

THE MOTIVATION OF PRACTICING SPORTS DANCE DURING PHYSICAL EDUCATION LESSONS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE SELF-IMAGE

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Abstract. *Background.* Motivational dynamics is always manifested at the level of global behavior, which means that understanding the motivational orientation of behavior requires a systemic view of it.

Objectives. Sports dance - whose specific means we used in the experimental study, are effective ways to develop the self-image, the motivational system and the motivation to achieve the self-image.

70 subjects participated in the research, students from different faculties within the University of Bucharest, based on registration in the sports dance class. Among them, 50 female students and 20 male students, aged between 19 and 25, first-year students at the University of Bucharest. All of them opted for the sports dance class at the beginning of the 2022-2023 academic year. Sports dance lessons were held throughout the academic year according to the curriculum.

Methods. *The observation method:* were monitored the indicators related to the efficiency of the execution, the improvement of the posture, of the body attitude, the efficiency of the communication, the relationship with the others, as relevant elements for the studied phenomenon.

In addition to direct observation, the video camera and the computer were used.

Speaking: using dialogue to obtain useful information.

For the present research, the preferred subjects are: knowledge of the particularities of the motivational system; hierarchical organization of motives; knowledge of the conditional determinative and inhibiting factors for practicing of sports dance; evaluation and knowledge of the relationship between achievement motivation and self-image.

Questionnaire-based survey: the questionnaire was developed to study self-image and self-esteem. It was developed and applied in order to study the importance that the subjects give to the sports dance practiced in the physical education class for the development of the motivation to realize the self-image.

Statistical-mathematical method – statistical-mathematical processing of the data resulting from the questionnaire.

Graphical representation method: Microsoft Excel was used.

Results. The obtained results were ranked according to the score, tabulated, interpreted and presented graphically.

Conclusion. The processing of the subjects results from the initial and final testing, highlights *the awareness that has occurred on the benefits that the practice of physical exercises, in general and sports dance, in particular, brings to personal development. From the results of the study, it emerged that Sports Dance develops social intelligence, interpersonal relationships, communication ability, emotional intelligence, the ability to make voluntary effort, perceptive qualities.*

Keywords: motivation, sports dance, physical exercise, self-image

Introduction

The motivation for physical education and sports activities is subordinate to the general meaning of the concept of motivation and represents the totality of the body's internal mobiles that energetically support, activate and direct the performance of physical education and sports activities.



The motivational process and self-realization within physical education and sports activities represent a very complex aspect, forming in ontogenesis, at the level of the individual's personality, a complex system, hierarchically organized.

It has a unique and original structure and organization, in relation to:

- the personal background;
- the educational influences of the environment;
- the structure and characteristics of personality;
- the maturation level;
- the level of involvement in physical education and sports activities (student, athlete, performance athlete. etc)

M. Bouet (1973), quoted by M. Niculescu (2000), highlights a series of reasons for sports activity, among which we mention:

- the need for movement;
- self-affirmation;
- complementary and balancing compensation;
- affiliation, belonging, relationship and integration needs;
- the need for social status;
- the interest for competing, the need for success, the need to compare with others, the need to oppose others, the desire for the unpredictable, etc.

And also the research carried out in our country reached similar conclusions. Thus, V. Horghidan and I. Holdevici (1977) believe that the reasons which determine the activity carried out by the student in physical education class can be grouped into external and internal reasons, these in turn being grouped into:

- ◆ native tendencies;
- ◆ social tendencies;
- ◆ tendencies related to self-affirmation of the Ego;
- ◆ interests in sports activity

It is possible to act in order to develop the self-image by developing the motivational system. An important part of the reasons for sports activity are from the category of achievement reasons, their weight and dynamic organization being directly related to the personality structure.

That is why we consider motivational analysis and the use of motivational procedures as being particularly useful methods and techniques for the specialist in Physical Education and Sport, regardless of the level at which they operate (pre-university education, university, performance sports).

Personal development and performance optimization are highly influenced by the management of resources, among which the energetical ones are of particular importance. Like any other component of the human psychic system, the evolution of the energy activating subsystem is multi-determined, education having a special role in this sense (along with genetic and environmental factors). The importance of motivation in human activity is of internal causality, having functions of energy support, activation, dynamization (together with affectivity), regulator/mediator of human activity. At the same time, motivation is the most significant intermediate variable that intervenes between the task and its realization, thus, it also has the role of mobilizing all the other psychic phenomena and processes (cognitive, psychomotor, etc.) in order to successfully realize the activity.

