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Line Dance: An Opportunity for Students' Physiological and Psychological Well-being

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Abstract

Given the emerging technology and development and evolution of leisure activities, dancing still remains as one of the popular recreational activities for young people. Dancing appeals to adolescents. Dance is usually accompanied by popular music cultures which the young people are much inclined to, which could be a possible reason why this physical activity is attractive for the adolescent age group. This study aims to emphasize the importance and effects of physical activity, specifically line dancing, towards the physiological as well as psychological well-being of adolescents, specifically students. Interviews were conducted to 16 students to show the advantages and influence of dance to total fitness. Thus, this study showed that physical activity, specifically line dancing, is an opportunity for young people to acquire physiological as well as psychological well-being.

Keywords: physical activity, physiological well-being, psychological well-being

Introduction

Dance is an avenue for health benefits not just physically and physiologically but also mentally and emotionally. Dance brings multiple physiological as well as psychological benefits such as cardiovascular fitness, flexibility, and self-esteem. A study by Dance for Health (Nordin and Hardy as cited in Hampshire Dance and Trinity Laban, n. d.) found that dance had positive effects on cardiovascular health, lung capacity, flexibility, confidence, and emotional wellbeing.

Dancing is one physical activity that can easily be introduced and taught to various groups with different age and backgrounds. Dancing is easily appealing especially to adolescents; introducing this physical activity to this age group would result to physically active adolescents and later on physically active adults.

“Maintaining regular levels of physical activity among children and adolescents is regarded essential for long term-positive health related attitudes and behaviors” (Hampshire Dance & Trinity Laban, n.d.). Well-being was recently defined by the UK government as “a positive physical and social and mental state” (Mental health foundation, 2013). According to NRG: Youth, Dance, & Health and Dance 4 Your Life, “dance is an appropriate physical activity to maintain and improve aspects of fitness & wellbeing...” (Hampshire Dance & Trinity Laban, n.d.).

Bourdieu's concept of “Cultural Capital” entails aesthetic appreciation which implicates a distance from economic necessities and practical urgencies. Through dancing, the individual is able to gain distance from necessities and urgencies -- which for adolescents can be quite confusing in this stage in their lives (Fensham & Gardner, 2005). Dancing helps adolescents forget their problems and confusion as well as provide a means for self-expression (Hampshire Dance & Trinity Laban, n.d.). Thus, this paper aims to emphasize the importance and effects of physical activity, specifically line dancing, towards the physiological as well as psychological well-being of adolescents, specifically students.

Methodology

The study was conducted among 16 college students enrolled in PE 2 Line Dance from the University of the Philippines Los Banos (UPLB). Two dimensions were looked at and how they related to participation in Line Dance class, specifically, physical aspects which included health and skill related components of well-being such as weight, flexibility,

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posture, cardiovascular endurance, etc. as well as psychological aspects which included indicators such as self-esteem, anxiety, moodiness etc. A survey form was given to all respondents combined with free flowing interview conducted to ensure that all aspects of this study are covered.

Results and Discussions

A. Physical Health

Most of the students considered themselves as physically inactive. However, 14 out of 16 students answered that they consider line dance as a health promoting physical activity.

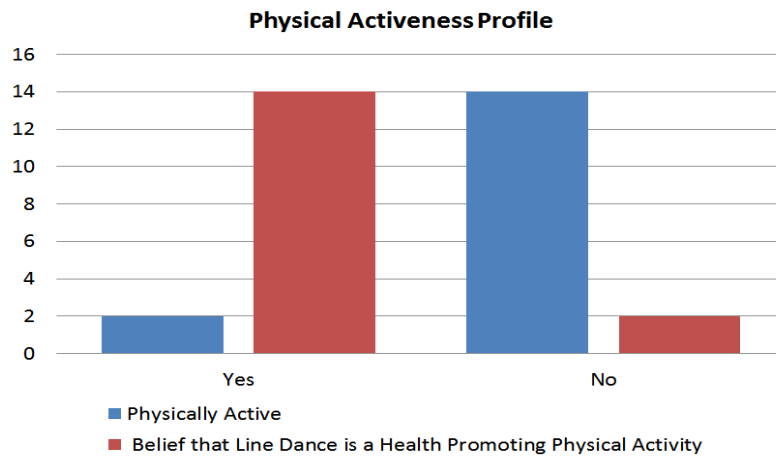


Fig 1

Among the physical components (body composition, flexibility, physical strength, muscular endurance, posture, cardiovascular endurance and weight), most of the students

