

Benefits of Dance Education for the Teens with Hearing Impairment

청각장애 청소년을 위한 무용교육의 이점

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본 연구의 목적은 청각장애 청소년들을 위한 무용교육의 이점이 무엇인지 알아보고자 한다. 이를 통해 무용교육이 청각장애 청소년들에게 교육적, 신체적, 정서적 발달에 미치는 영향과 가르칠 때 고려해야 할 점들, 그리고 무용/움직임 요법으로써의 가치는 무엇인지 살펴보았다.

그 결과 교육적, 신체적, 정서적 발달에 미치는 영향으로는 첫째, 리듬 훈련은 청각장애 청소년들에게 춤을 어떻게 추는지 배우게 할 뿐만 아니라 신체적, 정신적, 정서적으로 안정감을 주고 창의력 향상에 큰 영향을 준다. 둘째, 창작 무용은 신체지각과 움직임 동작을 향상시키며 언어적 어휘력 발달에 도움을 준다. 또한 이러한 창의적인 움직임을 통해 다른 사람과의 의사소통에 대한 두려움이 줄어들고 사회성과 표현력이 발달된다. 셋째, 무용의 다른 교육적 가치는 무용을 통해 서로 다른 문화나 역사 및 다양한 장르의 무용을 배울 수 있다는 점이다. 이러한 무용교육은 청각장애 청소년에게 다양한 경험의 기회를 줄 뿐만 아니라 다른 사람을 이해하는데 많은 영향을 준다. 넷째, 무용은 신체적 정신적으로 연결되어 있는 만큼 청각장애 청소년들에게 신체적 움직임과 리듬감에 대한 두려움이 감소되고 자아 의식과 자아 수용의 발달 등 치료적 효과가 있다.

청각장애 청소년들은 시각적으로 배우기 때문에 가르칠 때 항상 그들의 상태를 살펴봐야 하며 의사소통이 자유롭기 위해서는 수화는 필수적이다. 시각적 또는 촉각적인 신호를 사용할 때 집중적으로 신호를 줄 수 있도록 시선 교환이 중요하며, 리듬을 시각적으로 배우기 때문에 박자를 맞출 때 박수나 드럼 또는 조명을 같이 사용하면 효과적이다. 또한 악기의 진동을 느끼거나 만져 봄으로써 리듬감을 향상시킬 수 있다.

청각장애인을 위한 무용교육의 역사는 일반 무용 교육에 비해 짧으며 청각장애인은 들을 수 없기 때문에 춤을 추거나 즐길 수 없다는 오해에서 비롯되었다. 무용교육이 이들에게 주는 많은 이점과 잠재력을 고려할 때 앞으로 청각장애인들을 위한 무용교육에 더 많은 관심이 필요하다.

key words) dance education, hearing impaired, dance/movement therapy

주요어) 무용교육, 청각장애인, 무용요법, 무용치료

Even though there has been continuous effort to develop dance education for the deaf in the past century, the history of dance education for the deaf reflects the lack of public interest, support system, and social resources. Moreover, there has been definite lack of educational opportunities provided for the deaf teenagers. Major part of the reason why there has not been much of an effort to teach dance to the deaf was because people did not know the benefits of dance education for the deaf. This study is to answer the question of "How dance education can be beneficial for the teens with hearing impairment?"

The main interests in dance education in this study are higher education and dance therapy. In dance education, there are the lack of educational opportunities for the deaf teenagers. The hearing impaired teens have no physical difficulties to dance other than the fact that they cannot hear the music. Teaching these teens in a classroom setting needs specialties in both higher dance education and dance therapy. For the study, it explores into the history of dance education for the hearing impaired teens, current educational system, physical and developmental value, and teaching methods for the teens while attempting to answer the question: How dance education can be beneficial for the teens with hearing impairment?

The interrogation leads this study research into the relations between dance education and the students' physical, mental and emotional development. The possible research method is gathering information about history of teaching dance to the hearing impaired, the misconceptions and assumptions, the teaching considerations and methods, immediate and extended educational value, and observing existing dance education programs for the hearing impaired teens, conducting interviews, finding articles and theories on the subject, and drawing data and conclusion from the research. However, this study is not be able to cover the actual research of existing classrooms, observations, and interviews because of the limitation of time

and provided resources. It reviews literature including personal essays of teaching experiences, published thesis on both dance education for the hearing impaired and the influence of dance therapy, education theories, psychological theories, dance therapy theories, and case studies which are already conducted in these fields.

