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Connection Between Involvement in Dance and Building Character: An Analysis of Student Behavior

Megan L. Hoggarth

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

CONNECTION BETWEEN INVOLVEMENT IN DANCE AND
BUILDING CHARACTER: AN ANALYSIS OF
STUDENT BEHAVIOR.

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Of Masters in Dance Education

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School of Theatre Arts and Dance
Dance Education

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This Thesis by: Megan L. Hoggarth

Entitled: *Connection Between Involvement in Dance and Building Character: An Analysis of Student Behavior.*

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in College of Performing and Visual Arts in School of Theatre and Dance, Program of Theatre Educator Intensive

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of dance involvement on high school students' behaviors. This quantitative and qualitative study was designed to answer the three essential questions and to determine the connection if any between involvement in dance class, and changes in students' character traits and behaviors. The research instruments were a student character trait survey, student interviews, and observation forms.

The study is based from the seven character traits listed in Paul Tough's book, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character* and from the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP). The seven character traits are grit, curiosity, self-control, zest, gratitude, social intelligence, and optimism. One goal of the study was to make or help students become aware of the seven character traits and begin implementing them in their daily lives. Character education is important in schools because sometimes success is not defined by the highest grade in the class. Tough argues that the qualities that make people successful have more to do with character than with scoring the highest on tests. If students have a hard time in school, they can still become successful if they possess the seven character traits. If they are hardworking and determined, anything is possible.

The findings from this study suggest that implementing character traits into the classroom may have a positive effect on student behavior. Furthermore, the findings of this study led to more recommendations for future research. Character traits should be an integral part of the curriculum, not taught as a separate subject in school.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	Goal of Study	1
	Purpose of Study	2
	Significance of Study	5
II.	LITERATURE REVIEW	12
	Traditional Teaching	12
	Twenty-first Century Education	13
	The Role of Arts and Arts Integration	17
	Research on the Value of the Arts as an Alternative Teaching Strategy	21
	Implementing Character Education	23
III.	METHODOLOGY	31
	Research Site	31
	Research Participants	32
	Research Design	32
	Instrumentation	33
	Data Analysis	35
IV.	DISCUSSION	40
	Character Traits—Quantitative Analysis	40
	Students’ Behaviors—Quantitative Analysis	47
	Students’ Interviews—Qualitative Analysis	49
	Behavior Observations—Qualitative Analysis	53
V.	CONCLUSION	58
	Implications of the Study	59
	Limitations of the Study	60
	Recommendations for Further Research	61
	Conclusion	62
	WORKS CITED	63

APPENDICES

A.	PRINCIPAL'S APPROVAL LETTER	66
B.	APPROVAL LETTER FROM IRB.....	68
C.	CONSENT FORMS.....	71
D.	RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS.....	81

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1:	GRIT	41
FIGURE 2:	SELF-CONTROL AT SCHOOL OR IN CLASS	42
FIGURE 3.	GRATITUDE.....	43
FIGURE 4.	SELF-CONTROL: INTERPERSONAL	43
FIGURE 5.	ZEST.....	44
FIGURE 6.	OPTIMISM.....	45
FIGURE 7.	SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE	46
FIGURE 8.	CURIOSITY	46
FIGURE 9.	OVERALL COMPARISON.....	47
FIGURE 10.	NUMBER OF TIMES A STUDENT WAS TARDY.....	48
FIGURE 11.	NUMBER OF TIMES A STUDENT WAS ABSENT.....	48

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1. Grit—Character Trait Survey.....37

TABLE 2. Teachers’ Responses of Improved Student Behaviors.....54

TABLE 3. Teachers’ Observations: Behaviors that still need improvement..56

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Goal of Thesis

How does one define character? Is character defined by someone's personality, their mentality, or by their reputation? Paul Tough describes "character as being innate and unchanged, a core set of attributes that define one's very essence." (59). In contrast to his book, Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman describe character as "a term that does not have a fixed meaning. Character may simply be defined by what someone does not do" (5). If character is defined as not having a fixed meaning, then is character something that can be taught or is it something that is passed down? How does character develop? What roles do teachers play in developing character?

One of the goals of this project is to see effects of dance on students' traits and behaviors. If a student shows improvement on optimism and grit, they are more likely to do better in academic classes. If a student attends school more regularly, they are more likely to do better in all of their classes, including academics. Another goal of the study is to make or help students become aware of the seven character traits below and begin implementing them in their daily lives. The seven characteristic traits are grit, self-control (school work and interpersonal), zest, social intelligence, gratitude, optimism, and curiosity. Another goal is to determine if these characteristic traits are related to other

important outcomes, such as teachers filling out fewer disciplinary referral forms, decreased attendance issues, and being tardy less often.

Purpose of Study

One of the main purposes of this study is to answer the three essential questions: (1) Can the dance program help students grow and develop in ways not possible in an academic classroom? (2) How are character traits such as social intelligence or curiosity possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? (3) How are other student behaviors such as school attendance or office referrals possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? The study will look at possible ways a dance program can help students grow and develop in ways not feasible in an academic classroom. This study is an evaluation of a curriculum design and traditional research models do not apply in this study.

“Research studies connecting dance and learning indicate dance education has a positive effect on human traits and abilities such as creativity, critical thinking, self-esteem, reading, and social skills” (Hofmeister and Minton 68). Three programs that stretch the body and the mind are The International Baccalaureate Dance Programme, Knowledge is Power Program, and Waldorf education. These programs focus on developing artistic expression, social interactions, critical thinking skills, and building character. These programs believe success in life does not only depend on academic learning, but on character development. The first program that is designed to prepare students for success at a university and life beyond through a balance of academics and the arts is The International Baccalaureate (IB) Dance Programme. “This program encourages students to be knowledgeable, to ask questions, to develop intercultural

understandings, to become open-minded, caring, and compassionate, and to respect themselves and other's viewpoints" (International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme 1). From this program students are able to relate and connect to other subjects more easily due to the IB dance program. One student stated "I think that the written word hits the mind, but the dance word hits the heart. The written word can only go so far, but dance can hit that last chord" (Hofmeister and Minton 72). Another student stated "you can feel the emotions of the people; whereas, textbooks just give you the straight analytical point of view that makes no sense to you" (Hofmeister and Minton 73). The IB dance program promotes academic rigor while contributing to their high school as good students and great citizens.

The Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) is a program implemented in public schools that focuses on the seven character traits from Paul Tough's book, *How Children Succeed*. The KIPP Foundation had this to say about the program.

KIPP's mission is to create a respected, influential, and national network of public schools that are successful in helping students from educationally underserved communities develop the knowledge, skills, character and habits needed to be successful in college and the competitive world beyond. KIPP's motto is "Work hard. Be Nice." The development of character has been as important to us as the teaching of rigorous academic skills. "We believe both are essential to the success of our students in college and life, and a wide body of research proves it." (Character and Academics)

The idea behind the character report card at KIPP is for students to think their intelligence can be improved. "That presenting character to students not as a set of fixed traits but as a series of constantly developing attributes will inspire them to improve those traits" (Tough 98).

The third program is Waldorf education, also known as Steiner education, and is based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner (Association of Waldorf Schools of North

America). He divides child development in three stages; childhood education, elementary education, and secondary education. The three different developmental stages are described below.

