



The Influence of Sports Dance on Self-esteem Among College Students

Yeren Wang, Monthira Charupheng, Patcharaporn Srisawat

Faculty of Education, Srinakarinwirot University, Bangkok, Thailand

Email: 369693011@qq.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-0984-7924>

Email: monthira@g.swu.ac.th, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-6785-6821>

Email: patcharapom@gswu.ac.th, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-6462-4567>

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Abstract

Background and Aims: College students' lives depend greatly on their sense of self-worth. It has an impact on their social interactions, emotional well-being, and academic achievement. Several issues can arise for college students, such as social pressures, anxiety related to appearance, and negative body image. These elements may damage their sense of self-worth, which subsequently impacts their general health and standard of living. Sports dance is a unique physical activity that combines artistic ability and physical prowess to positively impact college students' self-esteem. Sports dancing has also been linked to improvements in self-esteem and self-image in addition to physical health, according to earlier research. The two main goals of this study are to first compare the experimental group's self-esteem before and after they participated in sports dancing, and then to compare the experimental group's self-esteem with that of the control group.

Methodology: This study included a sample of 20 third-year undergraduate students from the Dance Department, College of Art, Chongqing University of Mechanical and Electrical Technology. The samples were divided into two groups: 10 students, consisting of 5 female and 5 male students, in both the experimental and control groups. The experimental group used the sports dance training method, while the control group used the traditional teaching method. A self-designed, expert-reviewed Rosenberg's self-esteem scale was issued before and after the experiment to determine the influence of sports dance exercises on the self-esteem of the sample group. Data were analyzed using means, standard deviations, and t-tests.

Result: Before engaging in sports dance training, the experimental group's mean self-esteem score was found to be 28.3, while the control group's mean score was 28.8 before receiving traditional instruction. Following the experiment, the experimental group's mean score on self-esteem increased to 35.6, while the control group's score stayed at 27.8. After taking the sports dance course, the experimental group felt more confident in themselves. The mean score of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group. Students in the experimental group demonstrated higher levels of engagement in class during sports dance training. When given chores involving dance, they showed initiative in solving problems and made their own choices. They conversed with people more and gained self-assurance when voicing their ideas. These findings imply that sports dancing significantly and favorably raised the students' self-esteem.

Conclusion: The results show that sports dance programs can help students feel better about their bodies and have higher self-esteem. Students receive timely rewards throughout the sports dance learning process, which boosts their self-esteem in the classroom and promotes greater interaction between them. By working together to create dance performances, students improve their interpersonal skills and become fully immersed in a stimulating, dynamic, and demanding learning environment. This promotes a calm and pleasurable learning environment while also helping students develop their knowledge and skills and improving their communication skills. This study provides educational institutions and schools with a workable strategy for enhancing students' mental health by introducing sports dance courses. The results also highlight sports dance's potential as a useful tool for psychological intervention. Mental health practitioners might think about introducing elements of sports dance into psychotherapy sessions to help patients feel better about themselves.

Keywords: Self-esteem; Sports Dance; College Students



Introduction

Self-esteem, recognized as a crucial indicator of mental health, holds immense significance for the growth and development of college students (Chen, 2020). With the rapid advancements in science and technology, the pace of modern life is accelerating, ushering in fierce competition across various industries. This dynamic presents contemporary college students with substantial challenges in academics, employment, and interpersonal relationships, thereby escalating stress levels, particularly concerning mental health (Huang et al., 2020). Moreover, some research indicates that self-esteem not only influences students' academic performance (Acosta-Gonzaga, E., 2023) but also plays a pivotal role in mitigating depression and addressing mental health issues (Yang & Chu, 2023). Hou (2024) mentioned that low self-esteem serves as both a cause and a contributing factor to depression. And underscores the significance of self-esteem as the primary personality trait shaping individuals' emotions and life adjustment. Hence, fostering students' self-esteem emerges as an essential endeavor.