The ultimate goal of the research examines how much impact of dance education has on the overall development of hearing impaired teens by answering the three following questions.

1. What value does dance play a role in the educational, physical, and emotional development of the hearing impaired?
2. What teaching considerations are necessary for the hearing impaired?
3. What is the therapeutic value of dance and movement for the hearing impaired?

In order to answer these questions, it conducts the review of literature, and it is divided into the four following categories: misconceptions, dance education for the hearing impaired, teaching considerations for the hearing impaired, and studies in dance movement therapy.

II. Review of literature

1. Misconceptions

In the historical development of dance for the hearing impaired, Bruno (1990), Hottendorf (1989), Jones (1985), Kelley and Frieden (1989), and Roman (1990) have pointed out several misconceptions, which have effected the development of dance for the hearing impaired.

The major misconception of dance for hearing impaired is that since the deaf cannot hear, they cannot dance or enjoy dancing. This misconception, therefore, created a barrier caused by not a lack of ability but a lack of opportunity for hearing impaired students to learn to dance. Professional dance teachers who were not deaf thought their students could not learn or enjoy dancing. The parents also had same misconceptions, and the students could not feel comfortable learning dance.

Dr. Peter Wisher, a dance educator for the hearing impaired for over thirty years at Gallaudet University, recalled :

Back in 1955, many of my students told me their parents would not allow them to attend school dances because they couldn't hear the music. Some still feel that way even though I have tried to prove that deaf dancers keep perfect time. Everyone has rhythm—it's inside of everyone, even the deaf (Roman, A.R., 1990:17).

Sue Gill, the Director of the National Deaf Dance Academy in Washington, D.C., and herself a hearing impaired dancer, reports "the assumption on the part of able-bodied people that dance is beyond the reach of individuals with hearing impairments is something of a myth...you really don't have to hear to dance. You depend on internal rhythm" (Kelley and Frieden, 1989:183). Hearing impaired children can exercise the awareness of their body, heart-beat, rhythm, and the breath inherent in every dance movement.

Several studies (Allen, 1988; Byun, 2001; Jones, 1985; Markell, 1961) have indicated that dance can be meaningful to the hearing impaired without the relationship to music. For the hearing impaired, dance, in itself, is the primary medium of expression and music is the secondary and supplementary media.

The hearing impaired can use their own musicality in their body without music. Markell (1961) wrote from his personal experience and years of teaching experience that they can learn how to sustain a steady rhythm or beat by feeling their heartbeat, pulse and the natural time span of breathing in and out. It gives the hearing impaired to get the inner rhythm though the body. Also, Allen (1988:34) states:

Rhythm is internal. Being able to hear music has nothing to do with being able to dance. Although music and dance are inseparable in the minds of most hearing people, they are two separate arts. Dance does not depend on music(34).

The ability to communicate and express oneself through one's body and movement is not related to the ability to hear sounds. The studies and articles suggest that there is no significant evidence to support the misconception that the profoundly deaf person will possess a lesser degree of ability and interest in dance. In addition, the authors argued that the ability to learn dance and to have an interest in dance is not dependent on the degree of hearing loss(Roman, A. R., 1990:20).

2. Dance education for the hearing impaired

In the early stages the dance education for the deaf started to teach rhythm. The early educators believed teaching rhythm enhanced the speaking ability. During the teaching dance to the deaf, they have realized that it had allowed the students to have access to their emotions and had given them the desire to learn dance and to engage in other physical activities. Overall, the articles and researchers agreed that dance education enhances the ability to learn other subjects, helps the students to socialize and are able to release the tension and stress (Benari, 1995; Byun, 2001; Pan, 1984; Roman, 1990).

1) Rhythm training

Until the midnineteen seventies, educational programmes for the hearing impaired focused on the oral method of education. During this period, rhythm training played a significant role in the development of speech. Dance was utilized as one of the components of rhythm training (Byun, 2001; Chodorow, 1991; Roman, 1990). One of the rhythm training was to develop the sense of rhythm inherent in every individual, including the hearing impaired. Dance trains and awakens the inner musicality of the deaf children,

and it also lets the deaf exercise their physical, psychological, emotional creativities. Dance not only can be the tools to teach rhythm but it has greater subsequent educational value.