In childhood education these students focus on hands-on activities and creative play. Waldorf believed children learn best by being immersed in an environment they can learn from. A regular school day involves free play, artistic work, circle time, outdoor recess, and practical tasks, such as gardening, cooking, and cleaning. In elementary education these students focus on developing artistic expression and social interactions. Students connect to content on a deeper level because academic instruction is taught through artistic work which includes storytelling, visual arts, drama, movement, vocal and instrumental music, and crafts. Subjects that are taught at the secondary level include language arts, mythology, geology, algebra, history, geography, geometry, biology, mineralogy, astronomy, physics, nutrition, and chemistry. Secondary education focuses on developing critical thinking skills and empathetic understanding. Students at this level are expected to have a solid foundation to form conclusions based on their own thinking skills and judgment. (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America)

According to the Association of Waldorf Schools, assessments are based on reports from teachers on individual academic progress and personal development. Letter grades are not given until they reach the secondary level. Students are not asked to repeat a grade level and it is rare for students to be held back. It is uncommon for standardized testing to take place unless it is for college entry. Waldorf schools emphasize experiences and opportunities discovered through subject content over achieving a high score on a test (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America). The Association of Waldorf schools had this to say about this type of education.

Music, dance and theater, writing, literature, legends, and myths are not simply subjects to be read about and tested. They are experienced. Through these experiences, Waldorf students cultivate their intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual capacities to be individuals certain of their paths and to be of service to the world. (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America)

Students who graduate from Waldorf schools have the ability to integrate thinking; to assimilate information as opposed to memorizing isolated facts; to be flexible, creative and willing to take intellectual risks; and are leaders with high ethical and moral standards who take initiative and are passionate to reach their goals (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America).

Character education is important in schools because sometimes success is not defined by the highest grade in the class. Tough argues that the qualities that make people successful have more to do with character than with scoring the highest on tests. If students have a hard time in school, they can still become successful if they possess the seven character traits. If they are hardworking and determined, anything is possible.

The purpose of the essential questions is to notice changes in students' behaviors due to their participation in the dance program. Character traits such as grit and optimism will exhibit possible effects by participation in a high school dance program. Students' behaviors such as school attendance, tardiness, and office referrals will be looked at in terms of participation in a high school dance program. Another main purpose is to promote and show the importance of implementing character education in schools.

Significance of Study

The significance of the study is to show that students who do not excel in school can still become successful adults if they possess the seven character traits, and if the character traits can be developed through participation in dance and the other arts. Schools need to be preparing students for higher education not only academically, but emotionally and psychologically. Tough states, "In the classroom, they are hampered by poor concentration, impaired social skills, an inability to sit and follow directions, and

what teachers perceive as misbehavior.” (192). Students need someone to take them seriously, listen to them, believe in their abilities, be the support system, and challenge them to improve their abilities. The teacher’s job is not only to convey information, but more importantly to help students change or strengthen their character to become successful adults in the future. In order for a positive change to happen character education needs to be a daily priority. According to Dewey, “people can be defined by how they learn. Dewey believed that a love of learning and a desire to serve the community, along with good judgment and human empathy, are key components of a good character” (Casil 52).

We are coming to an age where teachers can no longer stand in front of the room and lecture for hours on end. Students do not remember content if teachers are just filling their brain with information. In today’s world, information changes too rapidly to master everything that has been taught. We are coming to an era where it is more important for students to learn how to find information they want to know and how to use that information quickly and correctly. “We want thinkers, we want people skills, we want problem-solvers, we want creativity, and we want teamwork” (Jensen 9). Learning should be more about offering opportunities for more in depth inquiries instead of trivia type questions just to memorize and forget the information. Memorizing information is the old reality. Anyone at any time can access information they desire, but can they analyze it, critique it, and use it in context? Students need to answer in depth questions, take the time to think, and reflect back on the information.

Teaching character education in dance class is more about teaching life-long skills, such as a hard work ethic, dedication, the value of being on time, setting goals and

accomplishing them, and problem solving. A community is established in the dance program and students feel like they belong and have purpose, which in turn, increases students' self-esteem and confidence levels. In a study Minton found that social self-esteem scores of students in one dance class were significantly higher than the social self-esteem scores for a control class at the same school (105). The significance of this study is to show positive effects of dance on students' character traits and behaviors. Students who have a higher self-esteem level perform better academically and behavior improves.

How does one define smart? What makes a person smart? Is it the amount of information they remember? "Intelligence is not just the ability to do well in school; it comprises different aptitudes for living and learning. It crosses culture. It is not fixed at birth; It is fluid" (McCutchen 78). This is the way author Brenda Pugh McCutchen defined intelligence in her book *Teaching Dance as Art in Education*. The multiple intelligences and the Values in Action Inventory (VIA-IS) are both ways to look at definitions and assesses intelligences. Most people would define intelligence as scoring the highest on a test. Howard Gardner believed that intelligence was defined as "an intelligence entails the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community" (Gardner 15). Howard Gardner identified seven distinct intelligences: linguistic, logical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Linguistic intelligence is when learners think in words and use words effectively. These learners enjoy writing, journaling, playing word games, and reading (Gardner 21). Logical intelligence is when learners see and explore patterns and puzzles. These learners enjoy calculating, reasoning, and solving puzzles (Gardner 19-21). Musical intelligence is when learners love hearing sounds. They

love music, show sensitivity to rhythm and beats, and may study better with music playing in the background. (Gardner 17). Spatial intelligence is thought of in terms of physical space. These learners are very aware of their space, they like to draw, figure out jigsaw puzzles, and read maps (Gardner 21). Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence is learning through movement. These individuals have a keen sense of the body, they pay attention to body language, and they learn best through hands-on learning (Gardner 18). Those with interpersonal intelligence are able to understand and interact with others, and they tend to learn best in group settings, have many friends, and are street smart (Gardner 22-23). Intrapersonal intelligence is having a clear understanding of one's own feelings, emotions, interests, and goals. They enjoy being alone, have wisdom, intuition, and motivation, strong opinions, and shy away from others (Gardner 24-25). Intelligence is no longer defined by a test score nor defined by how many facts can be remembered, but how the information can be used or the ability to create something.

Dance relies on many of the multiple intelligences, including bodily-kinesthetic, musical, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Dancers use music while dancing and develop a sharp sense for rhythm, tempo, beat, and musical tones. While a musician's instrument is the trumpet, saxophone, or a flute, the dancer's instrument is the body. Dancers have an impeccable intelligence for reading body language, have a keen sense of body awareness, and can read social interactions between people. Students who are involved with dance for longer periods of time have a heightened sense of spatial awareness. Spatial awareness is being aware of the relationships to the dancer or dancers in space. Dancers learn spatial awareness quickly in class by being able to dance in space without hitting anyone or dancing in a formation and maintaining equal distance between

the dancers. Students build on interpersonal intelligence because students collaborate as a whole group, in smaller groups, or in partners, but in the end they all come together to organize, plan, and prepare for dance concerts. Students involved in dance are more aware of the emotions and feelings they have because they are in tune with them on a daily basis. Students are asked to express feelings about different experiences from class, outside of class, how an exercise made them feel, or to express emotions about a past event.

Educational dance helps to teach what other subjects cannot. Intelligence is far more than the highest grade on a test or the highest grade in the class. In fact, civilizations do not record history by who achieved the highest score on standardized tests, but by the great works of art, scientific discoveries, legends and literature, music scores, and folk and classical dances—not by numbers of statistics.

The Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS) is a psychological assessment to determine someone's profile of character traits. Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman, who are both researchers of the psychology field, developed the twenty-four character strengths, have written many books in the psychology field, and created the online survey for people's strengths. The strengths were designed to fulfill people's lives instead of capitalizing on people's weaknesses. The online survey takes about thirty minutes to complete, and adults and youth are both able to participate. The higher the score the more likely the character trait will become a strength.

One intelligence that does not make Howard Gardner's list is emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman, author of the book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, mentions that "we leave the emotional intelligence of our children

by chance, with ever more disastrous results. One solution is a new vision of what schools can do educate the whole student, bringing together mind and heart in the classroom” (xiv). The definition of emotional intelligence, as described by Daniel Goleman, are “abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one’s moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope” (34). By participating in movement arts students learn that they can control their emotions and how they feel. Everyone has emotions, but not everyone is taught how to control their emotions. The movement arts teach students to control emotions through appropriate expression. It is becoming more common for students to come to school with no support from home, with concerns and problems, and while dealing with trauma. How are students supposed to be on task, follow directions and be focused for eight hours a day when dealing with so much baggage from home? Emotional issues will get expressed either in negative or positive ways. The movement arts can aid students in transferring negative emotions into positive emotions. It is not surprising that a “problem child” in one academic class is a treasured student for the kinesthetic teacher. “Simply providing an opportunity to express pent-up physical energy often produces surprising amounts of concentration and focus” (Griss 80). Students who are offered movement throughout the day tend to improve their behaviors. Students react to the world in physical ways and do not need to be taught how to roll down a hill, crawl on the floor, or run outside. Creative movement or dance allows students to explore these natural abilities. If they are not given the opportunities to express these physical needs, students will react in ways not suitable for the classroom. According to Griss, “the ability to move while learning decreased the

otherwise inappropriate behaviors of these students. It made their movement acceptable and a valuable part of the day” (78).

The need for character education in schools is apparent, but in today’s world character education is overlooked. At a time when violence in schools and around the world has been increasing, now is the time to start focusing on character education in youth. This study will hopefully show ways in which students can grow and develop not possible in an academic classroom, demonstrate how the student’s character traits are affected by participation in a high school dance program, point out how other student behaviors such as school attendance or office referrals are affected by participation in a high school dance program. Implementing the seven character traits from Paul Tough’s, *How Children Succeed*, essentially does not make a student smarter, but they are the golden hidden traits to enduring in a long life filled with successes.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditional Teaching

What is the capital of North Dakota? What percentage of Earth is covered by water? Which bird can fly backwards? Which country has the most lakes? Is someone considered intelligent if they answered these questions correctly? When traditional teaching was the focus of education, memorizing facts was emphasized to increase test scores. Traditional teaching focused on rote memorization of facts, recitation, drilling, and lecture. Learning was boring and disconnected, the assignments were unrelated, and all students learned the same material at the same pace. If students fell short of learning the material or fell through the cracks they failed, rather than being given the opportunity for intervention or remediation. Learning was teacher-centered and students sat quietly in their desks until asked to read out loud for class. There was no discussion between the teacher and the student to deepen learning. To maintain classroom management, forms of corporal punishment were even used. The teacher was the main source of information and parents and students had no say in what was taught.

“Many teachers did not even question this method of learning and many students came to hate school and dislike learning” (Casil 92). At this time, many students were not allowed to attend school. This was true of the children of the slaves, the poor, or female

children. John Dewey argued against the traditional way of teaching by put his ideas into action. Education, as it is known today, owes him credit for the changes seen today.

Twenty-first Century Education

Even in the 1900's John Dewey, philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer, had the right idea about education. His philosophy of education is current with the twenty-first century's educational ideas.

Dewey's ideas about learning helped to create the American system of education that exists today. Dewey introduced the idea of pupil initiative into the classroom. Instead of teachers telling students what to do, students had the opportunity to learn what they wanted to learn, the way they wanted to learn it. (Casil 13)

Dewey believed that everyone could learn and grow that the learning process was just as important as the subjects taught, and that a strong society needed to be educated in order to thrive. Some of Dewey's main educational beliefs, which are taken from the book *John Dewey: The Founder of American Liberalism* by Amy Sterling Casil, include:

- Learning should be focused on the child rather than the lesson.
- Learning is a social process that is achieved most effectively in small groups.
- Learning should be acquired through hands-on projects.
- The goal of education should not only be excellence in academics but also creative problem solving.
- The process of learning in a school setting should be a continuation of the type of learning that takes place in everyday life.
- Academic learning should be broad-based and encompass not only traditional subjects but also subjects such as arts, sports, music, and various extracurricular activities (49).

As one can see these beliefs are instilled in the educational field today. In the twenty-first century, education has shifted from teacher-centered to student-centered. Education today emphasizes a different set of skills needed to thrive in today's world. Collaboration, teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills are essential in achieving success now and in the future. Even digital literacy, where information is easily accessible and ideas are becoming endless, is a crucial component for success.

Dewey and Elliot Eisner both agree the experiences that one faces within the environment becomes a catalyst for education. Dewey states, "The word "experience" to mean all aspects of a person's relationship with the environment, not just human thought" (Casil 76). Eisner relates, "Experiencing the environment is, of course, a process that continues throughout life; it's the very stuff of life. The senses are the avenues to consciousness" (Eisner 1, 2). Without the senses one would be unaware of the qualities in the environment to which humans respond (Eisner 2). Humans learn to use the senses, sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch, to distinguish, identify and reminisce. Our sensory system is where development and learning takes place with the help of language, the arts, science, and values. Eisner defines education below.

Experience is central to growth because experience is the medium of education. Education, in turn, is the process of learning to create ourselves, and it is what the arts, both as a process and as the fruits of that process, promote. Work in the arts is not only a way of creating performances and products; it is a way of creating our lives by expanding our consciousness, shaping our dispositions, satisfying our quest for meaning, establishing contact with others, and sharing a culture (Eisner 3).

Education today fosters a community of learners to build a culture within the classroom. Many activities include hands-on activities, student-led discoveries, and group activities that create a learning environment that analyzes, critiques, and evaluates

information. Many learning tasks include hands-on work, student-led discoveries, and group activities that connect to all other information previously taught.

More collaboration between academic teachers has become increasingly common. For example, in science class students may be learning about the life cycle of plants. In agriculture class students may grow plants to experience the life cycle first hand. In math class students may graph the amount of water given compared to the amount of sunlight received. In dance class students may create movement based on observations of plant growth for the day. In English class students may write an essay of the plant's life cycle and the changes noticed from day to day. Finally, in art class students may paint a picture of the plant's life cycle. Interdisciplinary learning allows students to see connections between subjects and to deepen the knowledge base.

Last, the advancement of social development is a big change from traditional education to twenty-first century style instruction. Today, teachers encourage students to collaborate within groups on a daily basis. This allows students to develop social, communication, critical thinking, and intrapersonal skills in a diverse, complex, and interconnected world. If the focus is only on teaching content, students have no opportunity to learn in a way that goes beyond learning facts.

