



Social Partnership in Higher Education Institutions as a Relevant Problem of Educational Management

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Abstract

Education has acquired a strictly focused nature, which is associated with the need to form reliable partnerships between universities and potential employers. This type of partnership is called social. The purpose of the study is to consider the problem of organizing social partnership, which is aimed to restore the focus of the activities of music education institutions on the results and values of education – the formation of students' most important social, intellectual, and moral qualities and skills. The basis of the work comprises theoretical and practical research methods in the fields of management, sociology, economics, history, musical pedagogy, psychology, and cultural studies, as well as statistical data collection and analysis, observation, and forecasting. The main results of the study are that all five functions of the management system in the field of education, including professional music education, – forecasting, planning, and organizing activities, teamwork coordination, personnel training, monitoring and evaluation of the quality of educational services – are closely related to a specific product (a specialist in the field of musical art and pedagogy) and its promotion to the consumer (institutions of arts and culture, general and additional education institutions). Conclusions: Management in the field of education is primarily based on the grounds, goals, objectives, and principles shared with the social partner. These goals and objectives provide the focus that should determine the management of educational institutions.

Keywords: Education, Employer, Management, Social Partnership

1 Introduction

Professional preparation of musical specialists remains a relevant task of higher education. However, in different periods of the development of the education system, ways of solving it varied depending on historical and social conditions. Globalization, internationalization, digitization, replacement of traditional values by new ones, revision of cultural orientations of the past, etc. determine the nature of the formation of the educational doctrine [1]. An important role in it is played by modern principles of organization and management in professional education as a complex sociocultural sphere.

The goal of music education management is satisfying society's need for highly qualified specialists and professionals, meeting demands of the modern labor market, which provides the efficiency of an educational institution. A successful partnership between higher education institutions and local communities is highly estimated by D. Siegel in his book [2]. He identifies the key organizational factors of this success: a well-developed conceptual framework based on organizational theory, joint planning, and focus of the higher education institution and its partners on social well-being, values, and justice.

As noted by T. Agasisty, in recent decades, evaluation of the efficiency understood as "the ability to produce the maximum amount of educational service for a given budget" has become the main trend in the development of the higher education system [3]. This trend has formed under the influence of the decrease in public investment in the budget of educational institutions and the transition of the latter to internal financing [4]. R. Zemsky believes that "the future holds more privatization of public institution" [5]. Thus, the main criterion for the evaluation of the efficiency of a higher education institution is the correspondence between the budget and the level of provided services.

Another trend, closely related to the aforementioned, is university ranking based on various indicators [6-8]. Indicators include the activeness of academic exchange, the volume of attracted investment, the scientific value of employees' research, the number of received grants, the number of graduates, professors' qualifications, infrastructure development, the number of publications in journals indexed in international databases, international significance of conducted public events, and the scale of partnership with foreign organizations. However, among these indicators, the main, if not the key one is absent – the level of graduates, facing difficulties related to employment

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matching the studied specialty and further career development. D. Bok claims that “only those institutions that vigorously uphold academic values, even at the cost of a few lucrative ventures, will win public trust and retain the respect of faculty and students” [4, p. 54]. These goals and tasks provide purposefulness, underlying educational institution management.

Today, managers of different levels in higher education institutions of arts and culture must be sociologists, psychologists, culturologists, promoters, marketers, administrators, economists, and even politicians. Thus, “being the catalyst of the interests of the collective, consumers of its products, and society as a whole, a higher education institution manager acquires tremendous social significance, using the components of science, art, creativity, and intuition, integrating different types of relationships” [9, p. 45].

The education reform at the beginning of the 21st century produced such artistic and stylistic trends in music education that require a revision of managerial approaches, providing the efficient functioning of the new education system. A variety of styles and tendencies in contemporary art, freedom of creative self-expression, independence of artistic search, active modernization of musical language, formation of new esthetic phenomena, coexistence of different cultures (elite and mass, traditional and innovative), multiculturalism of society as a whole, coexistence of pop music and highly artistic works – all this requires organization of music education based on new foundations, as well as rational modern management. Modern music education requires “intellectual resource/capital for the formation of a creative economy and implementation of the state policy in arts and culture” [10].

Music education management provides the efficiency of an educational institution, in particular, professional preparation of highly qualified specialists, able to compete in the modern labor market. Having appeared relatively recently, management soon became one of the sciences of the third millennium, on which the efficiency of any kind of institution depends. There are many reasons for this: social, psychological, cultural, economic, and technological [11]. According to O.E. Shilova, in modern society, there is a growing “need for constructive management and functioning of a collective, formation of resources and means for its development and functioning, interaction with other social subjects” [9, pp. 44-45]. Today, educational management, including music education management, has become a socially relevant phenomenon [11].

The contribution of authors can be substantiated as follows: if in the works of management researchers in the field of education the search for objective assessments of universities’ functioning and solutions to the pressing problems of managing educational institutions is carried out, then this article proposes to build university ratings based on an estimate of the number of graduates employed in the specialty received, which is rarely used. Social partnership seems to be the most important management problem in the field of education and one of the first steps in organizing effective university activities. It is designed to restore the focus of educational institutions on the results and values of education.