2) Creative dance and movement

Creative dance and movement leads the deaf students to develop their creative potential by participating in inaudibility where disability is not. Moreover, it increases the deaf students' awareness of their bodies, improve their movement skills and verbal vocabulary, and develop favorable attitudes and appreciation of dance as an art form (Bruno, 1990; Roman, 1990; Weisbrod, 1972). Pisciotta (1980) recognized that the deaf have remarkable memories for recalling movement, that the skills of dance are very natural to the deaf, and that the deaf are able to concentrate longer than hearing students due to the lack of sound distraction. The author suggest that creative dance provides opportunities for socialization, fosters creative expression, and alleviates the frustration of verbal communication by providing a nonverbal medium of expression.

3) The value of dance

Dance has positive benefits on the psychological emotional physical developments of the hearing impaired. Several studies (Bruno, 1990; Byun, 2001; Chodorow, 1991; Pan, 1984; Weisbrod, 1972) have indicated that dance helps the hearing impaired overcome self-consciousness and gain in confidence and assurance, which is often lacking in hearing impaired individuals. Also they have revealed that dance provides an atmosphere where tensions and stress can be released for the hearing impaired. Dance affords an outlet where frustrations manifested from limitation in communication with the hearing world can be released. The studies have shown that dance decreases isolation and promotes socialization. Hearing impairment is frequently accompanied with increased levels of isolation and decreased opportunities for socialization. All articles found that dance helps the hearing impaired to externalize inner feelings which may be attributed to hearing impairment.

4) Extended educational value of dance

Pan (1984), Roman (1990), and Weisbrod (1972) found the benefits of dance education in teaching deaf students other educational subjects. The studies showed that dance could be useful in teaching reading, number concepts, history, and geography. The students would increase in understanding of reading and knowledge of vocabulary by demonstrating action verbs through movement. From Makell's teaching experience, by counting and combining the various number groupings found in the dance steps, the students gained practice in simple addition. According to the Byun's study, creative movement and dance skills improve vocabulary, comprehension, and the concept of action verbs. Through the demonstration of a movement, the students demonstrated more complex idioms through movement.

3. Teaching considerations

1) Using visual and tactile cues

When teaching dance to the hearing impaired, research has indicated that it is of utmost importance to maintain eye contact, to avoid walking around the room when giving instructions, and to remain visible to students at all times (Benari, 1995; Hottendorf, 1989; Kelly and Frieden, 1989). Kelly and Frieden (1989) suggested the blackboard or cards for instructional purposes.

Hottendorf states, "visually speaking, deaf people are generally more perceptive than the rest of us. Their lack of hearing makes them visual learners, so dance is one of the easiest things to teach them. Their language is movement" (Allen, 1988:36). Benari (1995) and Hottendorf (1989) state that rhythm can be visualized by counting with signed numbers, clapping, or beating the drum. Moreover, light impulses can convey rhythmic patterns for the hearing impaired.

As a teaching aid for hearing impaired dancers to learn rhythmic cues, the sense of touch has been utilized. The hearing impaired students can feel vibrations and rhythmic patterns by touching musical instruments or amplified speakers (Hottendorf, 1989; Kelley and Frieden, 1989). They can feel vibrations through the floor only under the following conditions: if the music is amplified,

and if the music contains heavy bass (Allen, 1988, Byun, 2001, Hottendorf, 1989). Kelley and Frieden (1989: 187) reported that:

Touching is to be encouraged and should be used to guide the participant. Instruction can be clarified through hands-on movement of the body or by placing the body in proper alignment in relationship to other dancers, the surrounding and the musical accompaniment (187).

2) Using auditory accompaniments

Many professionals use the drum as an effective instrument for teaching dance to the hearing impaired. The sound of the base drum can be heard by most hearing impaired individuals. In addition, the drum provides both a vibratory and visual stimuli for those students who are unable to hear the beat of the drum (Benari, 1995; Hottendorf, 1989). With a heavy bass, amplified music may provide the dancers with a tactile stimulus or an auditory stimulus on the sternum to feel the beat (Allen, A. R., 1988).

3) Other forms of communication

The use of sign language and total communication are the preferred form of communication for teaching dance. Roman (1990) reported that though the use of American sign language, the therapist could develop an atmosphere of trust and cooperation by communicating in the patient's native language. Kelley and Frieden (1989) suggested that since images are important for the learning process of the hearing impaired, instructors should communicate through manual signing. If a student communicates only orally, the teacher should speak with short, clear sentences.