Challenges Faced by Students and The Effects on Their Behaviors

In today's society students face many challenges at home and are expected to be fully engaged at school. Many deal with trauma, financial issues, broken homes, and homelessness. No wonder students behave badly, have outbursts at school, have attendance issues, or drop out. Great educators know that behaviors are tied to emotions, and until teachers get to know students and connect with them, they will not be able to

connect with the mind of each student. Social interactions should be a priority, not only for students, but between the students and the teacher as well.

The one characteristic that sets great teachers apart from mediocre teachers is that caring for students is crucial. Teachers can show students they care by offering advice, listening to them, asking how they are feeling, and by being present in their lives. When students feel teachers care about them they perform better academically, they attend school more frequently, and they regulate emotional outbursts. When students do not have any meaningful relationships in school or at home, the teacher can be that primary person. Todd Whitaker, the author of the book *What Great Teachers Do Differently: 14 Things That Matter Most*, says to, “Touch the heart, then teach the child” (120). A relationship between student and teacher is vital to maintain a positive environment which fosters an atmosphere where real learning can grow.

Along with teaching subject material teachers also place value on creating a positive environment. Some of these factors include setting and maintaining safe boundaries, maintaining a productive environment, building team effort between the class and teacher, showing willingness in taking risks, and building trust and support. “Students do their best work in a safe, nurturing, and positive environment” (McCutchen 326). Students who are in an environment where it is safe, nurturing, and positive, may not only do their best work, but are also willing to go further and beyond what is expected. When someone feels appreciated they tend to do more than what is expected without receiving an extrinsic form of gratitude. Students begin to feel empowered to accomplish great tasks that were never possible before. When the teacher is willing to take risks the students are more willing to take risks because it becomes a team effort.

Teachers should establish an affirming, productive environment for students, and they will love the magical, creative atmosphere and the expressive abilities that can be uncovered. This enlivens the environment and anything is possible inside the classroom (McCutchen 237).

The Role of Arts and Arts Integration

Does education emphasize test preparation instead of preparing students for the test of life, asks Typhani Harris from her book, *Putting the Performance in Performance Task: Connecting the Arts to the Core*. (34)? As if those who design educational curriculum are more worried about successful test scores rather than success in life. Harris states.

We are definitely in a drought of creativity and authentic learning, especially with the removal of the arts from schools. The arts really assist in academic success and removing them to prepare for standardized testing was a flaw in the system. Hopefully education will start embracing the importance of the arts and creativity once again. With any luck, the new format of the test will allow teachers to inspire their students, to help them prepare for the test, and ultimately prepared [prepare] for the test of life. (34)

The arts create a community, a culture, a sense of belonging, and social harmony within the classroom. A teacher's goal for the students for them to become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and to be creative. The arts are also a way to reinforce what was previously taught in the other subjects. Brenda Pugh McCutchen describes the role of arts integration in the following way. When "the arts are incorporated into the general education curriculum and are used to enhance the understanding of areas of study outside of the arts disciplines themselves, as well as in-depth learning in the arts" (302). Eric Jensen in his book, *Arts with the Brain in Mind* had this to say about the arts.

The arts enhance the process of learning. The systems they nourish, which include our integrated sensory, attentional, cognitive, emotional, and motor capacities, are, in fact, the driving forces behind all other learning. (2)

How will teachers achieve the above goals? Arts integration is one answer. Arts integration is the blending of content and skills from musical, visual, and kinesthetic arts into another academic subject.

The arts provide many benefits to students and should be a part of the normal school day. In a fast changing world, students need the arts even more today. Students cannot dismiss the importance of reading, writing, and math, but the arts are one vehicle to teach character and skill. Experience in the arts develops imagination, teaches students to make sense of the world, develops skills and attitudes necessary for the workplace, teaches how to problem solve, and builds confidence. The arts also help students think creatively, critically, and out-of-the-box. “Creative thinking is different than rote learning and memorizing facts because such forms of learning are reproductive, while creativity is productive” is how Minton describes creative thinking in her book *Using Movement to Teach Academics: The Mind and Body as One Entity*. (49). Creativity begins during childhood through play in developing skills needed for real-world situations.

First, the arts involve experimentation and play—pathways to imagination. Young children are encouraged to discover the world through play. Play provides children many chances to learn without any consequences. “From the point of view of learning, you can’t beat play. Play maximizes the developmental critical period during the selectively experience-dependent stage of synaptic elimination” (Jensen 90). Young children are imaginative and see the world differently. To an adult a rock is just a rock, but to a child it could be a button to transport humanity to the next universe or a dinosaur egg waiting

to hatch. When children grow up play decreases; therefore, imagination decreases. The arts are a way to maintain discovering new opportunities to develop imagination. Sandra Minton states in her book, *Using Movement to Teach Academics*, “If the ability to think in a creative way is important to the future of the world, then teaching students how to think creatively should be part of education” (49).

Second, the arts help students make sense of the world. Students involved in the arts are able to view the world from a different perspective because they discover what has not been discovered. Students make experiences from the world come to life through poetry, song, dance, acting, painting, or sculpting. “Art provides the conditions for awakening to the world around us; the arts provide a way of knowing” (Eisner 10).

Third, the arts develop skills and character traits necessary for the workplace. Skills and character traits are developed inside the classroom, which are necessary for the workplace. Three basic but important skills and character traits learned through the arts are teamwork, problem solving, and communication skills. The arts allow for students to develop skills that are important in the workplace and support students in becoming productive workers (Eisner 34). Employers are not looking for students who scored the highest on the ACT or the PSAT’s, but more importantly, students who can problem-solve, work together, and be creative. “We want thinkers, we want people skills, we want problem-solvers, we want creativity, and we want teamwork” (Jensen 9). These are the attributes that employers are looking for which will lead to success.

Fourth, the arts teach students how to problem solve from multiple perspectives. Traditionally, content is taught in a way that encourages teachers to look for a single correct answer. The aim of that curriculum is to teach to the test, or to get everyone to

arrive at the same answer. The arts are different. The arts encourage students to define the problem and come to a solution where variety is desired. When rote memorization was the norm, students were taught only one way to arrive at an answer, whereas, education today encourages students to think creatively by solving a problem in many different ways. “The arts teach children that their personal signature is important and that answers to questions and solutions to problems need not be identical” (Eisner 197). The more individuals can think creatively in solving problems the more personal meaning will be found in the learning. “Skills developed by working creatively in the arts are especially important to success in one’s profession because solving problems in a creative way is involved in many real-life situations” (Minton 50).

Engaging in creative work can also increase a student’s self-esteem, thus, the arts can build confidence. The arts show students how to be open-minded and to be nonjudgmental. The arts help students recognize what is unique and special about each person. Academic classrooms push for the correct answer or for responses that will show up on standardized tests, whereas, the arts push for individuality. In the arts there are multiple correct answers and the more individual or unique an answer the better. Students are also encouraged to voice opinions differently from the rest as long as they can justify the answer. The arts are a way students can be themselves and be proud of who they are. The arts push the limits because they say what words cannot. The arts allow students to imagine the impossible by giving them opportunities to explore new experiences. Through the arts the students learn to see what they did not notice before.

