

Extracurricular Music Activities in Elementary Schools of the City of Split

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Abstract

In the 20th century, extracurricular activities in elementary school became a part of structured school work within which educational activity of the school expands, with the goal of an individual student's development. This paper describes various forms of extracurricular music activities of children in elementary schools and their role in the overall development of a child. Empirical research on extracurricular music activities was carried out in elementary schools of the City of Split. Research conducted in the academic year 2013/14 shows that students were offered a total of twelve different extracurricular music activities in all city schools, and that the most frequently chosen ones are choir and folk ensemble. Likewise, we found that 11.8% of all students in elementary schools of Split attend extracurricular music activities, and that the greatest number of students is involved in choir and folk ensemble. We have found that students in the higher grades of elementary school attend extracurricular music activities to a greater extent than students in lower grades. It is necessary to make additional effort and invest additional resources in schools of the City of Split so that all students would have equal access to high-quality extracurricular music activities, and also to make those activities more available in students' free time, with the aim of overall development of children.

Key words: *children's choir; folk ensemble; integral development of students.*

Introduction

Education has been implemented from the beginning of human evolution, primarily to enable the survival of the individual and the community. Pedagogical practice has been developing and changing in parallel with the emergence and development

of different socio-political systems that imposed different values and, therefore, a different attitude towards the individual, work and other essential components of the process of education. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, there was a transition from an industrial society to an information society, and finally to the latest—a knowledge society. Knowledge has become a basic requirement of economic growth and development. The new socio-economic situation at the global level requires a reform of the education system.

Competence as a prerequisite for the successful functioning of an individual in the world (of work) becomes the central thread of the education system reform. In the centre of the teaching process we no longer find the curriculum or the teacher but the student and his/her need and desire to acquire competences. Common Reference Framework for key competences in 2004 (Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for lifelong learning, 2010), that was adopted by the Republic of Croatia, defines competences as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes adjusted to a context. It states eight equally important key competences required for all individuals for personal validation and development, active citizenship, social integration and employment. One of them is cultural awareness and expression, and refers to the appreciation of the importance of creative expression and self-expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in various forms such as music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts.

In elementary school, in the field of music, this competence develops within Music lessons and through various forms of extracurricular music activities. The teaching of music, according to the Curriculum for Elementary Schools (2006), is based on two fundamental principles: the psychological and cultural-aesthetic. The first implies the fact that students generally love music and that they want to actively engage with it, while the other principle emphasizes the idea that teaching music should enable students for independent and competent consumption of music in everyday life, during and after school.

Vidulin-Orbanić (2008) points out that music affirms critical and aesthetic thinking and stimulates the creative process, which affects cognitive and value aspects of individuals and promotes the culture of life and the value of lifelong learning and creating. She believes that an open and free access to extracurricular music activities ensures the development of students' music skills and enables them to discover and improve their creative and musical potential (Vidulin-Orbanić, 2013).

Participation in extracurricular music activities, such as children's choir, orchestra and folk groups, is voluntary so the students' intrinsic motivation is high (Rojko, 2012; Proleta & Svalina, 2011; Šiljković, Rajić, & Bertić, 2007). Likewise, participation in some of these activities involves a certain level of development of musical abilities. All these are prerequisites for extracurricular activities to become a setting for quality and active engagement with music and as such they have the potential of aesthetic education. Rojko (2012) believes that it is through active music making in ensembles

such as choir or (tambura) orchestra, that students can be enabled to comprehend aesthetic values as one of the tasks of aesthetic education.

Extracurricular music activities can be organized in different areas of music activities, such as singing, playing a musical instrument, dancing, listening to music and other. The form and content of the activities depends primarily on competences, preferences and creativity of the teacher-leader of activities. Vidulin-Orbanić (2013) lists the following forms of extracurricular music activities in elementary school: choral singing, solo and chamber vocal music making, solo and chamber instrumental music making, folk art, dance, computer music making, musical creativity, composing and music projects.

Empirical Research

Goal and Objectives

The aim of the research was to determine which extracurricular music activities are offered in elementary schools in the City of Split and what is the extent of involvement of elementary school students in such activities. The purpose of this research is to expand the research findings in the field of teaching music and extracurricular music activities, and contribute to raising the quality of teaching music in elementary school.