Research hypothesis. Today, the success of the university depends on active cooperation with employers and developed social partnership, which helps improving the quality of graduates’ training and ensures their relevance in the labor market. At the same time, education management, integrating different types of relationships into a single whole and

successfully solving the problem of social partnership, ensures the effectiveness of the functioning of the modern education system as a whole.

2 Methods

The problems of management in the field of music education are multifaceted, and therefore require a comprehensive approach to their solution. The most important research method was an expert survey with the participation of three experts from the state accreditation commission, which conducted the assessment of the activities of the Russian State Social University during the accreditation period in the fall of 2018. This method allows evaluating the efficiency of a higher education institution and management results, as well as proving the hypothesis that developed social partnership helps improving the quality of training of graduates and ensures their relevance in the labor market. In particular, during the accreditation of the university, experts noted such an area of activity as the department for developing partnerships between the university and employers and the department for employing graduates, as well as conducting scientific research on assessing the level of employer satisfaction with the quality of graduate training.

3 Results

The concept of management includes managerial, administrative, and organizational activities. Management is understood as a complex of actions, aimed at reaching a high level of the development of the organization and quality of provided educational services by means of efficient acquisition, distribution, and use of resources to achieve the institution’s main goal [12, p. 3]. Educational management includes five main functions: forecasting, planning, and organization of activity, coordination of collective work, personnel training, and, finally, monitoring and evaluation of the quality of educational services [13]. However, in addition to intellectual resources, an educational institution requires human and financial resources, allowing it to achieve its goals.

The functions of music education management are organization, implementation, and correction of the educational process results in accordance with society’s needs, coordination of the interaction between the educational institution and its social partner, identification of problems in achieving the desired result and their solution, and creation of favorable conditions for joint activity. The result of a manager’s activity, aimed at the implementation of efficient social partnership, is a product (specialist in the field of musical art and pedagogy) and its promotion to the consumer (arts and cultural institutions, general and additional education institutions).

All five functions of the educational management system, including professional music education, – forecasting, planning, and organization of activity, coordination of collective work, personnel training, and monitoring and evaluation of the quality of educational services – are closely related to the concrete result. Thus, educational management requires primarily for foundations, goals, tasks, and principles common with a social partner [14]. However, in practice, only four out of five functions can be successfully performed: control and assessment of the quality of educational services are carried out according to external, often quantitative, but not qualitative criteria.

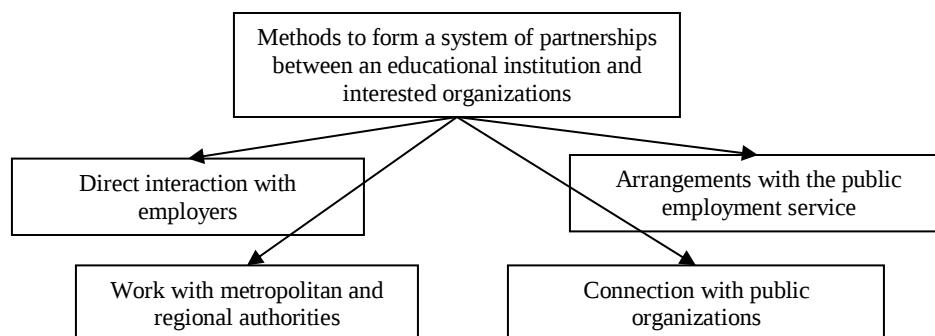


Figure 1. Methods to form a system of partnerships

The insufficiency of the joint work of the university leadership with social partners in determining common grounds, goals and objectives is obvious. Social partners of music colleges and universities are institutions employing graduates, as well as persons using the results of their creative activity and even parents [15]. Thus, cooperation between employers and educational institutions is a complex system of subjects, united by a common goal and interested in shared results (products or services) of joint activity. Engagement of participants in joint activity and creation of connections between the system's elements serve as the basis of social partnership. Several methods are applied (Fig. 1). The main tasks of social partnership are as follows:

- Engagement of employers of other organizations, using results of the activity of higher education institutions, in the professional preparation of specialists to satisfy society's needs and optimize the labor market [16];
- Formation and development of a system of professional orientation and social self-identification of the youth, encouragement of conscious choice of the future profession, improvement of the professional education system, and creation of conditions for the career development of a future graduate [10];
- Teaching the main principles of building a professional career and behavior in the labor market [17];
- Correction of an educational program in accordance with labor market demands to ensure maximum employment of graduates [18].

The state expects high results from universities in the form of specialists, able to perform productive activity for the good of the society and provide its economic growth. Professional educational and socioeconomic relationships based on internal and external factors grow increasingly close. According to experts, among partnerships and forms of interaction between an educational organization and interested institutions, the most significant is direct interaction with employers in the form of direct agreements on targeted admission of applicants. This relationship does not work due to the fact that in practice the opinion of employers regarding the competence of specialists in a particular field is not taken into account when developing curricula. There are too many intermediaries between the social partner and the university, as a result of which they are unable to sit at the "negotiation table".