Research on the Value of the Arts as an Alternative Teaching Strategy

The three studies described below show some of the values the arts can provide and for which they should be recognized. The three studies include: *Assessment of High School Dance Students' Self Esteem* by Sandra Minton, *Involvement in the Arts and Human Development: General Involvement and Intensive Involvement in Music and Theater Arts* by James Catterall, Richard Chapleau, and John Iwanga, and *Learning in and Through the Arts: Curriculum Implications* by Judith Burton, Robert Horowitz, and Hal Abeles.

In the first study, Sandra Minton explored the connection between creative work in dance and self-esteem based on the question of whether dance participation had an effect. She believes the “development of adolescent self-esteem is important, because having positive self-esteem is related to one’s ability to achieve in life” (63). Feelings of worthlessness contribute to feelings of depression; therefore, students who are depressed achieve less. The goal of the study was to evaluate the changes in the self-esteem of high school students who participated in a dance class. There has been little research performed on this topic, so the author felt this study would be a contribution to the literature.

In the study there were 225 high school students involved from eight different high schools. The students were divided up into two groups—those who were enrolled in dance and others who were not. Students who were categorized as dancers spent 4.5 hours dancing in school and 4.43 hours dancing outside of school. Students who were categorized as non-dancers studied other various disciplines including Health, History, Computer Literacy, English, Spanish, and Sociology. She states.

The study showed a significant difference between the dancers' and non-dancers' self-esteem at one school for social self-esteem, a form of self-esteem based on the quality of a student's relationships with his or her peers. The importance of this result, however, was that the dance teacher at this school used creative movement and dance making in her classes to a somewhat greater extent than the other dance teachers in the study. (Minton 50)

In the next study, sponsored by the United States Department of Education, the researchers surveyed more than 25,000 middle and high school students over a period of ten years. This report, released in 1999, was conducted to measure the effects of participation in the visual and performing arts. The results of the study showed more favorable outcomes for students who participate in the arts versus students who are not involved in the arts. Higher achievement, staying in school, better attitudes, and watching television less were all outcomes from students involved in the arts (Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanag 16-17). Benefits of the arts are not exclusively for the academic classroom, but more importantly extend into the student's future.

The arts have also shown links to student motivation and engagement in school, attitudes that contribute to academic achievement. The arts activities also can promote community—advancing shared purpose and team spirit required to perform in an ensemble musical group or dramatic production, or to design and paint an urban mural. With community surely comes empathy and general attachment to the larger values of the school and the adult society which high school students will soon join. (Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanag 18)

The last study was done at Columbia University where the authors examined 2,000 elementary and middle school students over a two-year span. The goal was to determine what cognitive, social, and personal skills are developed through the arts. Students were categorized as belonging to a high-arts and a low-arts group. The high-arts group outscored the low-arts group in their ability to express thoughts and ideas, exercise the imagination, solve problems, take learning risks, and develop a self-concept. Students

in the high-arts group also showed willingness and cooperation to provide explanations of learning before their peers and community members (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles 53).

There were benefits for the teachers in the arts rich schools as well. The results showed the teachers demonstrated more interest in their work, favored change and experimentation, and became more innovated in their teaching. In high-arts settings, teachers tend to have good working relationships with other teachers and considerable flexibility in the curriculum design with less emphasis on conformity (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles 55).

Implementing Character Education

The twenty-first century's educational system should be preparing students to become the future leaders, the next innovators, and the next professionals in the workplace. Exactly, how does society prepare students for big challenges such as these? Are schools setting students up for failure if they are more worried about test scores? According to Typhani Harris, the author of *Putting the Performance in Performance Task*, "Society is still valuing the numerical results of a test rather than the quality of an education, the joy of learning, and the fulfillment of knowledge gained" (10). She also asks, "Are we actually preparing students for life after high school or just another assessment" (Harris 12)? When education is more worried about standardized tests, education becomes more focused on teaching to the test instead of teaching to instill the joy of learning. Being curious about the world and becoming lifelong learners should become a focus in schools because these are some of the traits that will help students become successful in the future.

*The Seven Character Traits and
Their Definitions*

What does matter in a child's education? Is it how much information they can retain throughout the years? Is it how high their IQ score is by the time they graduate? "What matters, instead, is whether we are able to help them develop a very different set of qualities, a list that includes persistence, self-control, curiosity, conscientiousness, grit, and self-confidence" (Tough xv). These character traits are vital to one's success. Building character is something that will stay with a child forever, whereas, retaining facts about subjects will be forgotten. What is missing from education today is learning to persist in a task, follow through on a goal or a plan, control impulses, avoid distractions, or manage emotions. All these abilities will turn out to be valuable in the future workplace.

The seven character traits that Paul Tough emphasizes in his book, as well as those used in the study, are grit, self-control (school work and interpersonal), zest, gratitude, optimism, social intelligence, and curiosity. "Character strengths are the components of a good life" (Polly & Britton 5). These are the qualities that are valued in friends, family, and children, in the workplace, the community, and in the world. In the world today there seems to be a need for speed which leads to a desire for immediate gratification. With e-mailing, text messaging, and online shopping becoming more dominant, people want things faster, and when it doesn't happen, they give up (Polly & Britton 137).

Grit is finishing what one begins, striving until the end even despite obstacles, and avoiding temptation that might distract from achieving a goal. "Research suggests that people with grit report experiencing more happiness than those who are less gritty, even

when controlling for age and education, and earn higher grade point averages than their non-gritty classmates (Polly & Britton 138.) It is very common for students to get swept away or excited about a new project and want to skip from step three to thirty in a matter of days. They do not see the importance of developing the skills in the beginning that will be essential for step thirty.

In her article, "Using Dance to Create Ownership, Responsibility, and Character," Harris defines grit as "a quality that can fuel the successful and inhibit the weak" (11). Experiencing failure on one's journey is a crucial step in becoming successful. From Jon Gordon's book, *The Energy Bus: 10 Rules to Fuel Your Life, Work, and Team with Positive Energy*, he states, "We all have fear but the key to success is that your trust is bigger than your fear" (141). People who experience failure either strive for more or become discouraged and give up. "The idea of building grit and building self-control is that you get to develop those traits in response to failure. In most highly academic environments in the United States, no one fails anything" (Tough 177). Students who easily receive high test scores or high grades never really develop true grit or experience the failure that is needed when faced with challenges. As soon as they face a challenge they end up quitting due to being fearful of failure.

Just as building grit is important to get through failure, building self-control is just as significant. Self-control is "overriding an initial impulse of being able to redirect thought away from an undesirable behavior" (Polly & Britton 155). Another definition from the *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman "refers to how a person exerts control over his or her own responses so as to pursue goals and live up to standards" (500). A habit is an

automated behavior that occurs without much thought. Habits are learned and; therefore, can be unlearned (Polly & Britton 155). Self-control is the ability to change the habits that one does not want to engage in. Habits begin forming from the day we are born. A study that was conducted in New Zealand of more than one thousand people found that childhood self-control had connections with adult outcomes.

The lower a subject's self-control in childhood, the more likely he or she was at thirty-two to smoke, to have health problems, to have a bad credit rating, and to have been in trouble with the law. Adults with the lowest self-control scores in childhood were three times more likely to have been convicted of a crime than those who scored highest as kids. They were three times more likely to have multiple addictions, and they were more than twice as likely to be raising their children in a single-parent household. (Tough 73-74)

There are two categories for self-control: school work and interpersonal. Self-control: school work describes if a student turns work in on time, pays attention and resists distractions, gets to work right away without wasting time, and comes to class prepared. Self-control: interpersonal describes if a student allows others to speak without interrupting, is polite to adults and peers, and keeps temper in check.