In accordance with this goal and research objectives, the following research tasks were formulated:

- determine the types of extracurricular music activities that are offered in elementary schools of the City of Split;
- determine the total number of pupils in elementary schools in the City of Split involved in extracurricular music activities;
- determine the involvement of students in different types of extracurricular music activities;
- determine the number of students in lower and higher grades of elementary schools who are involved in extracurricular music activities.

Research Methodology

Sample

The following 22 elementary schools from the City of Split were involved in the study: "Slatine", "Srinjine", "Žrnovnica", "Kamen-Šine", "Stobreč", "Mejaši", "Mertojak", "Pujanki", "Visoka", "Ravnenjive", "Kman-Kocunar", "Blatine-Škrape", "Trstenik", "Pojišan", "Spinut", "Sućidar", "Plokite", "Brda", "Manuš", "Skalice", "Bol" and "Dobri". Data have not been obtained from the following elementary schools: "Marjan", "Lučac", "Meje", "Split 3" and "Gripe".

The Instrument and Investigation Procedure

For the purpose of this study a special questionnaire was designed, entitled: "The presence of extracurricular music activities in elementary schools of the City of

Split”. The data collected with this questionnaire are: the total number of students in the school, the total number of students in higher and lower grades, extracurricular music activities offered in school, the total number of students involved in individual extracurricular music activities and the total number of students in lower and higher grades that are involved in a particular extracurricular music activity. The data were obtained from professional services of elementary schools founded by the City of Split. The research was conducted in March 2014.

Results

Extracurricular Music Activities Offered in Elementary Schools of the City of Split

Table 1 shows the extracurricular music activities in which students from elementary schools in the City of Split are involved. In total there are 12 such activities. The most common extracurricular activity in elementary schools in the City of Split is school choir, then a choir of children in higher grades and folklore group. Only in some schools, activities such as the mandolin orchestra, traditional Croatian music, music workshops and drama-dance group are found.

Table 1
Extracurricular music activities (ECMA) in elementary schools of the city of Split

EXTRACURRICULAR MUSIC ACTIVITIES	PRESENCE OF ECMA IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
School choir	63.6%
Choir of children in higher grades	36.4%
Folklore group	27.3%
Children's vocal group	22.7%
Choir of children in lower grades	13.6%
Rhythmic group	13.6%
Block flute	9.1%
Orchestra	9.1%
Mandolin orchestra	4.5%
Traditional Croatian music	4.5%
Music workshop	4.5%
Drama-dance group	4.5%

The Total Number of Students in Elementary Schools in the City of Split Involved in Extracurricular Music Activities

On the basis of data on students' involvement in extracurricular music activities in schools, we can conclude that 1,320 (or 11.8%) of elementary school students from the City of Split are attending extracurricular music activities (Table 2). The highest number of students involved in extracurricular music activities can be detected in elementary school “Mejaši” (32%), followed by elementary schools “Slatina” (30.5%) and “Dobri” (30.4%). The lowest involvement is found in elementary school “Pujanki” (2.2%).

Table 2

The total number of students involved in extracurricular music activities

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ECMA	
"Mejaši"	600	192	32%
"Slatine"	59	18	30.5%
"Dobri"	283	86	30.4%
"Blatine-Škrape"	388	105	27.1%
"Žrnovnica"	344	77	22.4%
"Manuš"	587	103	17.5%
"Srinjine"	188	30	16%
"Kamen-Šine"	652	94	14.4%
"Visoka"	410	58	14.1%
"Pojišan"	582	65	11.2%
"Trstenik"	581	52	9%
"Ravnenjive"	749	67	8.9%
"Mertojak"	843	73	8.7%
"Spinut"	558	48	8.6%
"Stobreč"	290	24	8.3%
"Plokite"	442	35	7.9%
"Sućidar"	753	58	7.7%
"Bol"	497	35	7%
"Skalice"	548	34	6.2%
"Brda"	517	23	4.4%
"Kman-Kocunar"	659	28	4.2%
"Pujanki"	691	15	2.2%
TOTAL	11,221	1,320	11.8%

Students' Involvement in Different Areas of Extracurricular Music Activities

Table 3 shows the total number of students of all elementary schools participating in particular extracurricular music activities.

