Building up a competent profile and requirements for knowledge and skills to the folklore ensemble manager in Bulgaria

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The present paper is an attempt to identify managerial competences based on skills, knowledge and attitudes, tailored to the specifics of folk art in Bulgaria. This experience aims to be a guide to building up a profile for "Manager of a Folklore Ensemble" as a type of competence model in the field of folk art.

Keywords: folklore; ensemble; management.

Introduction

Based on an empirical study (interviews, observation, personal experience), we analyzed the way Bulgarian folklore ensembles function and where the "cracks" in their management can be found. These, so-called "cracks" make their main mission in the nation's cultural policy, linked to the identity of the nation difficult.

Prior to deepening the analytical activity, it is necessary to introduce some terminological explanations on the specific problems related to the building up a competence profile of the manager of a folklore ensemble as well as to the requirements to their knowledge and skills.

Terminology clarifications

Numerous definitions of the term "competence" can be found in the scientific literature, most of which define it as a grouping of knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow successful implementation of a series of work-related actions. Based on these and the current scientific sources, where it is stated that "competence is the ability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for successful performance of "critical job functions" or tasks in a particular work environment", adapted to the specifics of folk art and the position of a "Executive director/Chief artistic director" and following an empirical analysis, the term acquires the following meaning: acquired knowledge and skills in the field of music and dance art successfully applied in creative practice based on folklore.

These definitions include other basic concepts:

Knowledge – "The knowledge, understanding and expertise the person has, which have been acquired and/or

developed through experience and education. The knowledge required for the profession (theoretical and practical) is "a collection of conscious and steadily perceived, organized in the mind sets of data, information, notions, principles and facts related to the successful practice of the profession and doing the particular type of work activity".

Knowledge related to the specifics of folklore art is: knowledge about the Bulgarian ethnographic regions and their style characteristics.

Skills - The ability to successfully perform a particular task or activity. A skill (Stamatov, Minchev, 2003) is a developed psycho-behavioral system (experience, intellect, knowledge, abilities) to master a specific situation and achieve the desired objective. Skills can be classified as: general, special and inter-functional. In the work process, the inter-functional skills can be diagnosed by the following signs: 1. possesses and uses the acquired knowledge and experience in the activity; 2. anticipates the course of things and gets ahead of the development of events; 3. performs duties quickly and with ease; 4. achieves good results even under unfavorable conditions; 5. uses a variety of techniques even under normal circumstances.

The skills considered in the paper are singing, playing a musical instrument or dancing/performing skills, i.e. the ability to create something on the basis of folklore.

Capabilities - Persistently developed attributes of the personality that affect his/her performance. Internal potential for high achievements in a particular professional field or specific activity. High professional suitability, talents of the person to perform much better, unlike other people, certain types of activity. Capabilities are often associated with competences, but while capabilities can be inherited or acquired, competences are always developed through learning and experience. Signs by which capable employees

can be distinguished are: 1. The capability is displayed earlier in the individual development (school students, university students); 2. Appears as a spontaneous tendency; 3. Progress in training and work is much faster than others; 4. There is a striving for self-development and creativity without following patterns and imposing external stimuli; 5. The individual's achievements far exceed the standards; 6. The work is done with ease and with minimal effort; 7. The individual is delighted to do what he/she is doing and develops a sustainable motivation for the activity he/she experiences as a personal success.

Folklore arts skills are requirements to the professional performance – the person has to sing, play an instrument or dance professionally. They must have the ability to create art, in accordance with the laws of musical or dance drama.

These are part of the definitions offered by the field of study regarding the conceptual framework of this paper related to the development of the competence profile of the "Manager of a Folklore Ensemble". However, in order to determine the most suitable competences of the manager it is necessary to pay attention to the empirical study which includes interviews with executive directors and chief artistic directors of folklore ensembles in Bulgaria. The paper presents questions from a semi-standardized research interviews with the managers of folklore ensembles in Bulgaria and analysis of the received information.

The empirical study

"What is your educational background? b) Do you need any further qualifications or additional education? In what areas of your professional activity?". The results show what additional qualifications the current managers of folklore ensembles need. Most of them say that they need additional qualification "Specifically for the position of a manager or chief artistic director of an ensemble (...) I think that the first necessary additional qualification is either public administration or art management (...)" (Prof. Daniela Dzheneva). According to Georgi Andreev, "I would not only like to, but as far as I know I have to (...) have some kind of managerial qualification (...) Something like a Master's degree." The analysis of the answers to the question regarding the additional qualification points to a very important fact. Executive directors / Chief artistic directors note that contemporary conditions require not only art education but also management skills "This is the best option, yes. And it really is in the job description and I need it." (Natalia Kirilova). "It is important to have a degree in arts and an additional qualification". (Maria Kisyova) (...) we are not as good as managers and it is important to enrich ourselves with the latest trends and laws." (Stoyan Gospodinov)

"Which of these functions can be performed by another specialist on a full-time position in the ensemble?" (It is about the role of Executive director/Chief artistic director). The answers to this question set the guidelines for the skills that the Manager of the Folklore Ensemble should have. The two positions are differentiated. The chief artistic director is to "to do his/her creative things and have a manager who should be responsible for the finances." (Georgi Andreev) It is believed that they need specialized assistance in their work by saying that this specialist "(...) has to be a manager

and under the chief artistic director has to deal with the financial activities, such as selling the product and controlling revenues, distribution and advertising." (Prof. Daniela Dzheneva) Or to "... there should be a manager who works together with the Chief artistic director and they both should do their duties." (Stoyan Gospodinov). Others define the manager as "an administrator." (Lyubcho Vassilev) Prof. Peter Angelov gives his opinion on this matter by making a comparison between the period of socialist rule of a country and the contemporary conditions today and differentiates the two main trends in the activity of a folklore ensemble: "There were once ideal and political goals, and now there are two main activities and functions in the ensemble according to me. The first one is creative and the other one is commercial - the sale of the product. This business activity must be managed by a qualified person, that is, the manager. In order to sell something, you need to know it." The data obtained shows that it is not clear where the "Folk ensemble manager" can be hierarchically placed if we assume that he/she is a separate position in the organizational structure.

