

Implementation of education in sport and outdoor activities within the project "The Award goes to Universities" at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica

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ABSTRACT

Implementation of education in sport and outdoor activities within the project „The Award goes to Universities“ at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica.

The article focuses on application of the „The Award goes to Universities“ project at Matej Bel University. We introduce successful educational programme „The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award“ (DofE) and its future implementation into university curriculum which aim is to create new procedures and methodologies for education of future professionals of the DofE programme. Key parts of the project are spheres like sport and adventurous expedition which focus on skills’ development, independence and support of healthy lifestyle. The aim category is young population between 14-24 years who have a chance to improve their skills and characters for real life, to fulfil their potentiality and help them to be successful in the life. The benefit of the project should be also the guide book for university lectors, study materials for university students, scientific results of programme’s benefits and education of professionals in particular sphere.

KEY WORDS:

Adventurous expedition, educational programme, sport activity, The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award

SOUHRN

Implementácia vzdelávania v športe a outdoorových aktivitách v rámci projektu „The Award goes to Universities“ na Univerzite Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici.

Príspevok sa venuje problematike aplikácií projektu „The Award goes to Universities“ na Univerzite Mateja Bela. Predstavujeme úspešný vzdelávací program „Medzinárodná cena vojvodu z Edinburghu“ (DofE) a jeho budúcu implementáciu do univerzitného kurikula za cieľom tvorby nových postupov a metódik pri vzdelávaní budúcich odborníkov v rámci uvedeného programu DofE. Kľúčovou súčasťou projektu sú aj oblasti šport a dobrodružná expedícia so zameraním na rozvoj zručností, samostatnosti a podpory zdravého životného štýlu. Cielovou kategóriou sú pre nás mladí ľudia vo veku 14 až 24 rokov, ktorým projekt DofE dáva šancu rozvinúť svoje schopnosti a charakterové vlastnosti pre reálny život, naplniť svoj potenciál a pomôcť im uspieť v živote. Prínosom projektu má byť aj príručka pre vysokoškolských lektorov, študijné materiály pre študentov vysokých škôl, vedecké výstupy z overovania prínosov programu a vzdelávanie odborníkov v príslušnej oblasti.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA:

Medzinárodná cena vojvodu z Edinburghu, vzdelávací program, športová aktivita, dobrodružná expedícia

INTRODUCTION

Many national educational programmes were realized last five years in Slovak republic, for example: Physical education and rising of children's interest for physical and sport activities I. and II., Physical education at primary school and rising of children's interest in physical and sport activities, Improvement of qualification of physical education teachers. The aim of these projects was to rise interest of the young in sport and physical education and to strengthen teachers' knowledge and competences. Their long-term sustainability and effectiveness were often controversial and influenced by change of political spectrum. Our project is designed and realized by another way, however, it has some thoughts and aims in common with previous projects. The proved programme "The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award" (DofE) has arrived into Slovak republic and it focuses on personal development of young people between 14-24 years in chosen sections. Sport and adventurous outdoor expeditions fall into chosen sections. This programme comes from "below" thanks to avid people and mentors despite of mentioned. Schools as centres of education at all degrees and they can become part of the programme together with natural centres thanks to teachers. The professional community will be definitely interested in created structure and methodology of two key aim spheres which are sport activity and adventurous expedition. Despite of this informal access, teachers who are working in the programme together with schools by the system of local centres, play very important role by the system of local centres. Our aim is to implement "DofE" into the university educational system because it has not been realized despite of its existence. The article is an addition of the project KEGA 044UMB-4/2016 „Outdoor activities, sports and specification of sojourn in nature“(text book for schools and public) which is interested in new trends of outdoor activities of the young.

Table 1 Basic statistical information about the project.

Annual statistics of DofE
The programme is currently delivered in more than 140 countries and territories worldwide .
Millions of young people have participated and achieved Awards from its foundation.
In 2014, participation increased to almost 1, 135,000 young people taking part around the world in The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award.

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF DOFE

PROGRAMME

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (DofE) is a complex developed programme which gives chance to young people (age from 14 to 24) to improve their complex skills and characters for real life, fulfil their potential and to be successful in life. The programme is realized in more than 140 countries over the world. In another word, the DofE is the world's leading young achievement award, giving millions of 14 to 24-year-olds the opportunity to be the very best they can be or it can be understood following way: to promote lifelong improvement for all young people by encouraging personal development and achievement. The programme is built on the thought that each young human being has a potential to be successful and developed by helpful educational form. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award was found and established in 1956 by duke of Edinburg Philip (husband of Elisabeth II.) together with German educator and big propagator of adventure and experience pedagogy – Kurt Hanh and also with the leader of the first expedition on Everest's peak – Lord Hunt. The primary aim of the programme was to provide opportunity to British boys to improve themselves and be interested in something purposeful and meaningful mainly in the period between the end of compulsory education and joining the army because those boys lost their fathers in the World War II. The programme was opened also for girls after two years of its establishment and it was broaden around the world. The DofE programme changed some criteria and increased age limit on 24 years in 1980 and this form is known up to nowadays. (Guide book for leaders of "The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award" programme, 2015). Basic statistical information about the project are summarized in table 1.

