Development of Psychosocial Skills of Teachers

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Abstract

The modern vocational school has to react flexibly to market demands which leads to high expectations from teachers. Today companies demand not only professionally trained workers, but workers who are able to work in a team, solve conflict situations and create   positive workplace atmosphere.

Teachers must therefore develop not only the cognitive component of the students' personality, but also their affective component. Teachers must implement the teaching methods that train students to cooperate among themselves, to find solutions in critical or conflict situations and to respect others.

Competences that are focused on developing the students' emotional intelligence and fundamentally contributing to the climate of the classroom must be sensitively integrated into the teaching process.

The article deals with the question about competences which develop the affective component are necessary and must be mastered by future teachers and what methods of teaching should be chosen for the education of students at secondary vocational schools.

Entwicklung psychosozialer Fähigkeiten bei Lehrern

Die moderne Berufsschule muss flexibel auf Marktanforderungen reagieren, was zu hohen Erwartungen der Lehrer führt. Unternehmen fordern heute von Arbeitnehmern nicht nur eine professionelle Ausbildung, sondern auch die Fähigkeit, in einem Team zu arbeiten, Konfliktsituationen zu lösen und ein positives Arbeitsplatzklima zu schaffen.

Die Lehrer müssen daher nicht nur die kognitive Komponente der Persönlichkeit des Schülers entwickeln, sondern auch die affektive Komponente. Die Lehrkräfte müssen daher solche Unterrichtsmethoden anwenden, mit denen die Schüler lernen, wie sie zusammenarbeiten, Lösungen in kritischen Situationen oder Konfliktsituationen finden und andere respektieren können.

Kompetenzen, die darauf ausgerichtet sind, die emotionale Intelligenz der Schüler zu entwickeln und grundlegend zum Klima des Klassenzimmers beizutragen, müssen sensibel in den Unterrichtsprozess integriert werden.

Der Artikel befasst sich mit der Frage, welche Kompetenzen zur Entwicklung der affektiven Komponente erforderlich sind, um zukünftige Lehrer zu beherrschen, und welche Unterrichtsmethoden für die Ausbildung von Schülern von weiterführenden Berufsschulen gewählt werden sollten.

Keywords:	Schlüsselwörter:
Competencies	Kompetenzen
Psychosocial skills	Psychosoziale Fähigkeiten
Teaching process	Unterrichtsprozess

1   Introduction

There are new trends in students' education that support the latest scientific knowledge. The Framework Educational Programs and School Educational Programs are innovated to be continuously updated to meet the students' individual requirements and the students' innovative output skills. There are new tools and new technologies in schools. Teaching is innovated both materially and didactically and new methods of working with

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students appear. The aim of the whole effort is for a student who goes through all the levels of education to be a qualified worker at the early stage of his career.

Today's employers prefer those workers who meet not only professional but also humane qualification requirements. Therefore, today's school should develop not only cognitive but also affective part of the personality. The development of the student's personality is not only due to the family, as one of the most powerful formative factors, but also due to teachers. It is true that education in the Czech Republic is increasingly focused on shaping the student's cognitive abilities. The research abroad has shown that teachers with developed psychosocial competencies create positive working climate in the classroom and contribute significantly to improving the climate of the whole school and classroom (Hen & Goroshit, 2016). Psychosocial competences are set to the background. According to Franclová (2013, p. 8), all four dimensions of the student's personality - the dimensions of learning and recognizing, the dimensions of learning to act, the dimensions of living together and the dimensions of learning to be - should be purposefully developed. For the development of the student's personality to be comprehensive, teachers must possess not only professional knowledge but also psychosocial skills. It is therefore very important for teachers to develop their psychosocial competencies and apply their new skills and abilities in teaching. According to the recommendations of the European Commission, it is crucial that teachers undergo a reform of the whole education system in order to increase workers' productivity and skills (Supporting teacher competence development for better learning outcomes, 2013).

Inconsistency in psychosocial competences prevails in terms of teachers' specific professional and psychosocial competencies and their desired outcomes .They prefer the model of broad professionalism of teachers abroad (Dytrtová & Krhutová, 2009, p. 37).

