

Explore the Development of Dance Education and the Application of Art Dance Therapy in Medical Field

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Abstract: This thesis aims to explore the development of dance education and the application of art dance therapy in the medical field. As a comprehensive form of art education, dance education not only helps to cultivate students' aesthetic ability and artistic accomplishment, but also promotes physical and mental health and personal development. This article first reviews the history and development of dance education, and introduces the status and role of dance education in the education system, as well as the reflection on the current education system. Then, the thesis discusses the application of art dance therapy in the medical field. Art dance therapy is a comprehensive treatment method that combines dance and psychotherapy, and promotes the individual's psychological and physical recovery through dance and physical movement. Through in-depth research on the development of dance education and the application of art dance therapy, this thesis aims to provide theoretical and practical support for promoting the development of dance education in the medical field.

Keywords: dance education, education system, ADT, phycology

1. Introduction

Dance education is a form of education with dance as the main content, aiming at teaching dance skills, improving physical quality, cultivating aesthetic ability, promoting people's comprehensive development and improving the quality of life. Dance education involves dance performance, creation, teaching, research and other fields. It helps students gain dance skills and knowledge, improve physical coordination and flexibility, develop interest and literacy in the arts such as music and fine arts, as well as improve students' self-confidence, expression and social skills.

Dance education has a significant influence on students' physical, mental health and social ability. Its development can be traced back to ancient civilization. In ancient Greece, Rome and India, dance was regarded as an important cultural art form, used in religious ceremonies, celebrations and entertainment. In the 1950s, theories of dance education began to form and the concept of Art Dance Therapy (ADT) emerged. Art Dance therapy is a type of psychotherapy that uses dance and body movement as a medium to promote physical and mental health and treat psychological problems. Nowadays, the forms of dance education are becoming more and more diversified. It is constantly developing and innovating, and its application fields are further expanding, such as children, the elderly, the physically and mentally disabled, etc. In addition, the

combination and intersection of ADT and other therapeutic methods are also contributing to the promotion of popular physical and mental health and improving the quality of life.

2. History and Present Situation of Dance Education

2.1. The Development of Dance Education

In the early 20th century, modern dance emerged in Europe and the United States, emphasizing freedom and expressiveness, it became a new form of artistic performance. In the 1930s, the United States, Britain and other countries began to set up dance courses in schools to encourage students to participate in dance activities, which laid the foundation for the popularization of dance education. In the 1950s, theories of dance education began to take shape. For example, American dance educator Richard Kraus put forward the concept of “dance teaching method” and founded organizations such as “American Association of Dance Educators”, which promoted the research and development of dance education theory. In the 1960s, modern dance education became an important part of dance education. With its emphasis on creativity and self-expression, modern dance has become a subject of wide concern for students and teachers. In the 21st century, dance education forms are increasingly diversified. In addition to traditional ballet and modern dance, various forms of jazz dance, hip-hop dance, and folk dance also appeared. In addition, the development of network technology is also for dance.

2.2. The Significance of Dance Education

In the 1980s, Gardner, an American psychologist, put forward an important theory about the development of intelligence. Gardner believes that human intelligence is multifaceted, including a variety of different fields, such as language intelligence, spatial intelligence, physical intelligence (including dance intelligence), music intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, etc. These intelligences are quite independent, and are often combined to play a role in people's practical activities. In the course of the development of these intelligences, mutual influence and infiltration are very extensive. As an art form, dance education plays an important role in the development of human intelligence.

