music	50.0%	33.3%	15.8%	31.1%	25.9%
		% of total	1.4%	2.7%	6.1%	15.6%	25.9%
	20 to 30 years	Total	0	2	9	10	21
		% Work experience	0.0%	9.5%	42.9%	47.6%	100.0%
		% You are interested in further training in the domain of music	0.0%	16.7%	15.8%	13.5%	14.3%
		% of total	0.0%	1.4%	6.1%	6.8%	14.3%
	More than 30 years	Total	2	3	5	3	13
	% Work experience	15.4%	23.1%	38.5%	23.1%	100.0%	
	% You are interested in further training in the domain of music	50.0%	2.0%	8.8%	4.1%	8.8%	
	% of total	1.4%	2.0%	3.4%	2%	8.8%	
Total	Total	4	12	57	74	147	
		% Work experience	2.7%	8.2%	38.8%	50.3%	100.0%
		% You are interested in further training in the domain of music	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of total	2.7%	8.2%	38.8%	50.3%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 22.508; df = 9; p = .007$$

One can reach conclusions on the quality of knowledge gained in music seminars, and also on the possibility for teachers to apply this knowledge when implementing various musical activities, by looking into how much the participants are ready to use the knowledge they have gained in the seminars in their daily work.

Table 8 I use the knowledge gained in the seminars in my daily work

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
No	4	2.7	2.7	2.7
Mostly no	15	10.2	10.2	12.9
Mostly yes	58	39.5	39.5	52.4
Yes	70	47.6	47.6	100.0
Total	147	100.0	100.0	

Having analyzed the attitudes of participants towards the use of knowledge gained in professional training seminars in their daily professional routine (Table 8), we find that 128 individuals, or 87.1% do, and 19, or 12.9%, do not apply the knowledge they have gained in their work. With this fact in mind, we may conclude that most participants still use the various approaches to the implementation of musical contents, new knowledge, techniques and skills gained in seminars, in structuring and organizing preschool musical activities.

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study have confirmed that there is an interest among the teachers to use musical activities in their daily work. At the same time, however, the feeling of insecurity accompanying the implementation of musical activities with some teachers has an influence on their attitude. They feel a need for additional professional training in the domain of music. We have also noticed that teachers with shorter professional experience have a more positive attitude towards further musical training than their colleagues with many years of experience. Aware of this situation, and having in view the improvement of teacher training, we stress that it is not enough to plan and enhance their initial education alone. Rather, we need ensure their continued professional advancement, i.e. constant professional development. That will not only enhance their professional competences, but also promote their skills and teaching methodology. Ultimately, it would increase their satisfaction during the preparation and implementation of musical activities.

One can expect progress in the implementation of numerous preschool teaching activities, in our case the musical ones, from teachers who should be ready to use their vision, work habits, motivation, and professional competence to foster the development of both general and, in our case, specific musical competencies the children.

To sum up, if we are prepared to work on strengthening our competencies, as society and as individuals, if we are ready to pay specific attention to the development of children's potentials, and if we are interested in accepting the importance of life-long learning and in being part of such learning, we can confidently expect to successfully develop not only various activities in preschool education, the musical ones in our case, but also in the entire educational system. This will always stand at the basis of the success and future of our children.

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ZAINTERESOVANOST VASPITAČA ZA USAVRŠAVANJE MUZIČKIH KOMPETENCIJA

U prilog potrebi za stvaranjem podsticajnog okruženja u predškolskim ustanovama, kojim se istovremeno može uticati ne samo na razvoj znanja i veština dece, već i na kompletan razvoj detetove ličnosti, očekuje se da predškolske ustanove kako svojim programom, tako i kreativnim, efikasnim i motivisanim vaspitačima, to i obezbeđuju. Promenama u obrazovno vaspitnom sistemu, usmerenim ka podsticanju različitih kreativnih aktivnosti dece od vaspitača se zahteva da u svakodnevnoj praksi sprovede one aktivnosti kojima se stimuliše dečje kreativno izražavanje, stvaranje, istraživanje. Za ostvarivanje brojnih kompleksnih ciljeva i zadatka predškolskog obrazovanja, sa posebnim naglaskom na realizaciju muzičkih aktivnosti od primarnog uticaja su muzički kompetentni vaspitači. Zato je važno njihovo kontinuirano usavršavanje i jačanje muzičkih kompetencija. Polazeći od činjenice da vaspitači mogu upisati visoku školu strukovnih studija za vaspitače kao i učiteljski/pedagoški fakultet (studijski program za obrazovanje vaspitača) i bez adekvatnog muzičkog obrazovanja, postoji potreba za permanentnim usavršavanjem vaspitača za muzičko obrazovanje. U nameri da ispituju u kojoj meri su vaspitači u predškolskim ustanovama zainteresovani za usvršavanje znanja potrebnih za realizaciju planiranih muzičkih aktivnosti, autorice ovog rada su u aprilu 2016. godine sprovele istraživanje u kome su učestvovali vaspitači različitog radnog iskustva i različitog stepena obrazovanja. Cilj istraživanja je bio da se ispita u kojoj meri su vaspitači zainteresovani za usavršavanje iz oblasti muzike, kao i da li im dodatna stručna usavršavanja obezbeđuju veće zadovoljstvo u pripremi i realizaciji muzičkih aktivnosti. Sprovedenim istraživanjem utvrđeno je trenutno stanje u predškolskoj nastavnoj praksi, povezanost realizacije muzičkih aktivnosti sa stručnim usavršavanjem iz oblasti muzike i značajnost razlika u odnosu na godine radnog iskustva. Na osnovu dobijenih rezultata

zaključeno je da su vaspitači u predškolskim ustanovama veoma zainteresovani za usavršavanja iz oblasti muzike i da rado pohađaju stručne seminare. Većina smatra da stručnim seminarima mogu dodatno unaprediti svoje metodičke veštine i kompetencije u ovoj oblasti, čime bi se mogao obezbediti kvalitet u početnom muzičkom obrazovanju i dao snažan podsticaj daljem razvoju muzičkih sposobnosti dece.

Ključne reči: *muzička aktivnost, muzičke kompetencije, usavršavanje, vaspitač*