said that their posture and cardiovascular endurance were improved after taking line dance class.

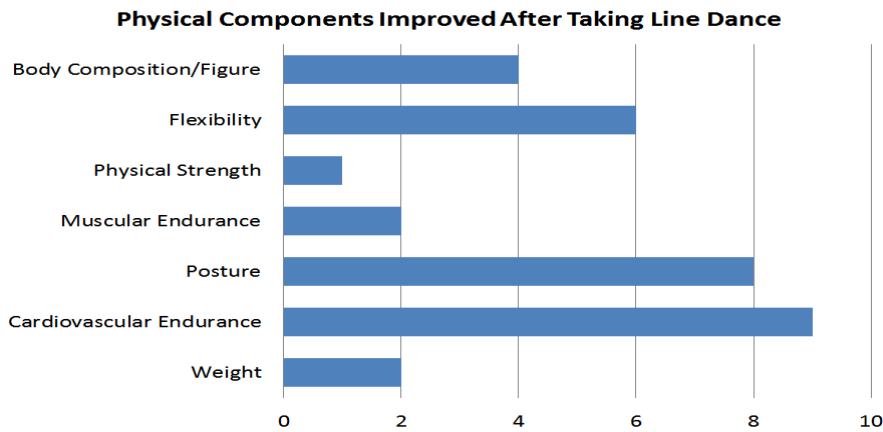


Fig 2

B. Psychological Health

Students were asked how often they experience

psychological or mental distress. Most of the students answered that they only experience distress sometimes.

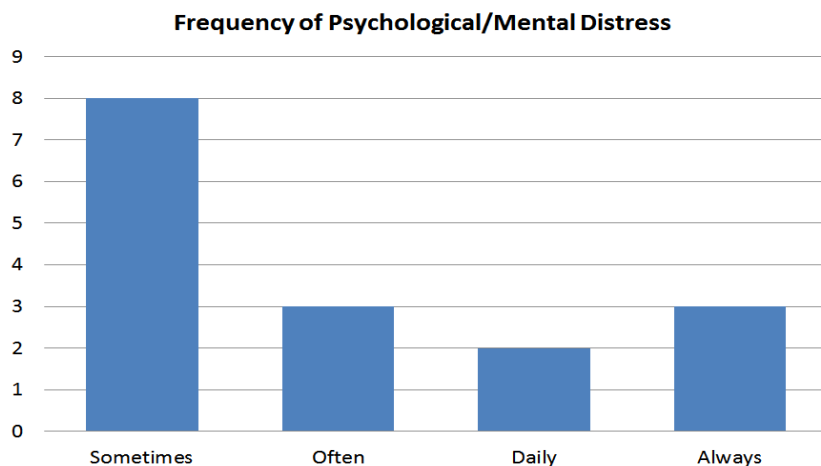


Fig 3

Among the psychological stress symptoms (feeling scared, anxious, moody, and irritable, forgetfulness, preoccupation with thoughts or tasks, easily embarrassed, inability to concentrate, and fear of failure), most of the students

answered that they are struggling with forgetfulness, preoccupation with thoughts or tasks and inability to concentrate.