From the literature review, physical exercise is widely recognized as a method for promoting both physical and mental health. Sports dance, as a form of sports integrating fitness, entertainment, and social interaction, was considered a method to promote mental health. Yang et al., (2020) found that sports dance helps to improve self-esteem among college students and their perception of their bodies. It suggests that sports dance can not only enhance the sense of self-worth but also shape a positive body image. Grosu et al., (2022) explored the relationship between different types of dance and the self-esteem of college students. It found that different types of dance activities can have positive effects on different aspects of self-esteem, such as emotional expression and body cognition. It emphasizes the importance of dance diversity for self-esteem. Ouyang et al., (2020) highlighted the role of sports dance in improving the self-esteem of college students. Through dance activities, students can not only improve their physical fitness and coordination but also build a positive self-image and self-esteem. Li (2020) studied the Influence of Cha-cha Dance Exercise on the Self-esteem and depression of Ordinary College Students. It found that Cha Cha dance exercises are beneficial for improving depression among college students and increasing their self-esteem level. At the same time, improving the self-esteem of college students can also help alleviate depression. In other words, self-esteem partially mediates the effect of Cha Cha dance exercises on improving depression among college students. These studies showed that sports dance has a positive impact on students' self-esteem. Different types of dance activities can play a role in improving self-esteem, and body image.

Based on the literature reviewed above, it is evident that dance training positively influences the self-esteem of college students. This paper seeks to investigate the influence of sports dance on the self-esteem of college students, aiming to provide theoretical foundations and exercise programs to enhance mental health and foster self-esteem. The findings underscore the potential value of sports dance as a psychological intervention tool. The education community and mental health professionals may consider integrating sports dance elements into psychotherapy to aid individuals in improving their self-esteem. Moreover, this paper introduces a novel educational approach by integrating sports dance into the curriculum, offering students enriched learning experiences and bolstering their motivation and interest in learning.

Objectives

1. To study self-esteem after participating in sports dance of the experimental group.
2. To compare self-esteem before and after participating in sports dance of the experimental group.
3. To develop sports dance programs for enhancing students' self-esteem.

Literature Review

Sports dance

A type of physical exercise known as "sports dance" blends dance elements with the competitive and structured nature of sports. Sports dance strongly emphasizes athleticism, coordination, and precision in contrast to traditional dance forms, which place more emphasis on artistic expression and performance. While following the rules and regulations set forth by governing bodies like the World DanceSport Federation (WDSF) or the International Dance Organization (IDO), athletes perform choreographed routines that frequently incorporate elements from different dance styles, such as jazz, ballet, hip-hop, and contemporary (WDSF, 2020; IDO, 2019).

In competitive sports dance events, dancers compete against each other in individual or pair classes

like ballroom, Latin, or freestyle. Judges assess performances based on technical proficiency, timing, musicality, and presentation. Sports dance is a combination of dance and sport that develops participants' teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship in addition to physical fitness and coordination (WDSF, 2020). Further evidence of sports dance's growing acceptance as both an art form and a competitive athletic endeavor comes from the number of contests, championships, and even its inclusion in multi-sport events like the World Games (IDO, 2019).

Self-esteem Among College Students

College students' self-esteem is a complex concept that influences many facets of their academic success, interpersonal relationships, and general well-being. Self-esteem is the individual's subjective assessment of their own value and potential, and it affects people's attitudes, sentiments, and actions in academic contexts (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). According to research, college students who have a high sense of self-worth are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and persistent in their studies, which results in higher academic achievement (Orth, Robins, & Widaman, 2012). On the other hand, procrastination, a fear of failing, and poor academic performance have all been connected to low self-esteem (Cherry & DeBose, 2009).

Furthermore, a college student's sense of self-worth is closely linked to the relationships and social interactions they have on campus. Greater interpersonal assertiveness, communication abilities, and the capacity to build deep connections with peers are all correlated with higher levels of self-esteem (Orth et al., 2012). On the other hand, people who have low self-esteem could struggle in social settings with shyness, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy. These issues could make it harder for them to build strong social networks and take part in rewarding social activities (Baumeister et al., 2003).

Additionally, the move to college is a crucial time when students' self-esteem may experience major swings as a result of different social, academic, and developmental difficulties. Many students must navigate independence, identity exploration, and new academic expectations during their time in college, which can have an effect on their confidence and self-perceptions (Orth et al., 2012). Studies indicate that interventions like counseling, mentorship programs, and campus-based support services that aim to help college students develop positive self-esteem and self-efficacy can improve their academic performance, psychological health, and overall adjustment to college life (Cherry & DeBose, 2009; Orth et al., 2012). Therefore, it's essential to comprehend the dynamics of college students' self-esteem when creating interventions and support networks that will help them succeed academically and personally.