As an art education discipline, dance can harmoniously integrate different levels of body, spirit and emotion, and society, and has an important impact on both individuals and society. According to Sabine Howe, an American physical education specialist, “learning, thought, creativity, and intelligence don't just come from the brain alone, but from the entire body. Movement combinations increase memory, order, and sequencing skills. Creating dances also increases self-esteem which is really important to learning.”[1]

2.3. The Influence of Dance Education on Individuals

Dance education enhances the physical fitness of learners. Dance requires continuous training and practice. In the process of learning dance, learners perform whole-body movements to mobilize various body parts. For example, in the process of practicing rotation, contraction, ten thousand sets, leg raising and other actions, the effect of different parts of the body can be realized. In addition, dance moves are also a kind of exercise, which belongs to aerobic activities. During the dance process, the dancer's heart rate is accelerating. In this process, it can effectively exercise the dancer's heart function and improve the blood supply of the human heart. ability, myocardial strength, and prevent the occurrence of various heart diseases. Long-term persistence in dancing can keep the heart beating slowly and powerfully, and have a strong cardiovascular system [2].

In addition, learning dance can enhance learners' self-confidence, creativity, discipline and teamwork skills. Learning to dance requires expressing yourself, which can help boost confidence and self-esteem, making students more open to challenges. Dance is an art form that can stimulate students' creativity and imagination to express their emotions and thoughts through dance. Learning dance requires rigorous training and self-demand, which helps to develop discipline and perseverance in students, making them more patient and persistent. At the same time, in the dance performance, it is necessary to cooperate with other dancers, which helps to develop students' teamwork ability and communication skills [2].

When a learner learns to dance, the teacher guides them through setting a series of tasks, and when the learner tries it out for themselves and sees how their hard work and practice pay off, it can make them think they are capable and able to accomplish difficult things. A sense of competence and accomplishment helps children feel more confident. Learning a new dance move or routine takes time and practice. After trial and error, continuing to practice pays off as they see their progress and feel a sense of accomplishment knowing they can learn and do new or difficult things. In addition to a sense of accomplishment, dance classes provide a place of acceptance. Dance classes are a great place to make lifelong friends. As children develop their dance skills, they will learn alongside them with the help of their classmates. The dance family is just an important place where they feel accepted and appreciated [3].

3. Reflections on the Education System

"No country has an education system that has dance every day but math every day. Why? Dance is as important as math. Children dance non-stop if they are allowed to. As children get older, educators pay more attention to their heads." by Sir Ken Robinson. He points out that every country's education system has a hierarchy of subjects to pass: math and languages are more important than humanities, and humanities are more important than arts. And in the field of art, music and fine arts are more valued by the education system than comedy and dance. However, everyone's preferred cognitive style is different: some people are auditory learners, some are visual learners, and some want to gain strength in the rhythm of the body. The uniform measurement standards make many gifted children in "lower" items forced to climb trees, and schools cannot pay attention to their individual development [4].

The progress of society is inseparable from creativity. Robinson pointed out that talents in the new era should meet the following points. First, diversify. People perceive the world from the perspective of vision and hearing, aesthetics, abstraction, and dynamics. Human society is built on various talents, and art, dance, sociology and natural science are equally important.

Second, a good student should be full of vitality. The development of the brain is connected, and the brain should be viewed creatively as a set of processes—processes that produce valuable original ideas—often resulting from interactive ways of thinking rather than rigid routines [5].

Third, personalization. Renowned choreographer Gillian Lynne is one of the creators of the world's most successful musicals, *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. One day Robinson asked her: Why did you become a dancer? It turned out that when she was a child, she couldn't sit still in class and couldn't concentrate, so her teacher thought she had a learning disability. So Mom took her to the doctor, who sat her in a chair, turned on the radio, and began to observe. It turned out that Gillian started dancing as soon as she heard the music. The doctor said: "Your daughter is not sick, she is a dance genius, let her go to dance school!" She went to dance school and danced with those children who also think with their bodies. She starred as a ballerina, set up her own dance company, and wrote scripts for famous musicals, bringing artistic enjoyment to tens of thousands of audiences.

4. Creative Dance Art Therapy

Dance creative art therapy is a method that uses the power of art to treat physical and mental problems with dance as the main medium, combining music, drama, visual arts and other elements. It has been widely used in medical treatment, rehabilitation, education, social work, culture and other fields. In the early 20th century, Maria Montessori, an American psychotherapist, used dance and music to help educate and rehabilitate exceptional children. Subsequently, psychotherapists Michael White and David Epston took art forms such as dance and drama and applied them to psychotherapy [6].