1205 new participants are joining into the programme every day.

On the average of **548 participants finished** the programme every day.

In 2011, participants volunteered in development of local communities around the world in length of **3,9 million hours**.

More than 200,000 volunteers support young people around the world to achieve their Award.

Slovak National Office gained accredited licence 30.3.2016. Since April 2016 it has broadened its programme to particular section and it has created conditions for functioning of basic programme.

AIM

Young people lose their motivation and they stagnate because of the absence of opportunities for the young together with lack of society appreciation. That is why we are sure that increasing motivation and expectations together with balanced education and social appreciation can improve and enhance lives of the young in Slovak republic. Our aim is to implement the DofE programme into the university education system which has not been realized yet. Creation of the methodology, steps and system within the university education can open possibilities for development and research in DofE programme.

METHODOLOGY

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DOFE PROGRAMME

Young people stated individual aims and challenges in particular activities in DofE programme. They enhance their responsibility and persistence, recognize and surpass themselves, gain new skills which are useful for academic and working life on the way to achieve and fulfil stated aims. Thanks to the joining of the young into the programme, they become a part of international community. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is established on four key spheres into which the young are joined: talent's development, voluntariness, sport and adventurous expedition. All spheres (timescales or sections) have three levels of difficulty, from bronze to the gold. When the young person achieves particular level he/she is immediately awarded and motivated to the next development. The main condition to be joined into the programme is to be 14-24 years old. Two main conditions are needed: join into chosen activities in all 4 spheres minimally one hour a week and fulfil individual aims for each programme's sphere. Participants do not compete

with each other but each one has to surpass oneself. (Guide book for leaders of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award programme, 2015)

SECTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUNG IN DOFE PROGRAMME

Development of the talent. Each person has a talent. Each participant decides what she/he wants to improve or she/he focuses into the sphere which is the most interested. There are many possibilities – play on the musical instrument, languages, ceramics (pottery), run a business, IT, natural sciences or the development of technical skills.

Sport activity, physical recreation. Sport leads to health and comfort. The Physical Recreation section of the Award encourages young people to participate in sport and other physical recreation for the improvement of health and fitness. This Section specifically aims to improve the performance, health, team skills, self-esteem and confidence of participants. Young people can choose team or individual sport. The aim is to encourage healthy behaviours and be responsible to the health.

Voluntariness. All life is about giving and getting something. Voluntariness is the way how we can give and get simultaneously. Participants get to know new people, they learn empathy, tolerance and patience. They learn to be more responsible and useful for the society.

Adventurous expedition. The Adventurous Journey section encourages a sense of adventure and discovery whilst undertaking a team journey or expedition. As part of a small team, participants plan, train for and undertake a journey with a purpose in an unfamiliar environment. The journey can be an exploration or an expedition but must be a challenge. The aim of this Section is to provide participants with the opportunity to learn more about the wider environment (homeland), as well as to develop their self-confidence, team work (in particular outdoor activities) and health. Participants are taken out of their comfort zone but kept within a safe and secure setting, achieved through suitable

training and supervision. (Guide book for leaders of “The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award” programme, 2015).

LEVELS IN DofE PROGRAMME

The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award programme should be a real challenge for the young and that is why it is inevitable and important to state aims for each person individually. If the aim is very easy for participant he will not be as satisfied as he expected. On the other hand, very difficult challenges should be demotivated. That is why the programme stated three levels with different difficulty – bronze, silver and gold. You can start with the level which is easy (the bronze) but you can start with silver or gold one.

Bronze level- for those aged 14+ years. Participants are joined into 4 sections (timescales, spheres): volunteering section (lasts 3 months), physical section (lasts 3 months), skill section (personal development- lasts 3 months), and expedition section (lasts 2 days/1 night). Participant chooses one section which will represent the most difficult aim. This section will last 3 months longer than the others. 6 months are needed to achieve and gain the bronze level of The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award.

Silver level - for those over 15 years old. Participants are joined into 4 sections (timescales, spheres): volunteering section (lasts 6 months), physical section (lasts 6 months), skill section (personal development- lasts 6 months), and expedition section (lasts 3 days/2 nights). If participant didn’t do Bronze, he/she must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or the longer of the Physical or Skills sections. 6 months (minimally) are needed to achieve and gain the Silver level of The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award if the participant did the Bronze and minimally 12 months for those who did not do Bronze and starts immediately with the Silver one.