Conceptual Framework

This study aimed to investigate the effect of sports dance on the self-esteem of college students. The figure below describes the conceptual framework of the study.

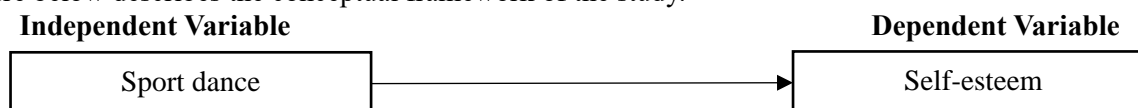


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Population and samples: The subjects of this study are the third-year undergraduate students of the Dance Department, College of Art, Chongqing University of Mechanical and Electrical Technology, including 10 students in the experimental group and 10 students in the control group. The student was selected from a pre-test of 140 students. There were no significant differences in gender, age, or academic student performance between the two groups to ensure the reliability of the study results.

Research Instruments

1. Self-esteem scale: The self-esteem scale issued before and after the experiment, in which the esteem scale was compiled by Rosenberg in 1965 to test the change in the self-esteem of the experimental group and the control group before and after the experiment, to determine the influence of sports dance exercise on the self-esteem of college students.

2. Sports dance course Lesson plan: There were eight lesson plans and eight weeks' of sports dance learning. The students of the experimental group learned sports dance according to the lesson plan. The students in the control group participated in normal cultural courses and did not participate in sports



dance-related exercise or other systematic physical exercise.

Data collection: The self-esteem scale was issued before and after the experiment, which the esteem scale was compiled by Rosenberg in 1965 to test the change in the self-esteem of the experimental group and the control group, to determine the influence of sports dance exercises on the self-esteem of college students.

Data analysis: Descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing, using Excel and SPSS 22.0, were applied to determine the scientific accuracy of the experimental results. Fundamental statistic was analyzed using means, and standard deviations. The hypothesis statistic was a t-test.

Results

The self-esteem data of the experimental and control groups were collected before the experiment using Rosenberg's self-esteem scale short form. The results were as follows:

Table 1 Self-esteem mean scores of the experimental and control groups before the experiment

Variable	Group	n	M	SD	t	P-value
Self - esteem	Experimental group	10	28.3	1.5	-0.7	0.4
	Control group	10	28.8	1.6		

Table 1 shows that the self-esteem mean scores of the experimental and control groups were 28.3 and 28.8, respectively; using an independent sample t-test, the P-value of significance result was 0.4, therefore the statistical results were not significant, indicating that there was no significant difference in the self-esteem scores between these two groups.

Table 2 Compare the self-esteem of the experimental group before and after participating in sports dance activities

Variable	Time	n	M	SD	t	P-value
Self- esteem	Before	10	28.3	1.5	-10.9***	<0.01
	After	10	35.6	2.1		

Note: * * * represent the significance levels of 1% respectively

Table 2 shows that the self-esteem mean scores of the experimental group before and after the experiment were 28.3 and 35.6, respectively. Using an independent sample t-test, the p-value of the significance result was less than 0.01. Therefore, the statistical results were significant, indicating that there was a significant difference in the self-esteem scores before and after the experiment. In other words, the change in self-esteem before and after the experiment is statistically significant. The p-value is very small, far less than 0.01, so the change can be considered to be very significant. Overall, from these statistical results, it can be concluded that the experiment had a significant positive effect on self-esteem because the post-experiment mean score was significantly higher than the pre-experiment mean score and the effect size was large.

Table 3 Compare self-esteem of the experimental group and control group after participating in port dance

Variable	Group	n	M	SD	t	P-value
Self - esteem	Experimental group	10	35.6	2.1	9.1***	<0.01
	Control group	10	27.8	1.6		

Note: * * * represents the significance levels of 1%

Table 3 shows that the self-esteem mean scores of the experimental and control groups were 35.6 and 27.8, respectively; using an independent sample t-test, the p-value was 0.0, therefore the statistical results showed a significant difference in the self-esteem scores between these two groups and the difference was very large. The experimental group had a higher mean score than the control group. This indicates that the dance-based



intervention had a positive impact on the self-esteem of junior undergraduate students of the Dance Department, College of Art, Chongqing University of Mechanical and Electrical Technology. Overall, the results indicated that sports dance courses had a positive effect on self-esteem and that the impact effect was highly significant.

