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New training master's program in "Art Therapy" at Academy of Music, Dance and Visual Arts "Prof. Asen Diamanidev" Plovdiv, Bulgaria

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Abstract

This article reflects a study related to the master's programs in "Art Therapy" in Bulgarian universities and formulates the need for training personnel in this field. An analysis of the existing master's programs was made, and a new interdisciplinary master's program "Art Therapy" was presented at the Academy of Music, Dance and Visual Arts "Prof. Asen Diamanidev" - Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

Keywords: Art therapy, education, master program

Introduction

Health is the highest asset and a major part of human well-being. The approaches to its upgrading must be based on evidence obtained through modern scientific methods. At present, none of the Bulgarian universities have scientifically justified art therapy, there are no scientific research projects in this field as well as doctoral programs. The interdisciplinary nature of the problem requires joint efforts of highly qualified researchers and specialists in the arts and medicine field - university researchers and lecturers. Health is a basic human need and lies at the base of the pyramid of needs. It is a hierarchical system of human needs made up by the American psychologist Abraham Maslow.

The subject has deep historical roots and is now a major interest for researchers in Bulgaria, Europe and the United States, Japan, in practice in all countries. In Italy, a number of scientists: Quadri E, Farè C, Palmero E, Campioni G, Chessa M, Callus E, have worked on art therapy for patients with congenital heart disease: a method of psychological intervention at the IRCCS Policlinico San Donato Milanese Hospital. Hospitalized children and adolescents often face psychosocial difficulties, and the mental health of their parents affects their well-being. Especially in hospital conditions, there is a marked need for care, besides the standard medication used. It is therefore necessary to pay attention to the psychological aspects besides the medical ones. Art therapy can be an answer to this need. For example, literature has outlined its efficacy in hospitals, also because of the increased interest of children and adolescents in creativity.

The objectives of this new master's program are:

1. Increasing the qualification of the scientific staff by creating a project for accreditation of a doctor's program in art therapy.
2. Stimulating the career development of young researchers - PhD students and post-doctoral students, students, and masters.

Method

The purpose of this publication is to reveal new opportunities for the professional development of students from the fields of art, pedagogy, psychology, and medicine by creating a new master's program "Art Therapy" at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" in the city of Plovdiv. (AMDFA - Plovdiv)

The object of the study is the existing master's programs in "Art Therapy" in Universities in Bulgaria and specifying the possibilities and specifics for creating a new master's program "Art Therapy" in AMDFA - Plovdiv. On this basis, the idea of implementing a new master's program was developed, which would unite specialists from different scientific fields and directions for the preparation of curricula in the relevant disciplines, and as a result, to have a new master's program developed with an interdisciplinary character, which would form a new direction in Art therapy in Bulgaria.

Findings and discussion

According to the modern definition, health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Among political leaders, legislators and governing bodies there is a growing interest in defining people's well-being. In different countries, there are structures aimed at tracking health and well-being indicators. For example, this government commitment in England is most clearly seen in the work of the Coalition for Measuring National Wellbeing (2010) which led to the National Wellbeing Program (2013) at the Office for National Statistics "Start measuring our progress as a country, not just by how our economy is growing, but by how our lives are improving; not just by our standard of living, but by our quality of life".

The characteristics of well-being are the following: a good or satisfactory state of existence; a state of happiness, health, or prosperity.

Well-being is a positive outcome that is meaningful to people and too many sectors of society. It shows the extent to which people perceive that their lives are going well. Scientific research in this area is very important for the development of health and public policies.

The topic related to the treatment of people through art provokes the research interest of people and scientists from all over the world. Teodor Popov in his book "Therapy and prevention through art" draws attention to the leading figures of art therapy worldwide. Two trends in art therapy are developing almost simultaneously - in the USA and in Europe.

Margaret Naumburg, who some researchers consider the founder of art therapy in the United States. She was a psychologist and later specialized in psychoanalysis and in her practice in the 1940s and 1950s she began to use drawing techniques and used the unconscious process of drawing as a tool for exploring experiences.

Edith Kramer has different ideas about the essence of art therapy and about the factors of healing effect related to it. According to her, artistic means enrich the subjective experience. Thanks to this ability, man can choose, vary, and reproduce at will different kinds of experience. In the creative process, the internal conflicts of the personality are experienced and resolved.

Adrian Hill, who is an artist, was the first to use the term in Europe. He is the author of several works related to art therapy and is the first scientist to consider art as a therapeutic and educational tool. Hill's main idea is that through pictorial activity the individual can escape from the painful experience.

Irena Champernowne directs her activity in the search for new forms of art therapy activity with psychiatric patients. It combines analytical procedures with the creation of conditions for the independent activities of patients.

Alexander Kopytin examined the mechanisms for non-verbal communication and the various forms of creative self-expression, which allow higher efficiency of art therapy work (Popov, 13-15).

Diane Waller proposes to use a process model of the profession, according to which the presence of different approaches, positions and concepts is beneficial for the evolution of art therapy as a whole. According to Waller, this model allows for the formation of new schools, methods, and segments. (Waller, 142)

Based on the theories related to art therapy, the impact it has on people's health and well-being, as well as people's need for creative expressions to solve problems, we prepare a study of the experience and the existing current master's program in Bulgaria.

