

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES OF MUSICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS: PARENTS' PERCEPTION

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Abstract: The focus of this research is aimed at looking at the perceptions of parents of musically gifted students about their children's extracurricular activities and determining the differences between the parents' gender and their perception about their children's extracurricular activities. A total of 95 parents of musically gifted students participated. The results show that parents of musically gifted students are generally satisfied with how much their children are involved in extracurricular activities, while mothers are more satisfied with the level of involvement of their children in extracurricular activities at school. Mothers more positively evaluate the competence of teachers for the organization of extracurricular activities that they organize in the context of students' giftedness, and their opinions are more positive regarding the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize, which do not concern students' musical giftedness. There are no statistically significant differences between the gender of parents and their opinion about the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize in the context of giftedness.

Keywords: *extracurricular activities, parents, musically gifted students, elementary school, cooperation.*

Field: Social Sciences and Humanities

1. INTRODUCTION

Educational work, apart from teaching, includes other forms of organized work with students, one of which is extracurricular activities (Zakon o osnovnom obrazovanju i vaspitanju, 2025). „Due to the fact that extracurricular activities are an inseparable part of education, participation in these activities have been made compulsory in many countries in order to increase the quality in education“ (Acar & Gündüz, 2017: 902). In the Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Serbia until 2030 (Strategija razvoja obrazovanja i vaspitanja u Republici Srbiji do 2030. godine, 2021), the importance of extracurricular activities is recognized both in pre-university and university education, with a focus on providing modern teaching tools and didactic systems for their implementation, as well as developing a system for their evaluation. Extracurricular activities are the subject of numerous researches that confirm the importance of their implementation for the purpose of comprehensive student development (Mlinarević & Brust Nemet, 2012; Caput Jogunica & Barić, 2015; Muratović & Musić, 2017; Vidulin & Papak, 2018; Meadows, 2019; King, et al., 2020; Miletić et al., 2024). Also, „extracurricular activities are rather interdisciplinary and have a strong cognitive, educational and developmental potential“ (Androshchuk, et al., 2020: 62). In order to improve the educational role of the school, to respect the individual interests of the students and to spend their free time purposefully, the school is obliged to implement extracurricular activities in various fields (science, technology, culture, art, media and sports), both for elementary school students and for students of the elementary music school (Zakon o osnovnom obrazovanju i vaspitanju, 2025). Although they may be different, they form an important part of every school and represent an important experience for developing the potential of each student. However, research shows that „in modern curricula in numerous educational systems, the most attention is given to the mother tongue and mathematics, because those areas are the focus of national tests. This reduces the number of classes and content from other fields, including natural sciences“ (Maksimović, 2024: 118). Also, „although teachers are most advocating for giving special attention to gifted children at school, gifted children, and even more so their parents, are very critical of what the school provides them“ (Maksić, 2012: 379). As the organization and realization of extracurricular activities of the school is important, as well as the relationship and involvement of parents, we wanted to examine the opinions of parents about the extracurricular activities of their musically gifted children.

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2. METHODOLOGY

With our research, we want to look at the perception of the parents of musically gifted students about their children's extracurricular activities and to determine the differences between the parents' gender and the perception of the children's extracurricular activities. The research tasks are: to survey the parents of musically gifted students as to how satisfied they are with their children's involvement in the school's extracurricular activities; to survey the parents of musically gifted students to what extent, in their opinion, teachers are competent in the organization of extracurricular activities that they organize in the context of the giftedness of students; to question the parents of musically gifted students about the variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional associates that do not concern the musical giftedness of students; examine which activities parents would like to be involved in more often; to survey the parents of musically gifted students about the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize in the context of the student's giftedness; to determine whether there are statistically significant differences between the gender of the parents of musically gifted students and the perception of their children's extracurricular activities. The sample consisted of parents of musically gifted students. This research is part of a wider research that examined the school aspect of parents of musically gifted students. A total of 95 parents of musically gifted students participated, 35.8% fathers and 64.2% mothers. We used a descriptive method and technique of surveying and scaling. Using tangential literature from the researched area, we created an instrument. We processed the obtained data in the SPSS package.

3. RESULTS

The results show that parents of musically gifted students are generally satisfied with how much their children are involved in extracurricular activities at school ($M=4.19$; $SD=0.689$), but there is certainly room for improvement in this important aspect.

Mothers are more satisfied with the degree of involvement of their musically gifted children in school extracurricular activities ($t=-3.801$; $df=93$; $p<0.05$), unlike fathers (Table 1).

Table 1. Difference between gender and answers of parents of musically gifted students on how satisfied they are with their children's involvement in school extracurricular activities

Satisfaction of parents of musically gifted students with their children's involvement in school extracurricular activities	Gender of parents	N	M	SD	t	df	p
	Male	34	3.85	.702			
	Female	61	4.38	.610	-3.801	93	0.000

Source: Authors

We wanted to examine the parents of musically gifted students to what extent, in their opinion, teachers are competent in organizing the extracurricular activities they organize in the context of the student's giftedness. The obtained results show that parents' answers are mostly positively oriented towards the competence of teachers for the organization of extracurricular activities that they organize in the context of students' giftedness ($M=4.41$; $SD=0.692$).

Mothers more positively evaluate the competence of teachers for the organization of extracurricular activities that they organize in the context of giftedness of students ($t=-3.232$; $df=93$; $p<0.05$), in contrast to fathers (Table 2).