Why do some people wake up feeling excited about the day and some feel drained and worn-out? The character trait they possess is zest, the feeling of being alive, being full of vitality, and displaying enthusiasm for any activity (Polly & Britton 183). People try to find happiness in making others happy in place of making themselves happy. In the end they are only letting themselves down and often find happiness in negative places, which tends to be temporary. "Remember, the gifts you bring to the world are not found in your resume, accomplishments, or presents to others. The gift is your presence of feeling good and being happy and bringing this to others" (Gordon 96). People want to be around others who bring energy and vitality to their life. Positive energy is contagious,

whereas, negative energy is draining. When people are excited and enthusiastic about life and work they bring this powerful energy to everything they do, and people notice (Gordon 108). When people are positive and have an outburst of energy they attract positive people, and positive outcomes. Successful people fill their life with positive energy because where there is a void negativity will fill it. “Enthusiasm gets them excited about being on your bus, but love is what keeps them on the bus” (Gordon 116). People with heart have strengths such as zest, hope, love, and gratitude.

“Gratitude is a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift, whether the gift be a tangible benefit from a specific other or a moment of peaceful bliss evoked by natural beauty” (Peterson & Seligman 554). Being grateful should become a daily occurrence to appreciate the little things in life. These things may go unnoticed, but the little things in life make it beautiful. People who are more grateful are happier with themselves and with the world around them. Being grateful floods the body with endorphins, and when combined with positive emotions, it provides for a powerful energy booster (Gordon 52).

Optimism is “having hope that in the future good events and associated positive feelings will outweigh or be more likely than bad events and associated negative feelings” (Peterson & Seligman 572). Optimistic people tend to see the bright side to situations. They believe their current actions will result in a bright future and benefit their life in some way. Instead of viewing challenges and obstacles as a road block, they tend to view them as an opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed (Gordon 108). Self-control, discussed above, is related to the learned habit of being pessimistic. Adults can learn to overcome negative thoughts or habits to become healthier, happier, more successful

adults. Martin Seligman defines optimism, from his book *Learned Optimism*, as “not an inborn trait; it can be acquired” (30). Such habits can be broken with the help of self-control and grit, but it can be done.

In order for one to want to change a habit, they must ask themselves why and evaluate the risks. What would the benefits be in changing the behavior? What would one lose if the behavior was changed? Would the changed behavior make a difference? Curiosity is a key in changing ingrained behaviors. “Curiosity involves the active recognition, pursuit, and regulation of one’s experiences in response to challenging opportunities” (Peterson & Seligman 125). Curiosity is the desire to learn without an extrinsic reward. Curiosity is important because it is fundamental to forming new thoughts, discovering new skills, developing innovations, and exploring unfamiliar territories. “Curiosity helps us explore and identify the things that are important to us. It is a mechanism that helps you create and discover meaning in your life” (Polly & Britton 39). If questions are not asked, answers will not be given, and new information will not be discovered.

“Social intelligence involves insights into one’s own motivations and the motivations of others” (Polly & Britton 161). In other words, it is the ability to understand someone else’s feelings and comprehend their emotions. It forces us to acknowledge that other humans have emotions and feelings separate and different from ours. Social intelligence makes people better humans because they are not as self-involved. The world today is more selfish than before because technology has become a source for the “look at me” type of attitude. Teenagers and some adults are more concerned about how many “likes” and “comments” they receive on a recent post than

reading a new book to spark curiosity. E-mailing, text, and Facebook messaging have taken social intelligence out of the picture. Today, it is easy to write negative comments on a post, text, or e-mail because those people are “not real” and “do not exist” to the person creating the message. Empathy is lost when writing negative comments, and a push of the button is all too easy. With cyberbullying becoming a daily occurrence, and people committing suicide because of it, now is the perfect time to concentrate on educating the youth and adults on social intelligence in the schools and at home.

Character Education in the School and at Home

Children usually possess strengths in love, zest, and curiosity, but lose these strengths as adults. How can one instill the character traits in the youth, but maintain them until adulthood? Parents, educators, and the community should recognize, identify, and cultivate strengths in their children. *Character Strengths Matter: How to Live a Full Life*, offers advice about children’s strengths versus their weaknesses.

Spotting strengths in your children cultivates your appreciation for them and their unique gifts of character. Putting on your strength lenses enables you to hunt for the good stuff. It helps you avoid thinking that problem areas are permanent and pervasive, keeping you optimistic (Polly & Britton 202).

Once, children begin to hear more strengths over the weaknesses, they will begin to develop a sense of worth and ownership of whom they are. They become more confident and begin to question their decisions, deciphering between right and wrong.

In summary, character building is the missing piece in today’s education. With violence on the rise in public schools, movies, malls, and in the workplace, character education is even more vital to student success. Students are becoming desensitized to people around them due to the escalation of social media. Students who feel valued,

respected, and safe in the classroom tend to perform higher academically, have improved attendance, and reduced violence, disciplinary, and substance abuse issues (Lahey 3).

Teaching core subjects will stay with the students for as long as they are in the classroom, but instilling character education will last a lifetime. Character education is the ingredient that is deemed for success, both in school, the workplace, and in the future.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of dance involvement on high school students' behaviors. The methodology section will help answer the three essential questions: Can the dance program help students grow and develop in ways not possible in an academic classroom? How are character traits such as social intelligence or curiosity possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? How are other student behaviors such as school attendance or office referrals possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? Chapter 3 includes the details of the methods used to set up this research study and examine the resulting data.

After developing the purpose of the study and how the data were collected, the researcher submitted a narrative to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. A brief description of the purpose, methods, data analysis procedures, data handling procedures, and risks, discomforts, and benefits were all included in the application. Sample consent forms from the students, their parents, and the teachers who participated in the study were also included in application. See in the appendices to view a copy of the IRB approval in the Institutional Review Board forms, appendix A.

Research Site

The study was conducted in a high school near the Mexican border in the southwest with a student population of 3,000 students in ninth to twelve grades with 218 full-time faculty and staff. Demographics of the student population were: English-

Language Learners 23%, Hispanic 99.3%, White .5%, other .2%, and students who qualified for special education services 12.8%. Due to federal programs and the creation of Title One, the school was eligible for one hundred percent free breakfast and lunch. The census data for 2010—2014 reports indicated that 32.2% of the residents are at poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016).

Research Participants

Students from Dance I level classes volunteered to be a part of the study. Twenty Hispanic females, ranging between ninth and twelfth grades, and two Hispanic males, both eleventh graders, were the participants in the study. Sixteen teachers volunteered to fill out behavior observation forms for the twenty-two participants. This means some of the teachers filled out forms for more than one student. Students who participated in the study attended their Dance level I class which met for fifty-five minutes five days a week.

Research Design

The study consisted of both qualitative and quantitative research. Student and teacher surveys, student interviews, and teacher observation forms were used to collect data. The researcher was also the students' teacher and filled out the on-line survey and documented her observations.

In order to be considered as a participant consent forms were a vital portion of the study. The four consent forms included: student assent form, an English form for the parent, a Spanish form for the parent, and the teacher consent form. The length of the study was a semester. See in the appendices to view a copy of the consent forms in Consent Forms, appendix C.

