



DANCE ATTITUDE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FEMALE AND MALE STUDENTS

JADRANKA VLAŠIĆ¹, GORAN OREB¹, DARKO KATOVIĆ¹

ABSTRACT

Dance is often stereotypically categorized as "women's" sports' activity and as such, dance is not a favorite sports' activity among men. In regards to various transformational, educational and nurturing benefits that dance enables, the dance attitude of students of the Faculty of Kinesiology was assessed. Questionnaire showed positive, although different dance attitudes among genders. Dance course had greater influence in attitude change on male students. Positive dance attitude is a good prerequisite for dance activities' engagement, especially that of male individuals.

Key words: female and male students, dance, attitudes.

Introduction

Dance is a conventional aesthetic activity that many authors consider to be a combination of sports and art (M. Zagorc, 2000, S. Bijelić, 2006). As a kinesiological operator, dance is efficient from the aspect of transformational, educational and nurturing effects (G. Oreb, 1992; X.X. Li & Y. Yoa, 2005). Traditional beliefs and prejudices (D. Brennan, 1996;

M. Björling, 2007) towards dance are causing minimal dance application in physical education classes and also minimal dance selection as a sports or recreational activity, especially considering male individuals.

Stereotypical "men's" and "women's" sports (Oglesby and Hill, 1993, according to K. Bosnar, H. Sertić, F. Prot, 1999) have following characteristics:

<i>Traditional "men's" sport</i>	<i>"Women's" sport</i>
Specialized, intensive	In balance with other life aspects, diffuse energy is being invested
Exclusive, elite	"for every girl"
Directed towards profit/win, spectacular for audience	Didactical, serves to development, private
Serious, rules' limited	Natural, spontaneous, fun
Risky, adventurous	Safe, health-friendly
Aggressive, directed on dominance over the opponent	Friendly, cooperative
Coaches and staff are males	Coaches and staff are females

According to description above, dance belongs to the category of "stereotypical" women's sports and that is one of the reasons for decreased application of dance contents into the physical education classes and for decreased men's dance involvement. Stereotypes slow down sports development, and dance as well; therefore youth and young people need to be raised unfettered by gender limitations. In order to

accomplish that goal, PE classes are ideal tool where PE teachers, as students' role models, can influence on positive attitudes formation towards all sports in both female and male students.

Attitude is being defined as an inherited, relatively permanent and stable organization of emotions, valorizations and reactions towards certain object (B. Petz, 1992).

Faculty of Kinesiology University of Zagreb, CROATIA

Email: jadranka.vlasic@kif.hr

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Attitude is permanent valorization of people, objects and ideas (G. Aranson, T.D. Wilson, R.M. Akart, 2005). All attitudes have emotional, cognitive and behavioral component and can be more based upon one over the other component. Once formed attitudes can hardly be altered as long as there is a functional and motivational basis upon which attitude formation was established on. However, there are ways or methods that can be used to change the attitude, one of them being persuasion. Persuasion consists of messages created with the goal of inducing changes in attitudes and behaviors of an individual receiving those messages. Important roles in persuasion have individuals who persuade, messages themselves, messaging tools and audience (according to M. Zvonarević, 1981). Attitudes define behavior; an individual behaves in accordance to his behavior, but also changes attitudes with behaviors. This can, among others, depend on the specific situation an individual is in. Individual's behavior imposed by situational factors that is not in accordance with his own attitudes may influence on the alteration of the previous attitude. This supports the fact that application of dance structures in PE classes and experiencing pleasant emotions that dance enables is beneficial to eventual negative dance attitude change in students.

Positive attitude towards certain activity still does not imply that an individual will engage in that activity. When it comes to an activity such as sports, it is to be assumed that an individual with negative attitude towards it will unlikely take part in it. Therefore, to incite involvement in such activities attitude questioning and promotion aiming to change attitude positively takes place. While having generally positive attitude towards sports, it is possible to expect negative attitude towards, for example, dangerous sports such as the martial arts, as well as sports where the aesthetic component is prevailing (K. Bosnar, H. Sertić, F. Prot, 1996).

Previously mentioned reasons have inspired the authors to assess the dance attitudes of male and female students of the Faculty of Kinesiology, the ones to become PE teachers, coaches and sports employees, who will throughout their functions in sports become certain role models, especially for youth. It is assumed

that with their positive dance attitudes and promotion of dance contents, they will have influence on positive dance attitudes of individuals they will work with, regardless whether it comes to PE classes, sports or recreation.

The purpose of this research study was to determine the differences in dance attitudes between male and female students and also to determine alterations in dance attitudes influenced by Dance course classes.