Whisher reports that the instructor should meet the needs of each individual, whether this is through manual or oral means of communication. However, based on his thirty years of teaching experience with the hearing impaired, Whisher still finds total communication to be the most effective (Roman, 1990).

4. Dance movement therapy

The Primary dance movement therapy goals are to build self-identification and self-acceptance, to expand movement repertoire, to introduce new movement options through modulation, effort/shape dynamic, and self-control, to facilitate internal equilibrium and stability, to invite creative and affective movement expression, and to promote the development of whole body image (Schipper, 1982). Schipper (1982:1) suggests, "the uniquely nonverbal visual language of movement has the dynamic power to transcend auditory communication barriers. Hence, the hearing impaired child is invited to clarify his sense of body-self as he joins the dance."

Dance movement therapy can provide the hearing impaired with a safe, non-threatening environment where they can express themselves, communicate, and experience the feeling of being understood and accepted (Byun, 2002; Pan, 1984; Weisbrod, 1972). In Summary, the review of the literature examines dance education for the hearing impaired by looking into the existing misconceptions, the value of dance education for the hearing impaired, teaching considerations, and therapeutic value of dance. The result of the review strongly supports the value and benefits of dance education for the hearing impaired teens.

Dance for the hearing impaired remains potentially unrecognized by many and misunderstood by many others. The review revealed two prevailing attitude effecting the current status of dance for the hearing impaired:

1) A prevailing misconception from the hearing community which states, "since the deaf do not hear music, they can not dance." 2) A belief from part of the deaf community which states, "dance is based on music, therefore, it belongs to the hearing culture."

It became apparent that the deaf lack exposure, however, the lack of opportunity has no relation to the ability to dance or to learn dance. Dance can play a significant part in the educational, physical, and emotional development of hearing impaired individuals. The research reveals that dance can promote self-confidence, improve coordination, can be a part of the educational process, can improve social skills, can develop language skills, and can develop abstract and critical thinking. In teaching dance to the deaf,

sign language is essential and the drum can be used for establishing rhythm in a large variety of dance forms. Other considerations include increasing the amount of demonstration, gesturing, and making certain that the student can see the teacher. Touching, using loud bass sound, and using vibrations from the loud drum beat and bass can also be effective. It must be always remembered that the hearing impaired are visual learners and their eyes are their means of receiving information. As dance relates body and mind, dance movement therapy helps the hearing impaired exploring their movement strengths and limitations, utilizes tension and relaxation to better their energy, develops an awareness of breath and rhythmic confidence, allows them to explore space, and enhances their reading writing abilities. Overall, the review supports the educational, physical, psychological and emotional benefits of dance education for hearing impaired.

III. Discussion

This study researched into the benefits and considerations of dance education for the teens with hearing impaired in terms of educational, physical, and emotional development, and discussed the therapeutic value of dance and movement through it. The results are as follows.

First of all, dance education focused on rhythm training and creative dance helps the educational, physical, and emotional development for the hearing impaired teens. Educationally dance plays an important role to introduce one's body and coordination of the body. Dance teaches the students to learn rhythm and new vocabularies, improve their language skills to express their creativities, and interact with each other. Dance also involves learning different cultures which in turn offers many educational experiences. Learning rhythm through dance enhances the students' speaking ability. It helps them not only to develop their language skills, but also to enjoy dancing.

One of the reasons why many hearing-impaired students do not feel

comfortable about learning dance is because of their fear of following music. Learning rhythm helps to overcome this fear and lets them enjoy. They can feel their inner rhythm and gain confidence in movement through dance. Dance also can be useful in understanding of reading and knowledge of vocabulary. Teaching words through creative movements has a strong impact on the students' learning vocabulary, the concept of words, and comprehension.

Dance can bring wider subjects into the classrooms in relation to the background of each dance they are learning, the history of particular cultures, geography, politics, and so on. Dance provides opportunities for socialization, expression of communication, and awareness of their bodies by expressing their creativities. Students engage their physical, psychological, emotional creativities. Physically, dance helps the students to improve their posture and flexibility, to be in better shape, and to release the tension in their bodies.

In the case of the deaf school, the students are attending so much through their eyes and hands. They are writing and thinking all the time of language through their entire body. In dance, there is no barrier. In a sense, dance offers release. Those physical benefits of dance carry over into the emotional, social, and other areas of learning. Emotionally, dance helps the hearing impaired to develop better morality, self-esteem, and self-confidence, and encourages them to be more independent, and increases their possibilities to socialize with others.