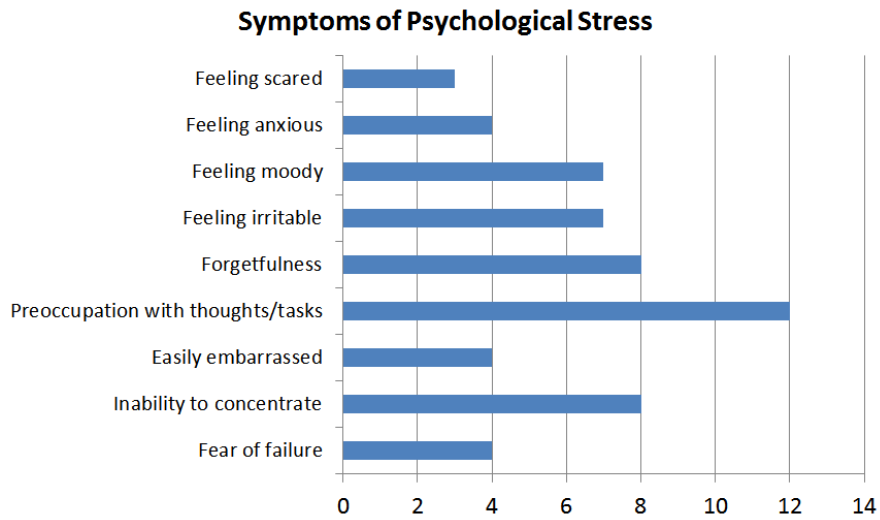


Fig 4

When asked whether taking up line dance class helped them in dealing with psychological stress in general, most of the students said yes.

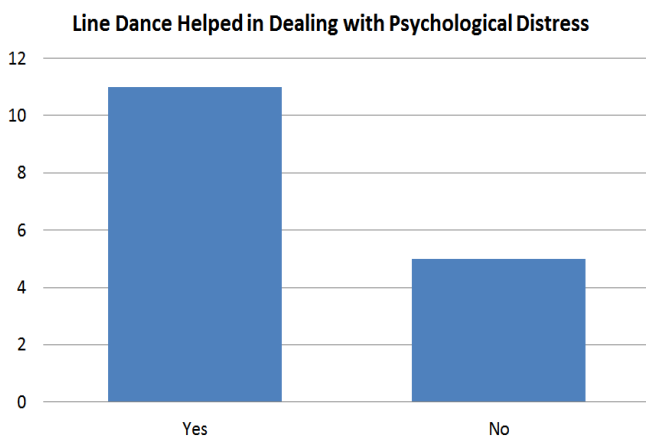


Fig 5

While most of the students said that their level of self-esteem or self-confidence is average, most of them answered that taking line dance class helped in boosting their self-esteem/self-confidence levels.

Level of Self-esteem / Self-confidence

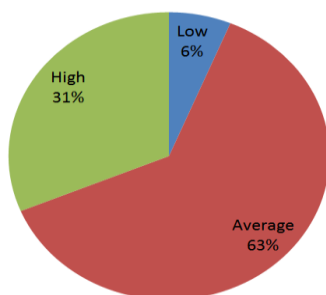


Figure 6

Line Dance Boosting Self-esteem/Self-confidence

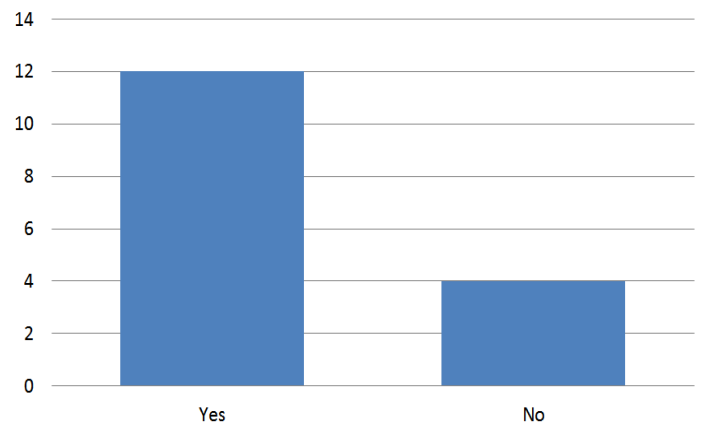


Fig 7

Lastly, students were asked whether they recommend line dance class to students who are suffering from physical/physiological ailments and from psychological/mental distress. Most of the respondents answered yes.