Research methods and procedures

The participants in this study were 80 female and 85 male students of the third year at the Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb. The average age of participants was between 21-23 years old. The basic requirement in defining this sample of participants was completed class program from Dance course.

Students' dance attitudes were assessed using dance attitude scale SPP (J. Vlašić, K. Bosnar, 2007). The scale consists of 20 items of both directions (positive and negative) with answers containing five grades: "completely agree", "mostly agree", "not sure", "mostly do not agree", and "do not agree at all". The answers are valorized using points from 1 to 5 in such way that the greater result indicates positive dance attitude. The overall, summarized result ranges from 20 to 100 points. Dance attitude assessment was conducted at the beginning and at the end of the Dance course educational process.

The results were analyzed using Statistica 7 programs. Descriptive parameters were obtained for every individual variable of interest; mean (M), minimal value (Min), maximal value (Max), and standard deviation (SD). The normality of results' distribution was tested using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-S).

To determine statistically significant differences in dance attitudes between male and female students, as well as to determine statistically significant differences in dance attitudes on the overall sample of participants in both measurements, T-test for dependant samples was used. Parameters obtained included: mean (M), standard deviation (SD), t-test value (t), and alpha level (p).

Results

Table 1. Descriptive parameters of the first and the second dance attitude measurement in female students (SPP).

FM	N	Min	Max	Range	M	SD	Kurt	Skew
1SPP	80	52	100	48	78.32	10.84	-0.21	-0.35
2SPP	80	37	99	62	81.71	9.83	4.04	-1.06

FM- female students; N-sample size; Min-minimum; Max-maksimum; M-mean value; SD-standard deviation; Kurt-kurtosis; Skew-skewness (coefficients of variability).

Descriptive parameters of variables for dance attitude assessment in female students (Table 1) confirm the increase of the average points in the first measurement test by 3.39 points in the second measurement, which indicates the increase by 3.39 in positive direction. Based on that notion, female

students had a positive dance attitude which even got better under the influence of Dance course classes. Distribution of participants' results in both measurements was mildly asymmetrical, indicating female participants' results to have been of somewhat higher values.

Table 2. Descriptive parameters of the first and the second dance attitude measurement in male students (SPP)

MS	N	Min	Max	Range	M	SD	Kurt	Skew
1SPP	85	30	92	62	66.12	12.55	0.21	-0.62
2SPP	85	29	92	63	71.05	14.07	0.92	-0.99

MS- male students; N-sample size; Min-minimum; Max-maksimum; M-mean value; SD-standard deviation; Kurt-kurtosis; Skew-skewness (coefficients of variability).

Descriptive parameters of variables for dance attitude assessment in male students (Table 2) show the increase of the average points in the first measurement test by 4.93 points in the second measurement, which indicates the increase by almost 5 points in positive direction although the dance

attitude of male students was positive. Distribution of participants' results in both measurements was mildly negatively asymmetrical, indicating male participants' results to have been clustered at somewhat higher values. This indicated that the sample was heterogenous.

Table 3. Descriptive parameters of the first and the second dance attitude measurement in all students.

S	N	Min	Max	Range	M	SD	Kurt	Skew	Max D	p
1SPP	165	30	100	70	72.04	13.22	0.27	-0.51	0.07	0.25
2SPP	165	29	99	70	76.21	13.28	1.19	-1.15	0.02	0.25

S-all students N-sample size; Min-minimum; Max-maksimum; M-mean value; SD-standard deviation; Kurt-kurtosis; Skew-skewness (coefficients of variability). Max D- deviation of the relative cumulative empirical frequency from the relative theoretical frequency; p-alpha level of K-S test.

Descriptive parameters' values from Table 3. show the increase of the average points from the first measurement test by 4.17 points, which indicates the increase by 4.17 points in positive direction although the dance attitude of all students was positive. Distributions of both assessment results were mildly

negatively asymmetrical and flattened. This, in other words, indicated greater quantity of results in the area of somewhat higher values demonstrating that the sample was heterogenous. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results showed that results' distributions were not statistically different than the normal distribution.

Table 4. T-test results of the first and the second dance attitude measurement in the overall sample, in male and female students

	S				FS				MS			
	M	SD	t	p	M	SD	t	p	M	SD	t	p
1SPP-2SPP	-4.17	15.63	-3.43	0.01	-3.39	13.64	-2.22	0.02	-4.92	17.35	-2.61	0.01

S-all student; FS- female students; MS-male students; M-mean value; SD-standard deviation; t-t-test value; p-alpha level



T-test (with alpha level of 0.01) showed statistically significant differences in dance attitudes in the overall participants' sample. Statistically significant differences in dance attitudes were also found between the first and the second measurement in male students, whereas for female students, statistically significant difference in dance attitudes between the first and the second measurement was found at the alpha level of 0.05. Conclusively, the group of students whose dance attitudes were significantly changed from one measurement to another had somewhat greater contribution to the statistically significant difference in dance attitude of the overall sample.