4 Discussion

The connection between an educational institution and a social partner ensures the efficiency of the higher education institution and the modern system of professional education in general. Educational programs include disciplines, providing the

formation of professionally significant competencies, required for work. "Key competencies play the main role in the development of a teacher musician, thus, special disciplines and subjects are of great importance" [16, p. 93]. Moreover, one of the trends of the last decade is the appearance of creative industries, corporations, and clusters – organizations, comprising several connected institutions, providing the full production cycle of a product or service from idea to promotion to the consumer. The system of targeted training is developing. Thus, today, the problem of forming social partnership has become one of the most important in the management of higher music education institutions.

Social partnership allows employers to directly participate in the educational process and higher education institutions – to achieve the result expected by employers. Thus, social partnership improves the level of professional education and, as a result, provides successful employment of young specialists, as well as optimizes financial and labor costs in educational institution management. In educational institution management, social partnership relies on a number of fundamental principles, forming, according to T.N. Suminova, "the philosophy and culture of management" [10].

According to 2017-2018 statistical data, at present, graduates of arts and cultural universities are in high demand in the labor market and perform productive activity in cultural and recreational organizations and additional education institutions. Successful employment of graduates of arts and cultural universities is related to the fact that in the educational process, students achieve a high level of professional competency and acquire personal qualities necessary for future professional activity. As a result, graduates of higher music education institutions successfully work in various organizations: theaters and studios, ensembles, choirs, and orchestras, on television and radio, children music schools and studios. This is associated with the coexistence in modern music education of "multidirectional methodological paradigms – conservative, avant-garde, technocentric, dialogical" [19]. These paradigms provide comprehensive preparation in higher music education institutions. Thus, the ranking of a higher education institution increases in terms of both study goals and results and expediency of organization and management of the educational process.

Employers usually find specialists at job fairs. However, in the last decade, employers seem to evaluate graduates' practical skills at creative shows, festivals, competitions, concerts, and cultural and educational events [17]. An example of a "casting of professionals" is a youth theater festival, performer competition, concert, or cultural and educational project, implemented jointly or based on social partnership. Student concerts are held at

various city venues for various reasons: holiday, memorable historical event, patriotic, cultural, educational, or recreational event for children, etc. Employers witness a specialist's skills in their practical implementation rather than just take the candidate's word at the interview.

At such events, conducted jointly with social partners, many graduates receive official job offers, which increases the number of employed graduates and increases interest from applicants to this university. Both students and their parents, choosing an educational institution and a specialty, first of all think about future employment and the level of their training in accordance with the requirements of employers. These projects become a perfect opportunity for young musicians, teachers, and specialists in sociocultural activity to find a job. Organization of such events, as well as activation of social partnership in general, are important tasks of modern music education management.

5 Conclusions

Thus, during the study of the practice of interaction between the University of Culture and Art with social partners, the hypothesis has been proved that the success of the university depends on active cooperation with employers and developed social partnership, which helps improving the quality of training of graduates and ensures their relevance in the labor market. Today, employers seek to hire comprehensively prepared, competent, creative, and independent specialists, freely applying innovative technology. Due to them, the ranking of a higher education institution increases in terms of both study goals and results and expediency of organization and management of the educational process.

The success of a higher education institution depends on active cooperation with employers and developed social partnership, which improves the quality of graduates' preparation and provides their competitiveness in the labor market. Educational management, integrating different types of relationships and successfully solving the problem of social partnership, provides the efficiency of the modern education system, as well as the stable development of society.

The findings of the study are as follows: music education management has high social significance and, thus, becomes a mechanism for stabilizing the development of society as a whole. In pursuit of financial advantage, many higher education institutions have turned from platforms for discussion of innovative ideas and scientific discoveries into companies with colorful logos and catchy advertising slogans. As social institutions, universities share social values. The main feature of shared values is a social partnership between higher education institutions and consumers of the results of their educational activity.

The research devoted to educational management is concerned with the search for objective evaluation of universities and solutions to relevant problems of educational institution management. In our opinion, university ranking must be based on the evaluation of the number of graduates, employed matching the studied specialty, which is rarely applied. Prospects for further research in this area are as follows: revision of the system of criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the educational institution and the inclusion in the system of such an important indicator as statistics on the employment of graduates by profession, level of satisfaction of employers with the quality of training. In addition, it is advisable to study the opinions of

employers as experts evaluating the professional competence of graduates of a particular field of training. Methodological developments in these areas of research are required. Social partnership appears to be an important problem of educational management and the first step in the organization of efficient university activity. It is meant to restore the focus of music education institutions on results and values of education – the formation of the most important social, intellectual, and moral qualities and skills and preparation of specialists, able to perform productive activity for the good of the society and provide its future economic growth.

Ethical issue

Authors are aware of, and comply with, best practice in publication ethics specifically with regard to authorship (avoidance of guest authorship), dual submission, manipulation of figures, competing interests and compliance with policies on research ethics. Authors adhere to publication requirements that submitted work is original and has not been published elsewhere in any language.

Competing interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest that would prejudice the impartiality of this scientific work.

Authors' contribution

All authors of this study have a complete contribution for data collection, data analyses and manuscript writing.

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