Line Dance Recommended to Students with Physical/Physiological Ailments

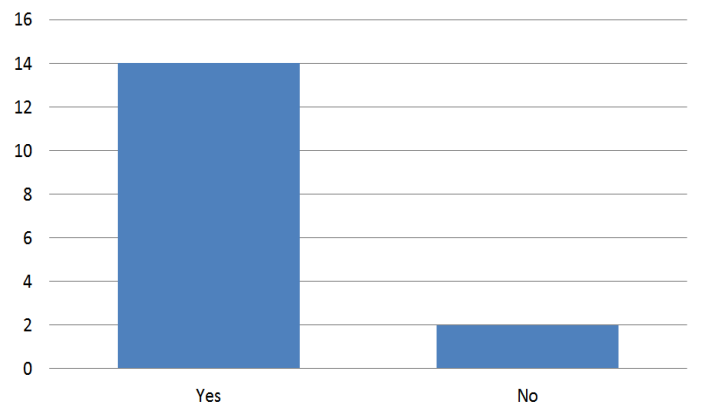


Fig 8

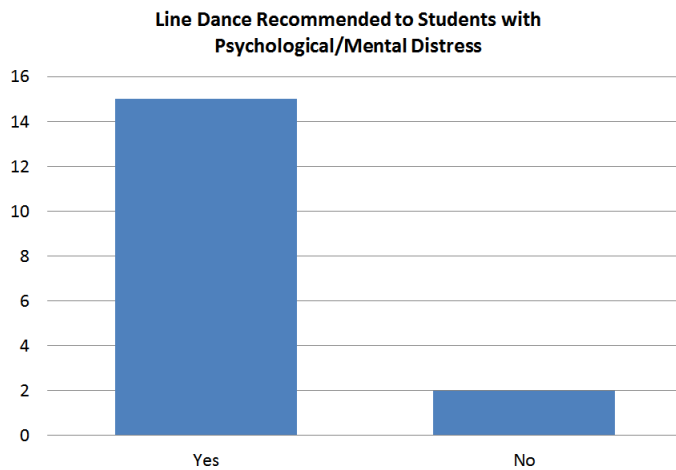


Fig 9

4. Conclusion

Based on the survey conducted to sixteen (16) U.P. students who took PE2 Line Dance and literatures gathered about dancing and one's well-being, this study illustrates the relationship between line dance as a physical activity and its effect on students' physical and psychological well-being. Conclusions are as follows:

- a. Students believe that line dance is a health-promoting physical activity. Moreover, line dance improves one's posture and cardiovascular endurance.
- b. Students are sometimes subjected to psychological and mental distress particularly forgetfulness, preoccupation with thoughts or tasks and inability to concentrate. Generally, line dance helped them in dealing with these psychological distresses. Moreover, taking up line dance class boosts one's self-esteem and self-confidence.
- c. Line dance is recommended to students who are suffering from physical and physiological ailments and from psychological and mental distress.

Out of the sixteen respondents, most have a positive attitude and view towards line dance as a positive health and well-being promoting physical activity. In any case, line dance class was able to help majority of the respondents with their physical as well as psychological conditions. This study shows to prove that physical activity, specifically line dancing, is an opportunity for young people to acquire physiological as well as psychological well-being.

Considerations for further research

This study is particularly limited to a small population of respondents and therefore cannot be used to generalize to a broader population. The majority of respondents are also females which makes it difficult to incorporate the findings to the opposite gender. The questionnaire used is also limited in its content and framework to just psychological and physiological well-being. Well-being is defined by the UK government as the "a positive physical and social and mental state" (Mental Health Foundation, 2013). Further research may be necessary to be able to generalize the findings to a broader population; further research may be necessary to capture the context of well-being in a more wholesome manner; and further research may be necessary to capture the implications of line dance to the male gender.

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