Table 3

The number of students participating in certain extracurricular music activities

EXTRACURRICULAR MUSIC ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ECMA	
School choir	531	40.2%
Choir of children in higher grades	321	24.3%
Folklore group	142	10.8%
Drama-dance group	75	5.7%
Rhythmic group	71	5.4%
Children's vocal group	52	3.9%
Choir of children in lower grades	44	3.3%
Block flute	34	2.6%
Mandolin orchestra	15	1.1%
Music workshop	14	1.1%
Orchestra	13	0.9%
Traditional Croatian music	8	0.6%

The largest number of students are involved in the school choir (40.2%), followed by the choir of children in higher grades (24.3%) and the folklore group (10.8%), while the lowest number of students are involved in activities such as traditional Croatian music (0.6%), the orchestra (0.9%) and the mandolin orchestra (1.1%).

Number of Students of Lower and Higher Grades Involved in Extracurricular Music Activities

From the obtained results we can see that the students in higher grades of elementary schools in the City of Split, 906 of them (or 16%), are more involved in extracurricular music activities than students in lower grades, where only 414 students (or 7.6%) are involved (Table 4). Elementary school students can be included in some of the activities only in higher grades of elementary school. The data also shows that students in lower grades (44.4%), as well as students in higher grades (38.3%), are mostly involved in the school choir (Table 5). Students in lower grades (23.7%) in a far larger number participate in the work of folklore group than students in higher grades (4.9%).

Table 4

The number Number of students of lower and higher grades involved in extracurricular music activities

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN LOWER GRADES	NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN LOWER GRADES INVOLVED IN ECMA		TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN HIGHER GRADES	NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN HIGHER GRADES INVOLVED IN ECMA	
5,458	414	7.6%	5,664	906	16%

Table 5

The number Number of students in lower and higher grades involved in various forms of extracurricular music activities

EXTRACURRICULAR MUSIC ACTIVITIES	NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN LOWER GRADES INVOLVED IN ECMA		NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN HIGHER GRADES INVOLVED IN ECMA	
Block flute	6	1.4%	28	3.1%
Drama-dance group	25	6%	50	5.5%
Folklore group	98	23.7%	44	4.9%
Music workshop	1	0.2%	13	1.4%
Traditional Croatian music	1	0.2%	7	0.7%
Children's vocal group	17	4.1%	35	3.9%
Choir of children in lower grades	44	10.6%	/	/
Mandolin orchestra	0	0%	15	1.7%
School choir	184	44.4%	347	38.3%
Orchestra	0	0%	13	1.4%
Rhythmic group	38	9.2%	33	3.6%
Choir of children in higher grades	/	/	321	35.4%
TOTAL	414	100%	906	100%

Table 6 shows data regarding students' involvement in extracurricular music activities in individual schools. From the data presented in the table we can see that Elementary School "Dobri" conducts the highest number of forms of extracurricular

music activities (5), while in eight schools only one extracurricular music activity is offered. From the data we can also see that in almost all schools the most common music activity is the school choir.

Table 6

The involvement of students in extracurricular music activities in schools

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	School choir	Choir of children in higher grades	Folklore group	Drama-dance group	Rhythmic group	Children's vocal group	Choir of children in lower grades	Block flute	Mandolin orchestra	Music workshop	Orchestra	Traditional Croatian music
"Blatine-Škrape"	-	90	-	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	-
"Bol"	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Brda"	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Dobri"	37	-	-	-	-	6	17	18	-	-	-	8
"Kamen- Šine"	65	-	17	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Kman-Kocunar"	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Manuš"	29	-	20	-	39	-	-	-	15	-	-	-
"Mejaši"	93	-	24	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Mertojak"	-	73	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Plokite"	25	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Pojšan"	-	9	24	-	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Pujanki"	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Ravnenjive"	-	46	-	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	9	-
"Skalice"	25	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Slatine"	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
"Spinut"	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Srinjine"	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Stobreč"	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Sućidar"	23	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Trstenik"	30	-	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
"Visoka"	27	-	-	-	-	15	-	16	-	-	-	-
"Žrnovnica"	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-
TOTAL	531	321	142	75	71	52	44	34	15	14	13	8

Conclusion

Extracurricular activities in schools, due to their elastic structure and the principle of voluntary involvement, are the space in which it is easiest to reach out to students, to their needs, desires and aspirations (Martinčević, 2010). In a series of research studies a positive correlation was found between extracurricular activities and academic

achievement (Broh, 2002; Eccles et al., 2003; Guest & Schneider, 2003; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002) and well-being in different domains (Gilman, Myers, & Perez, 2004). Broh (2002) notes that there is little empirical evidence on the reasons for such a connection. Feldman and Matjasko (2005) point out, however, that it is impossible to make a general conclusion that extracurricular activities are useful and effective.