Table 2. Difference between gender and parents' answers about teachers' competences for the organization of extracurricular activities that they organize in the context of student giftedness

Opinions of parents of musically gifted students regarding the extent to which teachers are competent in organizing the extracurricular activities they organize in the context of the student's giftedness	Gender of parents	N	M	SD	t	df	p
	Male	34	4.12	.769			
	Female	61	4.57	.590	-3.232	93	0.002

Source: Authors

We surveyed the parents of musically gifted students about the variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional associates that are not related to the students' musical giftedness. The results show that parents' opinions are not sufficiently positively oriented towards the variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional associates that are not related to the students' musical giftedness (M=3.73; SD=0.831).

Mothers' opinions are more positive regarding the variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional associates that do not concern the students' musical giftedness (t= -3.767; df=93; p<0.05), in contrast to fathers (Table 3).

Table 3. Difference between gender and parents' answers about the variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional assistants that do not concern the students' musical giftedness

The variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional associates that are not related to students' musical giftedness	Gender of parents	N	M	SD	t	df	p
	Male	34	3.32	.684			
	Female	61	3.95	.825	-3.767	93	0.000

Source: Authors

When asked which activities they would like to be included more often in the context of extracurricular activities, the largest number of parents answered that they would like to organize more activities such as different contents of workshops and games for children, as well as greater opportunities for extracurricular activities in which parents could get involved.

Questioning the parents of musically gifted students about the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize in the context of the student's giftedness was another research task. The obtained results show that parents' opinions are not sufficiently positively oriented about the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize in the context of student giftedness (M=3.85; SD=0.838).

Our results show that there are no statistically significant differences between parents' gender and their opinion on the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize in the context of student giftedness (Table 4).

Table 4. Difference between gender and parents' answers about the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize in the context of student giftedness

The variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional associates in the context of student giftedness	Gender of parents	N	M	SD	t	df	p
	Male	34	3.65	.884			
	Female	61	3.97	.795	-1.807	93	0.074

Source: Authors

4. DISCUSSION

Starting from the fact that „the positive effects that extracurricular activities have on students are behavior, better grades, school completion, positive aspects to become successful adults, and a social aspect” (Massoni, 2011: 84), in this part of the paper, we will present a discussion of the results on the perception of the parents of musically gifted students about their children’s extracurricular activities and the differences between the parents’ gender and the perception of their children’s extracurricular activities. Parents of musically gifted students are generally satisfied with their children’s involvement in school extracurricular activities. Mothers are more satisfied with the level of their children’s involvement in school extracurricular activities, unlike fathers. Parents’ responses are mostly positively oriented towards the competence of teachers for the organization of extracurricular activities that they organize in the context of the giftedness of students. Mothers more positively evaluate the competence of teachers for the organization of extracurricular activities that they organize in the context of giftedness of students. For example, the results of the research, the sample of which included boarding school teachers, they answer that during their education they acquired certain knowledge and skills about the organization of free time, but that they lack certain skills for the implementation of certain sections (Milanović, 2024a). Also, the results of this research show that the largest number of boarding school teachers believe that faculties that educate pedagogical workers, if they don’t have them, should introduce a subject that concerns the aspect of leisure time pedagogy (Milanović, 2024a). Parents’ opinions are not sufficiently positively oriented towards the variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional associates that do not concern the students’ musical giftedness, while mothers’ opinions are more positive regarding the variety of extracurricular activities organized by teachers and professional associates that do not concern the students’ musical giftedness. „Extracurricular activities at school are the space where it is easiest to reach students, their needs, desires and aspirations” (Martinčević, 2010: 22), whereby teachers and professional associates should pay more attention to these activities in pedagogical work with gifted students and devote themselves to the aspect of diversity. When asked which activities they would like to be included more often in the context of extracurricular activities, the answers of parents of musically gifted students are that they would like to see more activities organized, such as workshops, games for children, as well as greater opportunities for extracurricular activities in which parents could get involved. In this context, the results of the research show that both teachers and parents of elementary school students perceive the importance and pedagogical value of the play (Milanović, 2024b). The results of the research show different creative workshops that the students liked and in which they participate with the educators, also, the students are very satisfied with the creative workshops that they implement with the educators in the boarding school (Milanović & Mijajlović, 2024). The results of the research that examined the opinions of musically gifted students, teachers and educators about STEM activities implemented by future educators and teachers, show extremely positive opinions and impressions of musically gifted students, educators and teachers (Miletić et al., 2024). The opinion of parents is not sufficiently positively oriented about the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize in the context of the giftedness of students. „The results demonstrated that, for teacher mentors, it is more important to encourage musically gifted students to attend additional curricular and extracurricular activities” (Svalina et al., 2021: 143). Our results show that there are no statistically significant differences between parents’ gender and their opinion about the variety of extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize in the context of student giftedness.

5. CONCLUSION

We tried to present the perception of parents of musically gifted students about their children’s extracurricular activities and to determine the differences between parents’ gender and the perception of their children’s extracurricular activities. Considering that „extracurricular activities are said to be integrative in nature because they tie together many areas of knowledge and experience” (Lunenburg, 2010: 3), it is necessary to nurture them in the process of upbringing and education and in musically gifted students. Based on the findings of the parents of musically gifted students, the extracurricular activities that teachers and professional associates organize should be improved, more diverse and take a more honored place in the pedagogical work with musically gifted students. Future research could focus on the application of an experimental program that would examine the effects of applying certain extracurricular activities on the success of musically gifted students, but also on their communication skills, critical thinking and creativity.

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