The interconditioning between the somatic components, the functional capacity of the body's mechanisms and systems, the motor component and the psychic processes, determine the individual's involvement in the exercise. As the body copes with the more and more increased and/or varied motor solicitations, the subject's motivation for exercise increases, being revised the limits of the self-image regarding the effort capacity and the achieved and the achieved motor capacities.

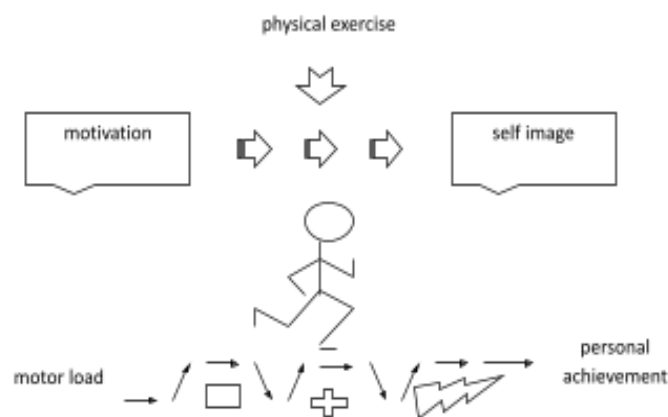


Figure 1. Physical exercise and motivation to adjust the self-image

In this context, physical exercise develops the motivational system, becoming an effective tool that acts by improving the general state of health and physical condition, in order to prevent stress, as well as to prevent the onset of numerous diseases.

The way you see yourself is crucial, because this will affect your behaviour, your thinking and how you relate to others. People respond to you either in a positive or in a negative way, depending on how confident you are. Your confidence in relationships depends on your self-perceived image. (Nair, 2016, quoted by Popovici, Moraru, 2019). Self-perception of competence in a certain domain has a substantial motivational component: those who believe that they are competent in that domain are more persistent and show more interest in it (Gouveia É.R., Ihle A., Gouveia B.R., at al, 2019, quoted by Pavlović, Pelemiš, Marković, Dimitrijević at al, 2023)

Motivation is one of the psychological factors that, along with the personality traits and aptitudes, direct and regulate the individuals' behavior. Believed by Atkinson & Hilgard (2005, p. 507) to be "a state that energizes the behavior, offering it a direction, motivation is lived subjectively as a conscious desire," to do or to achieve something, to perfect oneself, to reach an expected goal. (Dobrescu,T., 2016)

Under the student motivation approach, studies have pointed out that the way in which the teacher organises the sessions, involves students in decision kind, provides execution alternatives, recognises the students' feelings and provides quality feedback, are aspects that have important motivational implications (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2007; Hein & Koka, 2007; Standage et al., 2007; Koka & Hagger, 2010; Amado, Sánchez Miguel, González Ponce, Pulido, González & Del Villar, 2016)

Physical exercise is accompanied by a wide range of positive experiences, which can determine the widening of the motivational range. Dancing develops direct communication skills, empathic capacity, elimination of inhibitions, especially in the area of non-verbal communication, being an opportune framework for expressing emotional feelings. Good mood, optimism, joy, exaltation, are only some of the affective experiences that accompany practice in general and sports dance in particular. Also, the beauty of the body in motion and the aesthetics of the gestures generate affective states beneficial to a strong psychic tone.

According to M. Epuran, I. Holdevici and F. Tonița (2001), the interrelationships between the components of the psychobehavioral system are very strong, being possible that, in certain situations, the will acts on the intellect, the intellect on affectivity and motivation, the motivation on feelings.

Although it is not about performance dance, for which the initiation is done from an early age, it is necessary that the approach to the content of this sport within the physical education lessons with the students, be carried out at the initiation level, as corresponding to stage I (Manos, M., 2008)", simultaneously aiming at achieving the general objectives of physical education and influencing the attitude of the practitioners towards dancing, so that they find it as one of the most attractive forms of spending free time.

From the point of view of sports dance characteristics, this is part of the category of aesthetic-artistic sports together with gymnastics and its branches, figure skating, synchronized swimming. It is important that non-verbal language should be expressive, understood by viewers and should create feelings. Within the dance halls there are mirrors for specific exercises, for posture and artistic expressiveness. The other sports disciplines with a playful character do not emphasize these aesthetic characteristics, but have the ability to develop other features.