2   Psychosocial Competence

2.1   Definition of Psychosocial Competences

The general concept of competence can be described according to Berman (1997) and Veteška & Tureckiová (2008, p. 27) as "the unique ability of a man to act successfully and further develop his potential based on an integrated set of own resources in the specific context of different tasks and life situations, associated with the ability and willingness (motivation) to make decisions and take responsibility for his decisions. "

If the question of competencies in relation to the educational process is limited to psychosocial competences, they are defined as competences that are necessary for the functioning of an individual in the society. They enable human communication, promote the socialization of individuals, and help to cope with difficult life situations. They play an important role in the school environment - they promote pedagogical communication (Slavík, 2012, p. 78, Neubrand, 2013). As they are demonstrated in social interaction, psychosocial competences can be defined as the functional knowledge and skills (Veteška & Tureckiová, 2008, p. 28). The psychosocial competence of teachers can be understood as a social and emotional balance of personality that is able to cope with the extreme stress associated with teaching. A teacher should be a balanced personality with the high professional qualifications.

In his theory of happiness, Seligman (2014, p. 37-38) describes a strong personality as a kind person with high social intelligence, humor, courage, and a person who is able to accept the challenges that life brings. His theory can be used to define the required psychosocial competences of a teacher with his primary function of the main creator of the educational process.

Teacher's psychosocial competences can be described as the art of movement in the educational environment and the art of shaping students' personalities.

2.2   Teacher's Psychosocial Competences

Neubrand (2013, p. 363) and Gillernová (2003, p. 83-84) describe the work of a teacher as a diverse activity that requires the teacher to orientate himself in many disciplines. The teacher should have developed professional competences of the subject he teaches. He should also have good knowledge of didactics. In addition, he should be proficient in diagnostic activities and have developed psychosocial competences in order to link all of the above-mentioned pedagogical competences.

The teacher, as the main creator of the educational process, has available personality traits that will be able to format the influence on the student. Teacher's psychosocial competences are crucial for the class

environment. A teacher as a professional is considered to be the primary creator of the school climate because he is in mutual social interactions not only with students, but also with other teachers or parents. The teacher is expected to be capable, innocent, empathetic, communicative, to have increased social communicativeness, not to be emotionally volatile and appears to be emotionally stable one (Dytrtová & Krhutová, 2009, p. 37, Ganai & Mudasir, 2017).

According to Slavík (2012, p. 78), the orientation in difficult life situations and the ability to mediate acceptable solutions to students are among the basic psychosocial competences of the teacher.

The level of the teachers' psychosocial competences is reflected in the social interactions between the teacher and the student. There are large variables in the interaction between the student and the teacher that change. The interaction between the two subjects always shows the student's personal maturity and the teacher's personality. Evaluation of interaction has three basic levels - social interaction, social perception and social communication. At all levels it is necessary for both a teacher and a student to respect each other. Pedagogical communication is based on the internal needs of the student and the teacher (Vališová, Kasíková & Bureš, 2011, pp. 226-227, Ganai & Mudasir, 2017).

However, communication is difficult with students who often go through the turbulent phases of life. Because teachers communicate with an emotionally immature student, they must choose different strategies of communication with the student. These strategies are a great source of stress for teachers. According to Travers & Cooper (1996) and Tamas & Barn (2011, p. 25-26), each individual must be able to adapt to the stress factors to which he is exposed. The more stress factors an individual has, the more protective equipment must be involved. The teacher must adapt mentally quickly to the situation that is happening. Some psychophysiological reactions that mobilize his hormonal and nervous systems must be activated in the teacher's psyche. As a result, the brain combines information about physical activation and polarity of emotions. In fact, this condition is very beneficial for the psyche because it activates the whole organism to deal with the ongoing situation (Paulík, 2017. p. 23-24).

The psyche of the teacher constantly analyses the outcome of his reaction. If the solution of the whole situation is assessed as advantageous at the end, the teacher will use a similar solution in the framework of coping strategies (Baštecká, 2005, p. 82, Tsang, 2019). If a teacher has been experiencing stress events in his surroundings for a long time and is unable to use effective coping strategies, he may experience burnout. This is reflected in addition to physical manifestations at the social level. Such a teacher is incapable of empathy, or his willingness to communicate is greatly reduced, he loses interest in profession and does not take care of his environment carefully (Švamberk Šauerová, 2018, p. 38-41, Tsang, 2019).