Discussion

The results show that the pretest self-esteem mean score in the control group was 28.8, and the self-esteem mean score in the experimental group was 28.3. After the experiment, the self-esteem mean score in the control group decreased to 27.8 and in the experimental group increased to 35.6. It indicates that the self-esteem of the experimental group was higher after participating in the sports dance course. It can be concluded that sports dance had a significant positive effect on self-esteem. This result may be due to sports dance learning provides a safe and relaxed environment. During the sports dance learning, When faced with the dance activity task, the students in the experimental group could actively use various methods to solve them, make independent decisions in the course, get feedback, and get timely rewards to build up self-esteem in their learning and become more involved in classroom learning. In the process of unity and cooperation to complete the dance performance, the students strengthened the interaction and immersed themselves in an interesting, interactive, and challenging learning environment, which not only promoted the development of students' knowledge and skills but also improved their skills of communication between students to create a relaxed and pleasant learning atmosphere. On the contrary, in the traditional teaching process, the students in the control group had a more serious learning atmosphere, less initiative, and less enthusiasm for learning. It suggests that sports dance may contribute to improving individual self-esteem. The finding of this paper is consistent with several scholars' findings such as Wu (2019) found that sports dance teaching has a positive impact on the mental health and self-esteem of contemporary college students, which can improve their self-cognition ability, enhance their self-esteem, and improve their mental health level. Ouyang et al., (2020) found that the sports dance practice improved participants' mental health. The self-esteem and esteem level recovered quickly after the setbacks. Zheng & Ji (2021) found sports dance exercises could alleviate the psychological stress of college students and improve their self-satisfaction. Colleges and universities should include sports dance in the content of optional public courses and encourage more college students to actively participate in sports dance exercises to improve their mental health. Gao (2022) found that sports dance had a positive role in promoting the physical and mental health of college students, helping to establish good self-awareness and interpersonal skills, and cultivating their teamwork spirit and innovation ability. Guo (2020) found that sports dance could enhance self-esteem, relieve depression symptoms, relieve anxiety symptoms, and improve mental health levels. The practice could also improve the physical health of college students.

In summary, sports dance could regulate emotions, and relieve stress and anxiety through physical activity and musical rhythm, which helps to improve learners' emotional stability and self-regulation ability, and then enhance their self-esteem. In short, by participating in sports dance learning and performance, learners could improve their skills, goal-setting ability, social cognition ability, and emotional regulation ability, thus enhancing self-esteem. The findings highlighted the potential value of sports dance as a psychological intervention tool. Mental health professionals or the education community may consider introducing sports dance elements in psychotherapy to help individuals improve their self-esteem.

Recommendation

Recommendation for Implication: This study has important practical implications, especially for the areas of education and mental health. 1) Promoting mental health: The results showed that sports dance courses could help improve their self-esteem and body image. This provides a feasible approach for schools and educational institutions to promote students' mental health by introducing sports dance courses. 2) Enrich educational methods: This study introduced a new educational method in the field of education by integrating sports dance into the curriculum. This can enrich students' learning experiences and improve their learning motivation and interest. 3) Guiding psychological interventions: The findings highlighted the potential value of sports dance as a psychological intervention tool. Mental health professionals may consider introducing sports dance elements in psychotherapy to help individuals improve their self-esteem.

Recommendation for future research: Based on the findings and limitations of this study, further research can be conducted. 1) Diversity samples: Future studies could expand the range of students from



different schools, ages, and cultural backgrounds to verify the universality of the findings. 2) Long-term research: Future studies could conduct longer-term studies to assess the long-term effects of sports dance on students' self-esteem. This will facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the intervention's effects. 3) Multivariate analysis: Future studies could explore the effects of other factors of the dance intervention, such as dance type, frequency, and course design. 4) Mental health effects: Future studies could explore the impact of sports dance on students' overall mental health, including emotional health, social interaction, and quality of life. Considering these recommendations, future studies could explore more deeply the potential value of sports dance as a tool for psychological intervention and how it can best be applied to promote mental health and self-esteem development in college students

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