Instrumentation

Three instruments were used to collect data in this study. They included an on-line character trait survey, on-line behavior observation forms, and student interviews.

Online Character Trait Surveys

The on-line character trait survey was completed once in the beginning and again at the end of the study by the researcher and also by the teachers who participated in the study. This survey included thirty questions based on seven character traits: grit, self-control (school work and interpersonal), zest, gratitude, optimism, social intelligence, and curiosity. Three to five questions were asked for each of the seven character traits. For example, the character trait, *zest*, consisted of four statements: Did the student take an active interest in learning? Did he or she actively participate in class? Did they show enthusiasm? Did they approach new situations with excitement and energy? The questions were adapted from the KIPP Character Growth Chart (KIPP Foundation). The participants, teachers, and the researcher were all given pseudonyms when completing the forms in order to ensure confidentiality. To view a copy of the character trait survey see Research Instruments, appendix D.

The teachers and researcher were expected to complete the surveys within an allotted time frame of one week. This window gave the researcher time to collect all the data, and was of a short duration so that subjects' behaviors would not change substantially. The researcher sent e-mails to the teachers to remind them when the window would be open to complete the surveys. The scores were recorded automatically in the on-line form. The questions in the survey could be answered using numbers ranging from 1—7. These numbers meant: 1—almost never, 2—very rarely, 3—rarely,

4—sometimes, 5—often, 6—very often, and 7—almost always. For example, if a question was about whether a student finished his or her work, the score would be a 6 if the student performed well in terms of this question. The scores were totaled for each character trait at the beginning and again at the end of the semester. Then, scores were totaled for the overall growth in each character trait.

Behavior Observation Forms

The researcher was also curious to know if other student behaviors such as school attendance or office referrals were possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program. The form used to assess these behaviors was a quick, nine question, on-line document completed by the teachers and researcher every month for each participant. Refer to appendix D, Research Instruments, to review a copy. This form was administered at the end of each month to compare growth on each of the behaviors. The teachers were again expected to complete the form in an allotted time frame of one week for the same reasons noted earlier. The number of times a student was tardy, absent, or received a referral or detention was recorded on this form for each month during the semester. Three more questions were asked at the end of this form. These questions included: In what areas has the student shown improvement? What positive behaviors have you seen in this student? In what areas do you feel this student needs improvement?

Another benefit of the behavior observation form is that it could be used to compare student behaviors inside and outside of the dance class setting. Thus, the researcher was interested in knowing whether the students behaved in the same way inside and outside the dance room. The researcher also wanted to know if the students'

grades, absences, or being tardy improved since joining the dance class. A copy of the Behavior Observation form may be found in the appendix D, Research Instruments.

Student Interviews

Along with collecting data from the researcher and from the teachers, it was important to gather data from the students. This was done by having the students schedule an interview with the researcher towards the end of the study. Interviews lasted from fifteen minutes to an hour.

The student interview form included a series of five questions: Has your point of view about yourself or others changed during this class? What have you learned about yourself as a result of taking this class? What do you feel is needed in life to become successful? Do you feel there has been a change in your behavior or work ethic this semester and if so, to what do you attribute this change? How do you feel about your self-image now in comparison to those feelings at the beginning of the semester? If you feel differently about yourself, what do you think contributed to these changes? Participants completed the forms on their own time and turned them in before the interview. Then, in a face-to-face interview, the researcher used the completed form as a guide to clarify some of the students' answers. A copy of the Student Interview form may be found in the appendix D, Research Instruments.

Data Analysis

The data were collected in this study and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The character trait survey and the behavior observation forms with the exception of the questions at the end was analyzed using quantitative methods, but the

researcher used qualitative methods to analyze data from the questions at the end of the teacher's behavior observation forms and students' interviews.

Quantitative Analysis

The scores assigned by each teacher for each question pertaining to a character trait were added together on the pre-survey. This produced an accumulative pre-survey score for each question. The same process was used to calculate the accumulative teachers' scores on the post-survey. For example, grit included five questions or sub-groups. They finished what he/she began, stuck with a project or activity for more than a few weeks, tried very hard even after experiencing failure, stayed committed to goals, and kept working hard even when he/she felt like quitting. See table 1 below for an example of the accumulative scores for grit. If the accumulative pre-test score for "finished what he/she began" was a 217 and the overall post-test score was a 290 they were presented side by side in the table to view the difference. This was done for each question for the seven character traits. The accumulated score for each question for a character trait on the pre-survey was then added together to produce character trait score. The same process was used to calculate the overall post-survey score for each trait. The full complement of figures and bar graphs of the results of the study will be presented in the Discussion chapter.

Table 1: Grit—Character Trait Survey

Trait	January	May
Finished what he/she began	217	290
Stuck with a project or activity for more than a few weeks	211	281
Tried very hard even after experiencing failure	214	282
Stayed committed to goals	212	287
Kept working even when he/she felt like quitting	209	298

The total number of times a student was tardy, absent, or given a referral or a detention was calculated for the dance class and for the non-dance class for January and April. The scores assigned by each teacher from the behavior observation forms were added together on the pre-survey. This produced an accumulative pre-survey score for each behavior. The same process was used to calculate the scores on the post-survey. The full complement of bar graphs of the results of this part of the study will be presented in the Discussion chapter.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis is based on answers to the student interview questions and the three questions the teachers answered at the end of the behavior observation form.

Students were given the student interview questions and had a week to complete them. These questions were used to clarify students' answers during the interviews.

The behavior observation included three questions at the end of the form. These questions were: In what areas has the student shown improvement? What positive behaviors have you seen in this student? In what areas do you feel this student needs improvement? After the teachers had answered the questions at the end of the behavior survey and the student interviews were concluded, the researcher transcribed the information and grouped similar thoughts and ideas together into themes. The themes that emerged are described in the Discussion chapter. The goal was to discover how the teachers felt more generally about the students' behaviors, and also how the students felt about their own behaviors, particularly in relation to the dance class. In addition, what the teachers were observing in the non-dance class was compared to what the researcher observed in the dance class. Each of these data sets were analyzed separately.

Similar thoughts and ideas were grouped into these nine categories from the student interviews about changes in various areas: students' behaviors, attitudes about dance, attitudes in general, confidence, students' academic growth, accepting each other's differences, positive outlook on life, character growth, and learning that failure is important to growing.

After further analyzing the data from the student interviews the nine categories were condensed into four categories. They became: self-growth and self-awareness; interpersonal relationships; understanding connections among academic areas, students' behaviors, and attitudes; and realizing growth extends beyond dance.

In order to assess the benefits of a dance class, a variety of assessments were used as pre-data and post-data. The data consisted of on-line character trait surveys, on-line behavior observation forms, and student interviews. This chapter presented how the data were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to examine the effects of dance involvement on high school students' behaviors. This quantitative and qualitative study was designed to answer the three essential questions and to determine the connection if any between involvement in dance class, and changes in students' character traits and behaviors. Chapter four displays the results found from the on-line character trait survey, the on-line behavior observation survey, and the student interviews.