Research hypothesis

Increasing motivation through the specific means of sports dance in physical education lessons significantly improves self-image.

Subjects and place of research

70 subjects participated in the research, students from different faculties within the University of Bucharest. Among them, 50 female students and 20 male students, aged between 19 and 25, first-year students at the University of Bucharest, at the faculties of: History, Geography, Mathematics, Biology, Foreign Languages, Letters, Public Administration and Business. All of them opted for the sports dance class at the beginning of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Sports dance lessons were held throughout the academic year according to the curriculum.

Research methods

The observation method: the indicators related to the efficiency of the execution, the improvement of the posture, of the body attitude, the efficiency of the communication, the relationship with others, etc., were followed, as being relevant elements for the studied phenomenon. In this sense, the observation protocol, the video camera, the computer were created.

The conversation: using dialogue to obtain useful information.

For the present research, the favorite subjects are: knowledge of the particularities of the motivational system; hierarchical organization of motives; knowledge of the conditional determinative and inhibiting factors for practicing sports dance; evaluation and knowledge of the relationship between achievement motivation and self-image.

Questionnaire-based survey – the questionnaire was developed to study self-image and self-esteem SM. It was developed and applied in order to study the importance that the subjects give to the sports dance practiced in the physical education class for the development of the motivation to realize the self-image. (after SM2, Mihaiu, C., thesis, 2010)

Statistical-mathematical method – statistical-mathematical processing of the data resulting from the questionnaire and the applied tests.

Graphical representation method – it was used *Microsoft Excel* program.

The presentation and interpretation of the results obtained by applying the SM questionnaire

The application of the SM questionnaire, in the initial and final testing, allows us to evaluate some aspects regarding the importance that students give in general to the sport practiced in the physical education class and to sports dance in particular.

The answers given to **Item 1** targets the subjects' interest in the field of Physical Education and Sport. This has 5 answer options.

Table no. 1 – Comparative results – Initial testing – Final testing, item 1

Item 1	Subjects` group			
	Initial testing		Final testing	
Answer option	No. sub.	%	No. sub.	%
To a very small extent	5	7.14%	0	0
To a small extent	3	4.28%	1	1.42%
To a certain extent	12	17.14%	7	10%
To a higher extent	19	27.14%	9	12.85%
To a very large extent	31	44.28%	53	75.71%

It is observed that **the interest in the field of Physical Education and Sports** increased in the final testing compared to the initial one.

- *It decreased the number of non-interested from 7.14% at initial testing to 0 at final testing;*
- *and increased the number of those showing interest to a very large extent by 31.43%: from 44.28% to 75.71%.*
- *The Physical Education and Sport classes at the University of Bucharest have contributed to increasing students' interest in this field.*

For **item 2** – “*What do you understand by selfimage?*” Since this item was introduced to evaluate the level of knowledge of the topic, we evaluated the answers with the qualifiers “adequate” or “inadequate”.

We can observe from table no. 2, that the group improved their performance, (all subjects accumulating more information and knowledge in relation to the topic of our research in which they were involved) the progress being higher in the case of the final testing.

Table no. 2 – Comparative results – Initial testing – Final testing, item 2

Item 2	Subjects` group			
	Initial testing		Final testing	
Answer option:	No. sub	%	No. sub	%
Adequate	44	62,85%	61	87,14%
Inadequate	26	37,14%	9	12,85%

For **item 3**: “*What do you understand by motivation?*” We evaluated the answers with the qualifiers “adequate” or “inadequate”.

We also note that the group has improved its performance. *The range of those who gave correct (adequate) answers increased:*

Table no. 3 – Comparative results – Initial testing – Final testing, item 3

Item 3	Subjects` group			
	Initial testing		Final testing	
Answer option:	No. sub	%	No. sub	%
Adequate	53	71,71%	63	90%
Inadequate	17	24,28%	7	10%

In terms of familiarity with the topic it is noticeable as follows:

- *Students have knowledge that allowed them to issue competent answers* (in the initial testing, the group had a percentage of more than 50%, and in the final testing it increased by 10%);
- *The subjects were cognitively and emotionally involved in the research, as a result they made evident efforts to improve.* Dancing, through its characteristics, determines a great capacity of affective-emotional involvement of the subjects. The fact that it is a sport which is performed on music it contributed to the creation of emotional states and feelings that the subjects experienced during the lessons.

Item 4 – “Which statement fits you best?”