Extracurricular music activities have been recognized as a place of high-quality active (artistic) music-making with the potential of aesthetic education (Rojko, 2012). The role of extracurricular music activities is particularly important in shaping the attitudes towards music and is one of the most important strongholds of independent musical development of the young person outside the school (Pitts, 2008).

The research results of extracurricular music activities in elementary schools of Split showed that students in this area are offered a total of 12 different extracurricular music activities. Among them the most frequent ones are vocal activities, a total of four: School choir, Choir of children of lower grades, Choir of children of higher grades and Children's vocal group. In the second place are activities related to dancing (three): Drama-dance groups, Folklore groups and Rhythmic group, followed by instrument playing activities (three): Block flute, Mandolin orchestra and Orchestra. The other two activities are: Music workshop and Traditional Croatian music.

The school choir is the most frequent extracurricular music activity in elementary schools of the City of Split. It is found in 63.6% of the schools that participated in the survey. Consequently, most of the students who participate in extracurricular music activities are involved in the work of the School Choir (40.2%). When we add to that the number of students participating in the choir of children of lower and higher grades, we can conclude that 67.8% of children are participating in school choirs. The least represented, in only one school, are the following activities: Mandolin orchestra, Traditional Croatian Music, Music workshop and Drama-dance group.

We can conclude that in the City of Split, a sufficient number of diverse music extracurricular activities are offered, and that this number is not adequate at the school level. In eight schools only one type of music activity is offered, in seven schools only two activities, in five schools three activities, and in one school four i.e. five activities. It is evident that students in the City of Split have not been given equal opportunities to develop their music skills and musical potential.

The results show a significant disparity in students' involvement in extracurricular music activities between different schools. The percentage of involvement varies from 32% to 2.2%. While in some schools students' involvement in extracurricular music activities is at a satisfactory level, in 12 schools students' participation is below 10%. Also, we notice the discrepancy in participation between students of lower and higher grades. Students of higher grades are involved in extracurricular music activities far more than students in lower grades.

From all this we can conclude that in the schools of the City of Split it is necessary to carry out a systematic and thorough reorganization of extracurricular music

activities and invest more effort and resources to provide all students with equally better education and development of all their potentials. It is necessary to continue the ongoing monitoring of the quantity and quality of the realization of these activities, so we could take appropriate measures in order to improve the teaching of music in elementary schools of Split and in the end, in order to contribute to the enhancement of musical culture of the area.

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Izvannastavne glazbene aktivnosti u osnovnim školama grada Splita¹

Sažetak

Izvannastavne aktivnosti u osnovnoj školi u 20. stoljeću postaju strukturiran dio školskog rada u okviru kojeg se nastavlja odgojno-obrazovno djelovanje škole s ciljem individualnog učeničkog razvoja. U radu su opisani različiti oblici izvannastavnih glazbenih aktivnosti djece u osnovnim školama kao i njihova uloga u cjelovitom razvoju djeteta. Provedeno je i empirijsko istraživanje o izvannastavnim glazbenim aktivnostima koje se ostvaruju u osnovnim školama grada Splita. Istraživanjem provedenim u školskoj godini 2013./14. utvrđeno je da je učenicima ponuđeno ukupno dvanaest različitih izvannastavnih glazbenih aktivnosti na razini svih gradskih škola, a da su najzastupljenije pjevački zbor i folklorna skupina. Jednako tako utvrđeno je da 11,8 % učenika s područja grada Splita pohađa izvannastavne glazbene aktivnosti te da je najveći broj učenika uključen u zbor i folklornu skupinu. Ustanovili smo i da učenici viših razreda u većoj mjeri sudjeluju u izvannastavnim glazbenim aktivnostima od učenika nižih razreda. U školama grada Splita potrebno je uložiti dodatne napore i sredstava da bi svi učenici imali pravo na jednak pristup kvalitetnim izvannastavnim glazbenim aktivnostima i da bi one bile zastupljenije u slobodnom vremenu učenika, a s ciljem njihova sveobuhvatnog razvoja.

Ključne riječi: cjeloviti razvoj učenika; dječji zbor; folklorna skupina.

¹ Rad pod naslovom *Izvannastavne glazbene aktivnosti u osnovnim školama grada Splita* diplomski je rad obranjen 2014. na Filozofskom fakultetu Sveučilišta u Splitu, na Odsjeku za učiteljski studij, pod mentorstvom mr. sc. Marija Krnića.