Gold level - for those aged 16+ years. Participants are joined into 5 sections (timescales, spheres): volunteering section (lasts 12 months), physical section (lasts 12 months), skill section (personal development- lasts 12 months), expedition section (lasts 4 days/ 3nights) and residential section (undertake a shared activity in a residential setting away from home for 5 days and 4 nights). If participant didn’t do Silver, he/she must undertake a further 6 months in either the Volunteering or longer of the Physical or Skills sections which will be represented by more difficult aim. 12 months (mini-

mally) are needed to achieve and gain the Gold level of The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award if the participant did the Silver level and minimally 18 months for those who did not do Silver and starts immediately with the Gold one.

(Guide book for leaders of “The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award” programme, 2015)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME INTO UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

As it was mentioned in the beginning of the article, our aim is to implement the DofE programme into the university environment and curriculum. It is not only about the university’s joining as the local centre what is common in the world. University students can become not only participants of the programme but they can educate and become leaders and supervisors of the expeditions thanks to the programme’s methodology.

Education of future leaders of DofE programme within the university education require another organization, methodology and procedures as in the present informal concept of the programme’s existence. The creation of new methods and procedures is necessary to acquaint applicants with important and needed knowledge and skills. They are necessary in all key spheres and sections including sport and adventurous expedition. Supervisors have to be able to think about safety risks and have to know participants’ skills over a period of the programme.

Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica joined into the DofE programme through two ways. As the local centre and as the realizer (implementer) of the project „The Award goes to Universities“. The university team consists of professionals and teachers of various orientation gained a grant for „The Award goes to Universities“ project from The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Foundation thanks to the cooperation with national company. Its aim is to create conditions and methodology for sustainable development and realization of DofE in the Slovak university environment. Benefit should be also a guide for university instructors as well as study materials for university students. Research monitoring of DofE benefits will be a part of the project addressed to participants and leaders. This method can be inspiring for other universities not only in Slovakia but also in foreign countries. From the historical point of view, Matej Bel University has highly-developed system particular key spheres which are noticed in DofE. For example, education and educational methodological procedures in

voluntariness (Broznanová Gregorová et al. 2014). It is registered in whole-university subject Service learning which works and functions thanks to whole-university team.

CONCLUSION

Confirmed educational DofE programme with its history and philosophy focused on personal development of the young through informal education and it is beneficial for all society. Its basic success indicator is the statistics which is stated below in Table 1. Lack of knowledge, skills, attitude and lack quality of educational opportunities are the biggest barriers of the growth of the Slovak young people. Beneficial and important thing for our sporting community and formation of the personality of the young person is to use the means of sport and adventurous expedition in natural environment.

In the end of the article, we can summarize and define key benefits of the programme for the young:

- encourage the development of personal interests and practical and social skills thanks to which they find employment,
- ability to learn from own skills and experience,
- opportunity to gain something positive and constructive during the free time,
- chance to fulfil dreams, face to the challenge and surpass oneself,
- increase of self-confidence and self-belief,
- encourage independence and responsibility for myself and others,
- able to work in team,
- able to plan effectively and able to decide, be responsible and reliable,
- creation of active attitude to world around,
- finding new interests, friends and opportunities,
- social appreciation of made effort in the form of worldwide accepted certificate and its ceremonial sell

Results of DofE researches have shown that the participation in the programme improve compulsory education and success of the young, it develops lifelong interest for education, increase their employment, civil activity and tolerance to difference and it plays important role in prevention of asocial and criminal behaviour.

Denoted programme benefits can be tangible also for joined mentors and organization in Slovakia:

- opportunity to support personal skills thanks to worldwide confirmed programme with quantifiable results and international prestige,
- effective instrument for individual work with the young between 14-24 years,
- connection with prestige international sign – make it visible on Slovak web of the programme, status of local programme centre confirmed by prestige certificate,
- opportunity to use several activities in the programme which is in particular form led by organization or school,
- offer to young people educational aims which proceed from their own interests and on which they participate on,
- opportunity to organize free time of the young productively and support their personal and social responsibility
- chance to share own result satisfaction with the others,
- opportunity to improve organizational and professional skills thanks to the experience,
- possibility to create a group of active teachers/volunteers participating on organization and following connection with similar “thinking” community which is joined in DofE in Slovak republic or abroad,
- possibility to improve cooperation with other organizations and schools,
- opportunity to participate on international projects of the programme,

University environment provides lots of future professionals into posts of programme leaders and supervisors of expeditions thanks to the variety of study fields. Alongside, it provides practice and demonstrability of achieved and gained skills thanks to university education. These personal competences and skills are foundation of development in sport sphere. Sport movement and its development is built on volunteering, natural leaders, mentors and personalities. DofE aims are very similar with athlete’s personality what is one of a few positive idols for Slovak children and teenagers in the present.

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