This item aimed to investigate tendencies in self-assessment, as the subjects sense it.

Table no. 4 – Comparative results – Initial testing – Final testing item 4

Item 4	Subjects' group			
	Initial testing		Final testing	
Answer option:	No. sub	%	No. sub	%
I tend to underestimate myself	31	44,28%	6	8,57%
I have an adequate self-image	39	55,72%	64	91,42%
I tend to underestimate myself	0	0	0	0

From the analysis of the data entered in the table above, it was noticed that:

- *In general, subjects do not perceive themselves as having a tendency to overestimate themselves, rather to underestimate themselves, or to rate themselves adequately;*
- *All subjects achieved improvements in self-assessment, with subjects having a greater progress in the proportion of those who believed they had an adequate self-image, exceeding 90%.* Sports dance contributes to a better knowledge of one's own body, an awareness of posture, of the ability to harmonize movements with music. Through the means used during the dance lessons the self-evaluation of the subjects increased significantly.

Table no. 5 – Scoring method and interpretation of each interval for item 5

Interval	Formula	Interpretation
350 – 280	5p (which is given for the appreciation "very much") x no. of subjects	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance is very important for the development of this factor.
279 – 210	4p (which is given for the appreciation "much") x no. of subjects	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance is of great importance for the development of this factor.
209 – 140	3p (which is given for the appreciation "somehow") x no. of subjects	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance has some importance for the development of this factor.
139 – 70	2p (which is given for the appreciation "little") x no. of subjects	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance has little importance for the development of this factor.
Less than 70	1p (which is given for the appreciation "very little") x no. of subjects	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance has very little importance for the development of this factor.

Item 5 is designed to assess the importance that the subject gives to the sport practiced during the physical education class, for his general somatopsychic development:

In item 5, we have calculated and ordered according to the range on which each factor is located. To determine the score, we awarded points for each level of the appreciation scale:

- Very much- 5p; much - 4p; somehow- 3p; little - 2p; very little- 1p

The results obtained and ordered according to the score were tabulated and presented below.

Table no. 6 – Group results – initial testing - item 5

Factorul	Range	Score	Interpretation
To have a harmoniously developed body	1	320	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance is very important for the development of this factor.
Health	2	316	
To have more self confidence	3	280	
To integrate better socially	4	260	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance is of great importance for the development of this factor.
To relax	5	235	
To correct certain physical deficiencies	6	220	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance has little importance for the development of this factor.
To develop the personality	7	128	
To be more efficient in the activity	8	120	
To widen the field of knowledge	9	70	
To correct certain psychic problems	10	16	

Table no.7 – Results of the experimental group – final testing - item 5

Factor	Range	Score	Interpretation
To have more self confidence	1	316	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance is very important for the development of this factor.
To have a harmoniously developed body	2	306	
Health	3	288	
To be more efficient in the activity	4	251	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance is of great importance for the development of this factor.
To integrate better socially	5	227	
To widen the field of knowledge	6	195	At the level of the investigated group, it is considered that sports dance has some importance for the development of this factor.
To relax	7	170	
To develop the personality	8	158	
To correct certain physical deficiencies	9	153	
To correct certain psychic problems	10	150	

Item 6 is designed to assess the importance the subject attaches to the sport practiced in physical education class, for the development of his motor qualities: speed, strength, resistance, flexibility, coordination, balance, precision.

For the establishment of the score we have appreciated as follows:

- Very much– 5p; much – 4p; somehow– 3p; little – 2p; very little – 1p

Also, the intervals for the qualitative interpretation were established by the same formula (no. of points awarded x no. of subjects), being the following:

- 350–280 – very important;
- 279–210 – important;
- 209–140 – somehow important;
- 139–70 – little important;
- 0–69 – very little.

Thus, the points were calculated and the corresponding range was established for each factor and they were passed in the descending order of the range (and the resulting score), interpreting the importance of each factor. The following results were obtained:

Table no. 8 – Group results – initial testing – item 6

Factor	Range	Score	Interpretation
Suppleness	1	342	The investigated group believes that sports dance is very important for the development of this factor.
Coordination	2	305	
Balance	3	286	
Speed	4	262	The investigated group believes that sports dance is of great importance for the development of this factor.
Strength	5	136	The investigated group believes that sports dance has little importance for the development of this factor.
Resistance	6	122	
Precision	7	115	

Table no. 9 – Group results – final testing - item 6

Factor	Range	Score	Interpretation
Suppleness	1	342	The investigated group believes that sports dance is very important for the development of this factor.
Coordination	2	326	
Balance	3	335	
Precision	4	315	
Resistance	5	304	
Strength	6	286	
Speed	7	280	

Item 7 is designed to assess the importance the subject attaches to the sport practiced in physical education class, for the development of his mental qualities.