In the practice of dance creative art therapy, dancers create a unique work of art by expressing their inner emotions and experiences and taking dance as the carrier. In this creative process, a relationship of trust, understanding and communication is established between the dancer and the therapist, thus promoting the dancer's physical and mental health. Over time, dance creative art therapy has become more widely used. In 1980, the Dance/Movement Therapy Association was founded, marking the beginning of dance creative art therapy as an independent discipline. At present, dance creative art therapy has been widely used in the world and has become an important means of psychotherapy [7].

5. Application of Art Dance Therapy in the Fields of Medicine and Psychology

Dance movements continuously stimulate the auditory, visual, and nervous systems of dancers. After these stimulating behaviors are transmitted to the nerve center, they will send instructions to the human body, and these instructions can effectively eliminate people's anxiety. In the process of dance performance, the dancer's emotions are concentrated in the expression of dance emotions, and the interference with other food around him is continuously reduced. It can realize the harmony of body and mind, and effectively adjust people's mental state [8].

In the 1960s, Beth Kalish-Weiss began studying psycho-motor personality and dynamic behavior in children with autism, opening the intersection between dance therapy and the autism community. The cause of Autism Spectrum Disorder is not clear, but is related to genetics and neurobiology. The main symptoms of autism spectrum disorder are language disorder, social disorder, repetitive and stereotyped behavior and motor development disorder.

Kalish-Weiss first identified the Body Movement Scale (BMS, Physical motion scale), and it was integrated into the Behavior Rating Instrument for Autistic and Other Atypical Children (BRIAAC, behavioral evaluation system for autistic and other atypical children). Thus, an effective evaluation method for children dance therapy was established. Kalish-Weiss has worked with an autistic child, Ana, a four-month-old girl born with Digeorge genetic syndrome (Kalish, 1982, unpublished), who had her thymus transplanted after it was removed. Her parents noticed that Ana neither laughed nor responded to the sounds around her.

She made no eye contact with others, and when she was picked up, Ana's body stiffened, her back hunched or went limp. The doctor diagnosed Ana as having the symptoms of an autistic child, and that she was mostly deaf in both ears! Ana was first sent to a school for special needs children, but she refused to have any physical contact with other children. Instead, she played by herself, often lying on the floor and repeating the same routine. This made Ana's parents and teachers very upset. Two years and four months later, Ana was sent to Kalish-Weiss for dance therapy.

Kalish-Weiss deduced that Ana's resistance to the outside world was a manifestation of her ego-strength. She decided to use games and movement first to allow the child to expand body language and develop her sense of her body and self, because autistic children are deficient in this area. Kalish-Weiss had Ana's mother take part in the training, holding her in different positions to strengthen her command of different spatial positions and eye contact. After several sessions of

dance therapy, Ana was clearly able to tell the difference between the therapist and her mom and became more sensitive to her surroundings.

More importantly, Ana began to try new movements instead of being immersed in her own single movements, and it was as if she could hear voices. Her mom was encouraged to see that Ana finally had someone to play with, and she enjoyed interacting with her daughter more. She brought the methods and positive attitude she had learned in dance therapy back to the home environment, which helped Ana's healing process very well. After three months of treatment, the BRIAAC test showed significant progress in Ana, but overall ability remained at the autism level, similar to that of a normal child aged one and a half years. Kalish-Weiss decided the next step was to let Ana's mother go and do therapy alone with Ana. Slowly, Ana's range of attention began to expand, and the actions became more direct and directed. One day, she found the car keys from her mother's purse and gave them to Kalish-Weiss, as if to say, "Where's Mommy? Can I go home now?" Ana began to learn to communicate. By this time, a second BRIAAC test showed that Ana had made significant progress. She could actually hear and no longer rejected the hearing aid. After six months, BRIAAC tests showed encouraging improvements in Ana's body movements, voice reception and relationship building. There is no doubt that dance therapy helped Ana significantly reduce autism symptoms throughout the 10 months, effectively compensating for the lack of physical and social integration in the child's development.