Second, it is necessary visual and tactile elements to be considered essential and sign language as a method of communication is the key in classrooms.

It must always be remembered that the hearing impaired are visual learners. Considering the condition of the hearing impaired, teachers need to facilitate specific and various teaching methods. Effectively incorporating visual cues, tactile cues, auditory accompaniments, and sign language will help maximizing the outcome of the class. In terms of communication tools, the use of total communication is the most preferred form of communication for teaching dance. Total communication is more frequently used method of communication. This method of communication combines speech, signing, and finger spelling. Using sign language allows teachers to communicate with the students in their native language, which can provide certain level of comfort and trust. If a student communicates only orally, the teacher should speak with short, clear sentences.

By using the combined methods, teachers can be better equipped for responding to each student's needs to communicate. Since the hearing impaired have been visual learners, visual cues are extremely useful in classrooms. Writing on the blackboard or cards for instructional purposes, clapping, counting or signing numbers, and beating drum can help giving clear instructions to the students. It is very important that the teacher maintains eye contact with the students and does not move around the room in order for the students to pick up the visual cues. In addition, rhythm can be visualized by the use of visual cues, which is essential for learning dance and movement. Auditory accompaniments provide the students with both vibratory and visual stimuli. They cannot hear the music but they can feel the music through vibration. Especially, using low pitch percussive instrument such as drum can give both visual and vibratory sensation. Establishing rhythm often becomes the key to learning the structure of many dance forms. Feeling the drum beat can help the students embody the rhythm. Using amplified recorded music or piano also allows the students feel the rhythm as well as the music itself through the vibration. The sense of touch can give the hearing impaired to encourage learn rhythmic cues and movement of the body. By touching instruments or auditory accompaniments, the students can feel vibrations and learn rhythmic patterns. Moreover, they can be learned their movement of body and rhythm through hands-on or placing the bodies.

Third, it discovered that dance and movement education for the hearing impaired teens have the therapeutic value of not only educational aspects but also psychological, mental, and social aspects. Many of educational principles in dance can be applied to a dance therapy setting. Dance is a great way to release tension for the hearing impaired as well as a way to be creative. Through dance therapy, the hearing impaired can release the stress and dissatisfaction that come from the possible difficulties of not having as much freedom in communicating with the others. Dance movement therapy provides the hearing impaired to have opportunities for actively moving their bodies, expressing their emotions, and encouraging social activities. Therefore, they can have confidence of themselves including their bodies, and movement strengths and limitation.

The other educational value of dance therapy could be the development of improvisational skills and building creativity, both of which tremendously

help the students grow spontaneous problem-solving skills on their own. This can build their confidence and self-esteem. Through dance movement therapy, the hearing impaired build self-identification, feel freedom of their limitation, develop their creativities and expressions, and engage social activities.

IV. Conclusion

Dance, as an art form, has the ability to communicate despite cultural and language differences. Since the language of dance relies on inner expression, movement communication, and visual orientation, it seems natural that the hearing impaired, whose language is based on these principles, use dance to express themselves, enhance their social and educational abilities, as well as simply enjoy learning dance.

Throughout this study, It explored that the value and effectiveness of dance education can give to a particular person, as well as the educational value could be found that there is a meaning as a method of therapy. As a result, the rhythm training, which used to focused on because of its relation to the development of speech, frees the students from the awkwardness in their movement and awakens the inner musicality. Deaf students have remarkable memories for recalling movement and are able to concentrate longer due to the lack of sound distraction. Using these abilities, dance fosters creative expression, provides opportunities for socialization, and alleviates the frustration of verbal communication. Dance helps the students to overcome self-consciousness, gain confidence and assurance, decrease isolation, and promote socialization. It lets the hearing impaired teens to externalize inner feelings.

Dance education for the hearing impaired has a relatively short history and it has been trying to overcome the general misconceptions. Despite the range of hearing loss, deaf are capable of perceiving music for the dance by

internalizing rhythm, visual cue, and visualizing music.

Thus, this study from the current situation, which is a lack of research on hearing impaired, has extended the range of dance education for disabled and evoked interest in dance education. However, it has limitations that can not examine the therapeutic effect with respect to other disorders, because it has focused on the hearing impaired only. Further study on the subject will help discovering more detailed scientific connection between dance and overall development of the students, developing teaching methods, and providing more effective educational approaches for the teachers.

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