In item 7, we have calculated and ordered according to the range on which each factor is located. To determine the score, we proceeded as in the case of items 5 and 6, as follows:

We awarded points for each step on the appreciation scale:

- Very much – 5p; much – 4p; somehow – 3p; little – 2 p; very little – 1 p

The scores obtained in this way helped us to qualitatively assess the results of the group of subjects. The intervals for the qualitative interpretation were established by the same formula (no. of points awarded x no. of subjects), being the following:

- 350–280 – very important;
- 279–210 – important;

- 209-140 – somehow important;
- 139-70 – little important;
- 0-69 – very little.

Thus, the points were calculated and the corresponding range was established for each factor and they were passed in descending order of range (and the resulting score), interpreting the importance of each factor.

The following results were obtained:

Table no. 10. – Group results – initial testing – item 7

Factor	Range	Score	Interpretation
The aesthetic sense	1	310	The investigated group believes that sports dance is very important for the development of this factor.
The ability of self-control	2	290	
The ability to put voluntary effort	3	278	The investigated group believes that sports dance is of great importance for the development of this factor.
The development of interpersonal relationships	4	273	
The ability to communicate	5	264	
Social intelligence	6,5	260	
Emotional intelligence	6,5	260	
Perceptive qualities	8	262	
The qualities of attention	9	246	
The ability to recover after effort	10	243	
Emotional stability	11	232	
Team spirit	12	226	
Intellectual qualities	13	220	
Imagination	14	214	

Table no. 11 – Group results – final testing – item 7

Factor	Range	Score	Interpretation
The aesthetic sense	1	323	The investigated group believes that sports dance is very important for the development of this factor.
The ability of self-control	2	318	
Social intelligence	3	310	
The development of interpersonal relationships	4	304	
The ability to communicate	5	290	
Emotional intelligence	6	289	
The ability to put voluntary effort	7	282	
Perceptive qualities	8	260	The investigated group believes that sports dance is of great importance for the development of this factor.
The qualities of attention	9	254	
The ability to recover after effort	10	250	
Emotional stability	11	246	
Team spirit	12	238	
Intellectual qualities	13	230	
Imagination	14	227	

The processing of the subjects' results in items 5, 6 and 7, from the initial and final testing, highlights the awareness that was produced over the benefits which practicing physical exercises, in general, and sports dance, in particular, brings for personal development and for self-esteem.

Therefore, for **item 5** – which assessed the general somatopsychic development, it was noticed that, if at the initial testing the subjects considered that sport dance had little importance for: personality development, performance in the activity to widen their field of knowledge and to correct certain mental problems, in the final testing no element was included in the categories of little and very little importance.

For **item 6** – *the group of subjects* considered at the initial testing that sports dance had little importance for the development of strength, resistance, and precision, compared to the final testing when they considered that sports dance has a very high importance for the development of all motor and psychomotor qualities (suppleness, coordination, precision, balance, resistance, strength, speed).

For **item 7** - regarding the assessment of the importance of sports dance for the development of mental qualities, both at the initial and final testing, *the group of subjects* considered that sports dance has a very high and great importance for the development of all the mental qualities presented as answer options. At the final testing, the great importance of sports dance was recognized for the development of the following qualities: social intelligence, the development of interpersonal relationships, communication ability, emotional intelligence, the ability to make voluntary effort, perceptive qualities.

Conclusions

The students involved in the research have the necessary knowledge to enable themselves to issue competent answers. They had a positive attitude and were involved in the research. It was highlighted the efficiency of the response systems applied for:

- increasing the subjects' interest in the field of physical education and sport;
- improving the ability of self-assessment;
- awareness of the benefits that practicing sports dance brings for personal development: general somatopsychic development, development of motor and psychomotor qualities; development of psychic qualities.

The reasons which have the highest frequency are the ones that have the highest activator-energetic force. The first three ranges indicate those reasons that guide the conduct. The orientation towards the practice of sports dance could be related to the satisfaction of these needs which often, "the strongest needs" indicate, in fact, "the most unsatisfied needs".

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