In therapy, dance therapists can bring autistic children back to early childhood development through regression, and gradually develop and recover the ability to interact with the outside world. This requires dance therapists to be able to establish empathy with children well, communicate equally, truly experience children's inner feelings, and help them to come out of the lonely inner world [9].

6. Therapeutic Psychological Effect of Art Dance Therapy

Art therapy originated in Europe and the United States, and initially focused on visual art. In the 1980s, the University of Massachusetts Riley called all kinds of art therapy methods including music, art, dance, stories, comedy, and poetry "Creative Art Therapy". The forms of creative art therapy are rich and varied, and the specific atmospheres are as follows: painting, music and dance, hand-made, writing and drama photography. Among them, music therapy and dance therapy are common forms of creative arts therapy. Dance therapy is to promote the emotional, cognitive and psychological integration of the visitor through exercise. Accompanied by drums or other musical equipment, the body dances spontaneously to the rhythm. The visitors slowly release their emotions and discover negative emotions as they dance. Therefore, art dance therapy has good therapeutic effects on anxiety, depression, self-esteem, social disorders, and ect [10].

In addition, art dance therapy is used in the field of cancer treatment to reduce emotional distress during the treatment of children with cancer, improve the cooperation of children with treatment, and promote the development of children's self-esteem and personality. According to the data released by Runbaofangde Public Welfare Foundation in 2019, 36.21% children (0-15 years old) in China are diagnosed with tumors every year, with an incidence rate of 38.58% and a mortality rate of 17.35%. Although the survival rate of children has been greatly improved due to the advancement of medical technology (surgery, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, etc.), these traumatic treatments will undoubtedly have a huge physical and mental impact on children.

In addition, because the child is too young and has not yet established a mature physical and mental response mechanism, various degrees of physical and mental symptoms (crying, screaming, aggressiveness, etc.) Children's quality of life and prognosis [11].

Art dance therapy can be used in many aspects of children with tumors, such as promoting cooperation among peers, improving cognition and exploration ability, etc. Given that children with

cancer generally feel helpless and imprisoned in the hospital, art dance therapy Creation is a very important way of coping for children, because it provides a place for children to express their inner thoughts freely, so that children can temporarily leave the impact of such acute stress events, and in the sense of artistic creation Enjoying peace and joy, lowered their anxiety and fear levels.

7. Conclusion

Dance education refers to the cultivation of students' comprehensive abilities in terms of physical fitness, aesthetic quality, and artistic accomplishment through dance training and education. Dance education in modern society has experienced a diversified development process from traditional classical ballet to modern dance, jazz dance, street dance and so on. The current education system should abandon a single evaluation standard and develop a curriculum system that is more inclusive of the diversity of children's talents. Dance education is of great significance to both personal development and the progress of the whole society. The progress of society is inseparable from creativity, and the process of learning dance is extremely beneficial to the cultivation of students' creativity. Therefore, the makers of the education system should value dance education more.

With the continuous development of dance education, the theory of art dance therapy has gradually formed and is widely used in the medical field. Art dance therapy treats psychological disorders, recovers physical injuries and other diseases through dance and exercise, and at the same time improves the psychological quality and physical quality of patients. It is based on body language to help patients release emotions and stress; cultivate patients' self-confidence and self-expression ability; through the combined effect of music and dance; enhance patients' emotional regulation ability and help patients rebuild body confidence and body awareness. In the fields of medicine and psychology, art dance therapy has been widely used in the treatment of rehabilitation, autism, depression, Alzheimer's disease and other diseases. Also, art dance therapy has also become a way of psychological counseling, which has a significant effect on reducing psychological stress, relieving emotional fatigue, and improving sleep.

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