Discussion

Descriptive parameters of variables for dance attitude assessment confirm the increase of the average number of points from the first measurement test in female students (Table 1) by 3.39 points, whereas this increase for male students was by 4.93 points. In other words, the average number of points from the first measurement test increased by 3.39, that is, by 4.43 points in the positive direction. Based on this, it is evident that the positive dance attitude of female and male students has changed for the better under the influence of the Dance course classes. The increase of positive dance attitude in male students compared to female students is indicative of the fact that male students were less familiar with and were less involved in dance activities. In that way, male students were more exposed to the negative dance attitudes and stereotypes on dancing. However, the fact that Dance course class influenced the positive changes is promising and encouraging for all dance instructors and dance enthusiasts.

Descriptive parameters' results of dance attitude of all students (Table 3) show that the average number of points from the first measurement test increased by 4.17 points, meaning this increase was by 4.17 points in the positive direction at the second measurement test, although the dance attitude of all students should be defined as a positive one. The results' distributions of both dance attitude measurements show the greater quantity of results to be in higher values' area and also show that the participants' sample was heterogeneous. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results confirm that results' distributions were not statistically different from normal distribution.

The differences in dance attitudes in the first and the second attitude assessment of male and female students, which means before and after Dance course educational process, and the differences in dance attitudes between the first and

the second assessment of all students were analyzed using T-Test for dependent samples.

T-test ($p=0.01$) showed statistically significant differences (Table 4) in dance attitudes in the overall sample and in dance attitudes of the students in the first assessment compared to the students in the second assessment. Female students showed statistically significant differences in dance attitudes at the alpha level of 0.05. The group of students whose dance attitudes were significantly changed from the first to the second measurement contributed somewhat more to the found statistically significant difference in dance attitudes. The cause for this result may be attributed to Dance course classes. This could be supported by the fact that statistically significant difference was found in the results of male students, and especially having on mind scientifically established fact that dance belongs to stereotypical "women's" sports' activity (Oglesby, Hill, 1993, according to K. Bosnar, H. Sertić, F. Prot, 1999).

Many research studies have confirmed that dance as sports' activity is chosen by women (F. Prot, K. Bosnar, 2000; F. Prot, K. Bosnar, G. Sporiš, 2006), whereas men discard dance as a sports' activity. This research study established students' positive dance attitude. Such result is extremely valuable since the SPP questionnaire relates primarily to the attitude towards ethnic/folk and social dances that students are generally not well familiar with. It is especially important to highlight the prejudices and negative attitudes towards ethnic dances. These are mostly based on the lack of information on their values for which the educational system is partly responsible by not giving enough tributes to the tradition and nation's own culture. Positive influence of Dance course classes on dance attitudes in students needs to be valued from the aspect of the fact that PE teachers are the biggest authorities for sport that children and youth encounter, and therefore it is reasonable to expect that PE teachers will have significant influence on molding their attitudes towards sports (F. Prot, K. Bosnar, 2000), dance included. Due to this reason, it is clear that students, future PE teachers will influence with their positive attitudes on the positive attitudes of their students, that is, on the change of the stereotypes in their students. Additionally, the changeability of stereotypes' influence that is more pronounced in sports that individuals reject compared to sports that are accepted, needs to be accentuated. The positive influence of performing certain activity on the attitude towards that activity was confirmed in dancers themselves. Dancers' attitudes towards their own dance form are more positive than towards other dance forms, in some dancers (ethnic



and modern dance) this was also partly due to the time period they spent engaged in certain dance technique (P. Nieminen, Varstala, 1999). All previously mentioned implies that students' positive dance attitude was changed to an even better attitude by dance contents application. This research project hypothesized on positive influence of dance classes, that is, dance contents and/or experience, on dance attitude, which was proven as well as the hypothesis on different dance attitudes in male and female students.

Conclusions

This research study confirmed the positive influence of Dance course classes on dance attitude positive change in students of the Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb which implies that increased application of dance structures are needed in PE classes, sports and recreation. More intensive application of dance structures during mandatory education (PE classes), as well as during sports training and recreation, would most likely contribute to the dance attitude change as a stereotypical "women's" activity, and with that would also influence on dance popularity among male population. Statistically significant differences in dance attitude between female and male students and greater influence of Dance course classes on dance attitude change in male students agree with the above mentioned.

These research results are concrete contribution to PE teachers and dance pedagogues in regards to dance structures' application with the goal of enhancing the overall status of school-aged children and youth, as well as their contribution to the nurturing component of the PE classes.

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