According to Seligman (2014, p. 154), the positive news is that psychic resistance can be taught and trained. It is therefore very important that the development of psychosocial competences is taken into account in the education of future teachers. Bansal (2009) and Slavík (2012, p. 80) describe that a prospective successful teacher must receive targeted education in which the prospective teacher learns through own experience.

2.3 Training of Future Teachers

Bansal (2009) and Kratochvílová, Horká & Škarková (2015, p. 10-12) emphasize the quality of the professional development of the teacher, which is realized in all its components, which are integrated with each other. After graduation, experts in their field who have practical skills have professional competence in didactics, psychology and pedagogy. It is essential for teachers to acquire the knowledge they have acquired during their studies in the teaching practice that activates it. A modern trend in the education of prospective teachers is their integration into the real school environment, where they become members of the teaching staff, they come into contact with students. This will enable future teachers to develop effective strategies for working with students and to develop their psychosocial competences. In pedagogical practice, prospective teachers are led by a trainer who leads students to independence, responsibility and systematic work. Key skills are created by students' own pedagogical activities. Future teachers learn how to create a positive and creative classroom climate, how to communicate with students, and how to develop student's personality. At the same time students of pedagogical faculties practise pedagogical communication with students. However, it is necessary to involve the student - teacher gradually into the pedagogical activities. His integration into the teaching process must be divided into several phases. In the first phase, the student is only an observer of activities until the final phase, when the student is able to conduct independent teaching.

2.4 Self-reflection in the Development of Psychosocial Competences of Teachers

A very important tool for the development of psychosocial competences not only for beginning teachers is self-reflection. According to Janík (2016, p. 191), self-reflection is a way to realize your working practices and how emotions and motives that were involved in the whole meeting were involved in dealing with situations. There are several models of self-reflection. As an example, it is possible to mention the model of the ideal ALACT reflection process according to Korthagen et al. (2001 in Brandenburg, 2008, pp. 34-35). The ALACT model is divided into five successive phases - action, looking back at the action, awareness of important aspects, creation of alternative procedures and lessons learned (Fig.1). Thanks to the ALACT model, it is possible to realize through internal dialogue and information collection how to improve attiude to students and to the teacher himself. (Kratochvílová, Horká & Škarková (2015, p.13-14).
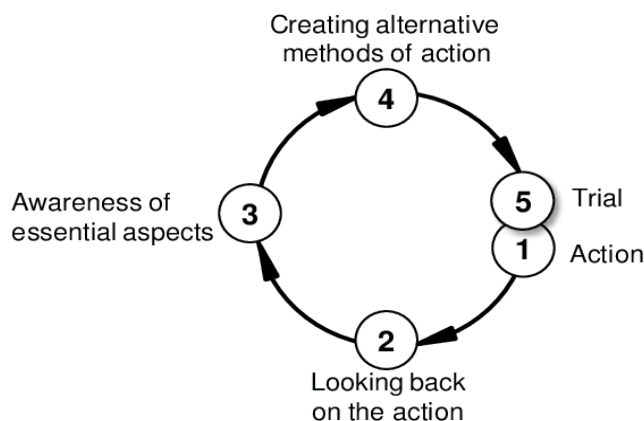

Fig. 1: Diagram of ALACT (Korthagen et al. 2003 in Driessen, Tartwijk & Dornan, 2008, p. 15)

If teachers are expected to perform in the best way in class, some therapeutic methods must be provided to guide teachers in their professional development. These methods help teachers with difficult decisions which they have to make every day (Abraham, 2003, p. 4).

Another very effective provision to develop competence of a teacher is mentoring as a comprehensive system of methodological support for teachers. Mentoring is based on trust and empathy (Kratochvílová, Horká & Škarková, 2015, p. 16-17, Dikilitas', Mede, & Atay, 2018). Mentoring is a very valuable method for beginning teachers. The mentor should be chosen by each teacher himself, since mentoring is not so effective if the teacher has no choice. The essence of mentoring is the transfer of information and experience of the teaching process, increasing the performance of the teacher.