"What education should this specialist have?" The answers to this question point to the specifics of the expected educational and qualification characteristics of the position "Manager of Folklore Ensemble". It is confirmed that the manager, apart from having a degree in the field of music and dance art, is required to also have a qualification in management. According to Stoyan Gospodinov, it is obligatory to "(...) be connected with the creative activity of the ensemble, but must also have a degree in cultural management (...). It is not necessarily to have been a member of the ensemble but to be familiar with the specificity of the work in the ensemble." Qualification in management is defined as "This is the best (...) it is good to have a degree in Arts and an additional one in Economics, plus Management of Cultural Institutions, Management, etc. (...). A young person with a degree in Arts and Management of a Cultural Institute, what can be better than that." (Lyubcho Vassilev) Another question also arises - Can the manager be an executive director of a folklore ensemble? Prof. Daniela Dzheneva notes that "Until now, executive directors have always been artistic persons (...) can a manager be an executive director? In my opinion, it is necessary to be a graduate of an artistic specialty and with additional qualification, for a number of reasons (...) a graduate of public administration or management may be a manager, but then it is good to have a chief artistic director ... Laws are laws, he/she must be familiar with them. Finance, planning, organizing, legal, social, they must not have break them (...) A manager or an executive director cannot afford to do something outside the law.

Do other activities and a necessity for problems to be solved appear outside the job description of the chief artistic director in the process of work? The answers to this question define the guidelines for finishing the profile of the Folklore Ensemble Manager. The manager is the person who facilitates the work of the executive director or chief artistic director of a folklore ensemble, according to Prof. Daniela Dzheneva, "they take all the responsibility". This statement is confirmed by Mario Egov "the position of the chief artistic director, he is the person who does all the main work, he manages the ensemble and there is no way the creative and administrative work not to intertwine even if the two

positions are divided (...) the management part, fundraising, advertising, concert activity definitely requires another person to do it."

There are different views on the structure of management. What is the place of the manager in the hierarchy?: The chief artistic director must be above the manager; The chief artistic director should deal with the creative things only, and at the same time the art manager has to exercise some control over the creative activity because he/she deals with the financial, administrative and commercial matters of the ensemble; The creative person must be above all; The chief artistic director must have a decisive role; the executive director and chief artistic director - monocracy, and under him the other heads of units.

The quoted opinions on issues related to identifying the profile of "Manager of a Folklore Ensemble" lead to the following conclusions:

The old methods and approaches of management from the socialist period are still imposed due to the fact that the majority of the managers have graduated then and the trend seems alien to them. A misunderstanding of the notion management is evident and the perception that the manager threatens the established sole power of the Executive director and the chief artistic director.

Of course, the factor "money" is taken into account when structuring the management - fewer positions, less costs. Somewhere the requirements for managerial functions become limited to organizing concert activities. There is little competence in the field of administration and

management and fear to apply business practices in the performing arts. And as Peter Drucker notes "In order to survive, business requires a different structure, different principles, different behavior and a different kind of work. To sum up, it requires managers and management (...) Managing a business or public service institution is fundamentally different from managing personal property... (Drucker, 2003) In the context of Drucker's thought, the management of a folklore ensemble as a cultural institute differs from the management of a private chamber formation (musical, dance or mixed form).

The information retrieved from the interviews outlines the profile of the manager and also defines the exact competences and skills requirements. It is classified as a type of functional competence profile.

The author's argument to determine the type of classification as functional, is the definition of Peter Drucker's "management": "The word" management "has existed for centuries. But its application to a governing body of an institution is typical of America (...) Management is both the function and the people who do it. It means social position and authority, but also scientific discipline and field of study. (Drucker, 2003, p.8)"

The displayed Table 1 is adapted according to the Competence Model in which competences are dealt with in a common and functional model of the research project "Methodological Guidelines for Design, Appropriation, Testing and Verification of Sectoral and Corporate Competence Models and Maps for Assessment of Competences of the Workforce", Sofia - 2011.

Table 1

Competent Model of Executive director/Chief artistic director and Manager of a Folklore Ensemble

General competences					
Executive Director/Chief Artistic Director	Leadership	Flexibility	Team work	Analytical thought	Managerial competences that refer to the director
	Efficiency	Innovations	Communication	Problem solving	
Functional competences					
Manager of a folklore ensemble	Technical skills	Risk management	Change management	Legal knowledge	Functional competences related to manager's functional specialization features
	Knowledge of the market	Doing business		Project management	

Conclusion

After analyzing the functions of the folk ensembles' management, the following profile of the folk ensemble manager is outlined. The position "Manager of Folklore Ensemble" in the structure of the ensemble is subordinated to the Executive director/Chief artistic director and assists

him/her. He/she performs tasks related to: the administrative activity; raising additional money; selling a creative product (concert activity); advertising activity. The competent pursuit of the profession requires an art education and additional qualifications in the field of management (art management). It is classified as a type of functional competence profile.

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