Table 1. Current master's program in Bulgaria

	University	Master program	Description
1.	National Art Academy - Sofia	Art therapy	The Master's program offers a specialized way of using art and the creative process as a way of communication, development and self-expression. This master's program draws on traditions in fine art and contemporary approaches to psychological development and the nature of creativity.
2.	University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. St. Cyril and Methodius"	Art therapy	The master's program focuses on the use of the means of expression of the visual arts in the field of social and therapeutic work. Specialized training in using the means of expression of the visual arts.
3.	New Bulgarian University - Sofia	Art therapy in speech therapy practice	The master's program is specified in the field of music therapy, as a specific form of psychotherapy. The impact of music, emotional and mental growth of the personality, its relaxing, cathartic, corrective and creative effects of impact and their use in psychotherapy and speech therapy are the basis of the course.
4.	New Bulgarian University - Sofia	Art and art therapy	The Master's program "Art and Art Therapy" introduces the history of visual arts as expressive and psychotherapeutic practices from ancient times. It introduces the use of fine art as a therapeutic tool in expressive art therapy practices.
5.		Music Therapy	The training of specialists who graduated from "Music Therapy" includes a wide

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Diamandiev" - Plovdiv

range of scientific-theoretical and applied
knowledge in various fields:
In the field of musical art – knowledge of
musical literature and its application in
clinical music therapy practice;
knowledge of musical instruments and
musical improvisation from the point of
view of their application in the
therapeutic process;
In the field of psychology and medicine -
basic knowledge of developmental
psychology, differential psychology;
music psychology with an emphasis on
the peculiarities of the perception of
music and its impact on the personality;
pathopsychology;
In the field of psychotherapy and art
therapy - knowledge of the main
approaches in psychotherapy; about the
essence and varieties of art therapy and
about different art therapy techniques

Source: Adapted by Vesela Kazashka

During the social isolation in 2020 caused by COVID-19, we conducted a survey related to the desire for self-expression through creativity. The survey data were reported at the International Scientific Conference "Evolution against revolution or for the models of development" in Vesela Kazashka's report "The Internal Horizons and Social Isolation. Therapeutic Practices Based on Creative Attitudes" (Kazashka, 2020).

Respondents indicated various creative processes that were important to them and found satisfaction in them. Reading books, cooking, fine art, playing music, scientific research are among the respondents' preferred creative activities in COVID-19. In conclusion, in the context of a pilot study of Kazashka, conclusions were made related to the opening of a new master's specialty in "Art Therapy", namely:

1. Interdisciplinary specialists are needed to train and work in the field of art therapy.
2. It would be useful for art universities to offer training in hybrid master's programs in art therapy, which could find realization in the labour market.

These results, the currently offered master's programs, the desire of colleagues to work in the field of art therapy, the desire of students to continue their education as master's program "Art therapists" gave the motivation to create the new master's program "Art therapy" at AMDFA "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv.

Conclusion

The main goal of the educational program "Art Therapy" is to prepare qualified specialists in the field of art therapy who are able to use the means of expression of music, dance and visual arts in the sphere of social and therapeutic activity. Students studying in the master's program "Art Therapy" will receive in-depth theoretical and practical training in the field.

The new interdisciplinary master's program is best suited to the field 8.1 Theory of Arts from higher education field 8, Arts in Department of Theory of Arts.

The Master's program "Art Therapy" focuses on the application of therapeutic practices related to music, dance and fine arts, and it is the first master's program focused on all three types of art. There is another master's program at the Academy that is specifically aimed at music therapy and is in the relevant professional field. This is the first such master's program in Bulgaria.

This "Art Therapy" program was developed by leading teachers from professional field 8.1 Art Theory and teachers from other professional fields in arts, psychology, medicine are also included. The study programs are developed in accordance with the requirements for a balance between theoretical and practical disciplines and include an annotation, teaching methodology, topics and method of assessment and compulsory literature. We have accommodated the requirement for more complete and specific annotations.

Our study plans and curricula are made according to an academic standard developed and approved by AMDFA "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv and are tailored to the specifics of teaching in the field of arts.

The greater out-of-classroom employment is due to the increased need for self-training, and this logic was followed in the development of the curricula

Lectures and exercises are interconnected and balanced. The theoretical part is the basis on which the practical part is built.

Theoretical disciplines are based on a larger number of lectures, practical disciplines have a preponderance of exercises.

Contracts have been concluded with Art Centers, psychological offices, where specialized art therapy practices can be conducted with groups.

We are planning to conclude agreements with medical clinics and hospitals, in which students will have a certain place and time to eat art therapy activities under the supervision and guidance of the specialist teacher.

Graduates of the master's program "Art Therapy" are highly trained specialists who can carry out consulting activities related to the use of art therapy in the field of social-preventive activities, organize and carry out art therapy activities for various medical, socio-pedagogical practices related to work with children, adults, supporting families, consulting work with teachers, preventive or outpatient practices with adults in risk situations, etc. Successfully graduated masters in the specialty "Art Therapy" can work in day care centers for children and adults with disabilities, centers for resocialization and social integration of people with disabilities, centers for personal and social support of children and adults, institutions for the upbringing and education of children at risk, psychiatric clinics, sheltered housing, family-type accommodation centers, to organize an independent art therapy activity.

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