Mentoring involves a similar exchange of information as in intergenerational learning. Older and more experienced teachers can pass on their experience to younger teachers who lack some experience. Mentors must be carefully selected because a teacher showing signs of burnout is not a suitable candidate. The main advantages of mentoring include the fact that the teacher will get to know himself better, will work on his strengths and use strengths as his advantage (Švamberk Šauerová, 2018, p. 172-173, Dikilitas', Mede & Atay, 2018).

2.5 Researches Dealing with Psychosocial Skills

The professional literature discusses the importance of developing psychosocial competences of students and teachers. There are very few concrete researches that would address the issue of psychosocial competences of teachers. At the same time, positive psychosocial climate in the classroom, which creates supportive environment for students, contributes to better student performance, motivates students to continue learning and prepares students for future social life (Hen & Goroshit, 2016).

Studies of teachers' professional competences have shown that teachers' personal competences are very important. However, they cannot be specified or described precisely. The basic assumption is that the teacher

has some developed personality traits and personal skills, value orientation, empathy and great mental resistance (Kratochvílová, Horká, Škarková, 2015 p. 15).

The study published by Şinoforoğlu & Balçıkanlı (2020, p. 66-76) showed that teachers of Physical education in Turkey were empathetic, but did not have sufficient imagination and achieved only average values in the field of emotional skills. This led the authors of the study to the idea that it was necessary for teachers to strengthen their psychosocial skills at the very beginning of their studies at universities.

The decisive factor for the development of the psychosocial competences of future teachers is their personal qualifications for the profession. The teacher should be empathetic to be able to understand the student and be able to evaluate the information gained in communication with students through social interaction quickly. Salovey, Brackett & Mayer (2004, p. 5) define these abilities as emotional intelligence. They define emotional intelligence as the ability to distinguish between their own emotions and the emotions of others and to use this information in their actions and thinking. The question is what the initial competences of the first year students at universities are.

According to the survey done by Zelníčková (2018) at the secondary school, it was found out that the students who studied four year fields of study and were expected to be able to study at universities had a higher emotional coefficient (EQ) than those who attended three year courses. Research of Zelníčková (2018) is based on the book written by Anja Kanitz (2008) and used her questionnaire to determine the emotional coefficient. Emotional coefficient was evaluated according to Kanitz (2008) recommendation see Table 1. This confirmed the assumption that students who are educated in high school graduation courses have a higher emotional coefficient. The difference in EQ values may be due to the social background of the students, but also due to the different teaching methods chosen for students in the fields of study and apprenticeships. For students studying in vocational fields, the primary objective is to develop vocational competencies that enables them to obtain apprenticeship certificates. For four year courses, emphasis is placed on the study side of the curriculum. The overall length of the study in four and three year fields may also play a key role. The observed differences between EQ for apprenticeship and graduation courses are shown in Table 2 and Fig.2.

Points	Final Results
19-30 points	There are still gaps in the development of emotional intelligence.
31-45 points	Go through the building blocks again. Which competences do you already have well developed, in which building blocks do you still have the opportunity to develop? Decide what competence (s) you would like to further develop.
46-57 points	You have had many opportunities in your life to develop and test your emotional intelligence. Therefore, you know best in what area you can still improve.

Table 1: Original Results of Emotional Intelligence - Anja Kanitz (2008)

Value	Three year courses with apprenticeship certificate	Four year courses EQ
$\bar{x}$	38,05	40,02
x_0	27	25
x_{25}	34	37,25
x_{50}	38,50	40
x_{75}	42	44
x_{100}	46	47
$Mod(x)$	40	38

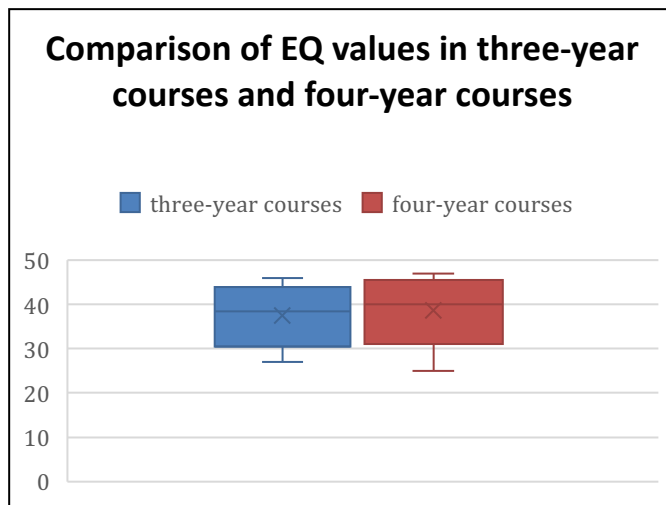**Table 2: Comparison of EQ values in three year courses and four year courses**

Fig. 2: Comparison of EQ values in three year courses and four year courses

2.6   Methods Developing Psychosocial Skills of Students

The future social dexterity and adaptability of a person depend on how his psychosocial skills have been purposefully developed throughout his life since his birth. From an early age we are able to communicate at a certain level with our surroundings. Preschool children learn psychosocial competences within the games and learn how to make appropriate contacts with their surroundings (Sárközi, 2010, Agarwal & Nagar, 2010).

After the student goes to the first class, the school plays a fundamental role in the development of psychosocial competences. Already at the first stage of primary schools, methods of teaching that support the social contact of the child with their surroundings should be primarily chosen (Rázková, 2015, Dyson & Casey, 2012,). Methods that will support group work of students are especially suitable. Rázková (2015), Pedersen & Digby (1995) recommend cooperative learning.

In cooperative learning there is „*positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, personal responsibility, the formation and usage of interpersonal and group skills, and reflection of the group activity*" (Sárközi, 2010, Dyson & Casey, 2012). Kasíková (2011), Gillies & Ashman (2003) describe that cooperative learning stimulates students' performance and develops their thinking, encourages vocabulary and helps to develop psychosocial competences of students. It significantly helps to reduce stress of students. Students learn in a team the things which they will have to manage one day on their own. Cooperative learning suits all levels of school, from primary school to secondary school. However, Sarközi (2010) and Clifford (2015) draw attention to the fact that cooperative learning does not guarantee that students will develop their psychosocial skills yet. Students must cooperate and communicate with each other within the framework of cooperative teaching.

Another method that develops students' psychosocial skills is the community circle method. The community circle develops interpersonal relationships and improves classroom climate. The method is based on mutual tolerance between students and teachers. Students must listen to others, not talk to each other and keep everything that is said in a group for themselves. Students pass a selected subject during the discussion in a group that entitles them to speak. However, they may use the opportunity not to say anything. The teacher is the first one to start in a group and ask a question and answer it or he selects the student to answer. With the community circle method, the teacher must consider if it is suitabile to use it in the classroom as this method is not appropriate for the teaching of a new topic. It is suitable for creating a positive climate in the classroom or for preventing bullying at school (Sárközi, 2010, Clifford, 2015).

It is clear from the above-mentioned methods that psychosocial skills should include methods that deviate significantly from the transmissive concept of teaching. Modern teaching methods must be implemented sensitively and in a planned way. Despite strong criticism, frontal teaching has its advantages. However, it cannot be used as the only teaching method, and when planning teaching, teachers should purposefully include methods that involve the student in his learning process. However, this requires the future teachers to be prepared to apply these teaching methods.

3   Conclusion

Psychosocial skills are a very important professional competence that teachers need throughout their working life. As these specific skills are progressive and should increase with age and practice, it is very important for teachers to develop them in practice. For teachers who are already involved in the teaching process, it should be taken for granted that they will pass on their experience and advice to the new generation of teachers.

In order to improve the quality of teaching, it is necessary for teachers to be given the opportunity to share their experience in workshops and training sessions.

Teachers should receive feedback and reflect on the development of their communication and personal aspects through self-reflection. The main objective of improving the education of qualified teachers is the development of all professional competences. Teacher's professionalism is particularly evident in teaching practice because only a highly qualified teacher can look at work in self-reflection and improve performance and it is the key to applying new teaching methods.

In a modern school, it is not enough to pass on the knowledge to students, but students themselves must involve their personality in their educational process. It is important not only to educate students, but also to develop the students' personalities so that they are able to cooperate, to create interpersonal relationships full of empathy. This can only be achieved through constructivist conception of teaching and modern teaching methods in schools. However, careful planning of teaching with sensitive integration of appropriate teaching methods remains an important part of the teaching process.

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