Character Traits--Quantitative Analysis

The results of the seven character traits were presented in a bar graph with an overall comparison of the traits displayed at the end of this section. For each character trait the scores were graphed to show a comparison in changes between the beginning and end of the study. The amount of change presented in each of the graphs was the difference between the pre and the posttest score for each character trait question. The pre and posttest graphs show the students improved in all of the character trait areas. The character trait graphs are presented so the one displaying the largest change during the duration of the study is discussed first, and the one showing the least amount of change is discussed last. The numbers shown along the left side of each figure indicate the total scores for each question related to a character trait. These scores were calculated by adding the scores for each question assigned by the researcher and the other teachers involved in the study. The analysis indicated the students showed the most improvement

for grit. Grit is finishing what one begins, striving until the end even despite obstacles, and avoiding temptation that might distract from achieving a goal. The largest improvement was for “kept working hard even when he/she felt like quitting,” and the smallest improvement was for “tried very hard even after experiencing failure.” “Finished whatever he/she began” and “stayed committed to goals” had about the same change from January to April. The difference for “finished whatever he/she began” amounted to a difference of 73 points, while “stayed committed to goals” resulted in a difference of 75 points between the beginning and end of the study. “Stuck with a project or activity for more than a few weeks” showed a difference of 70 points between the beginning and end of the study. Figure 1 shows the comparison of the pre and post survey analysis results.

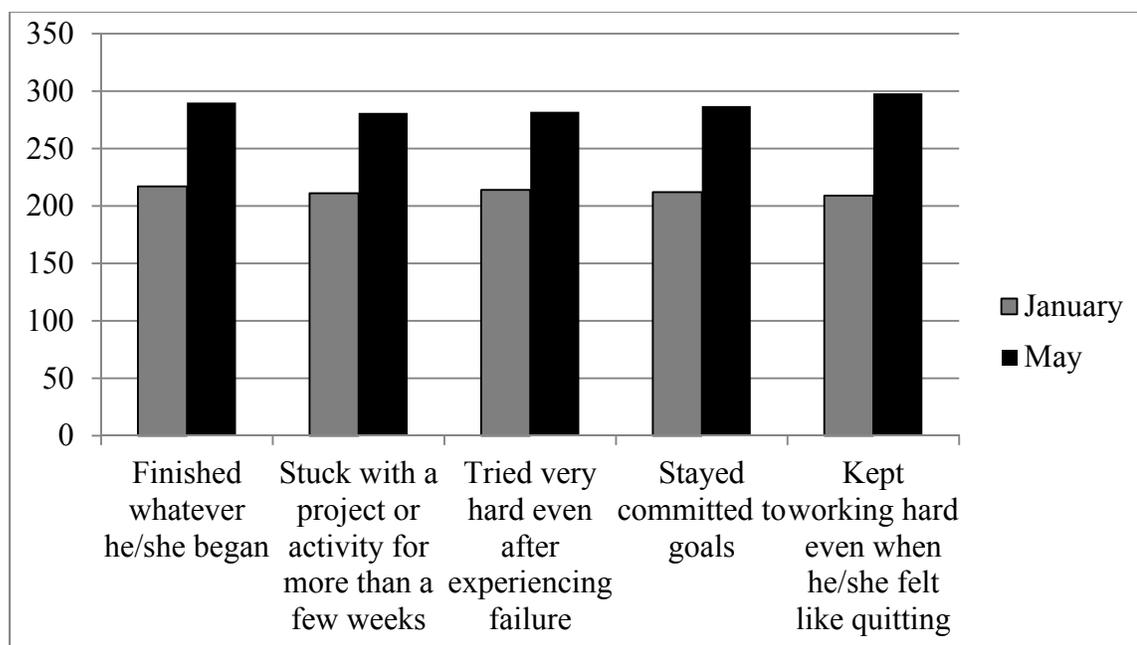


Figure 1: Grit

The next character trait to be discussed is self-control at school or in class. Self-control is “overriding an initial impulse of being able to redirect thought away from an undesirable behavior” (Polly & Britton 155). The results indicated there was growth in

this trait throughout the semester. “Remembered and followed directions” only showed a difference of 50 points for the least amount of change, while “remained calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked had the most change of 68 points. “Got to work right away instead of waiting until the last minute” amounted to a difference of 55 points,” “came to class prepared” displayed a difference of 51 points, and “paid attention and resisted distraction” had a difference of 67 points. Figure 2 displays the results of self-control at school or in class.

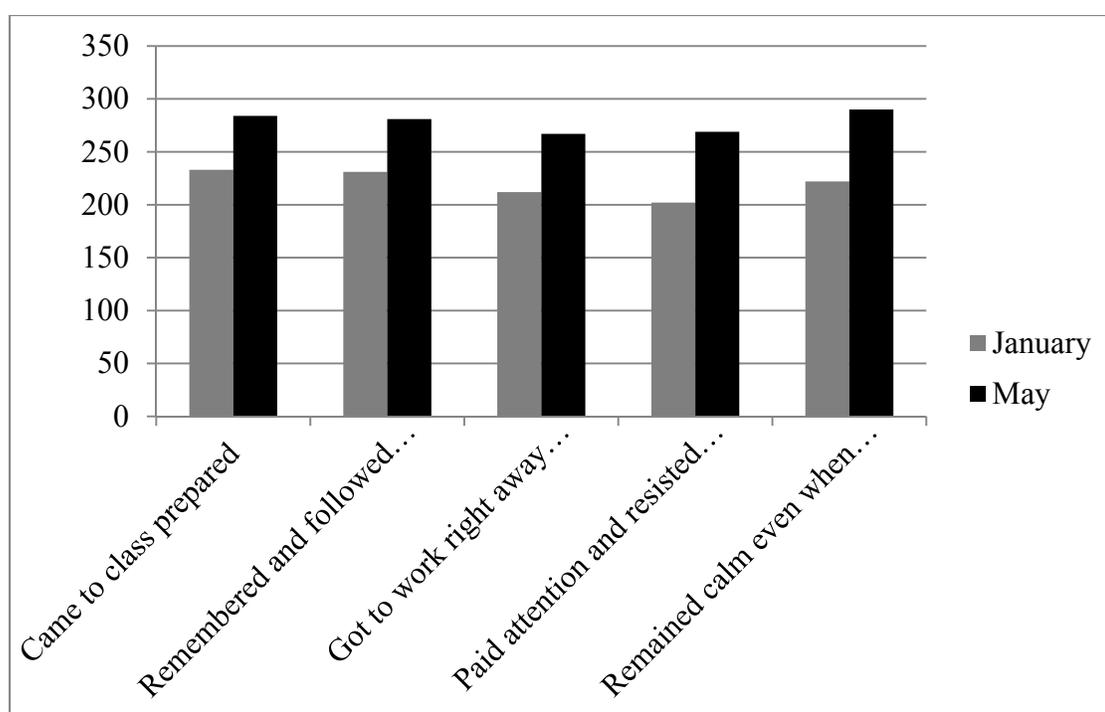


Figure 2: Self-Control at School or in Class

“Gratitude is a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift, whether the gift be a tangible benefit from a specific other or a moment of peaceful bliss evoked by natural beauty” (Peterson & Seligman 554). “Recognized what other people did for them” and “showed appreciation for opportunities” revealed the same growth difference of 69 points. “Expressed appreciation by saying thank you” displayed a

difference of 73 points and “did something nice for someone else as a way of saying thank you” showed a difference of 72 points between the beginning and end of the study.

Figure 3 displays the results of gratitude.

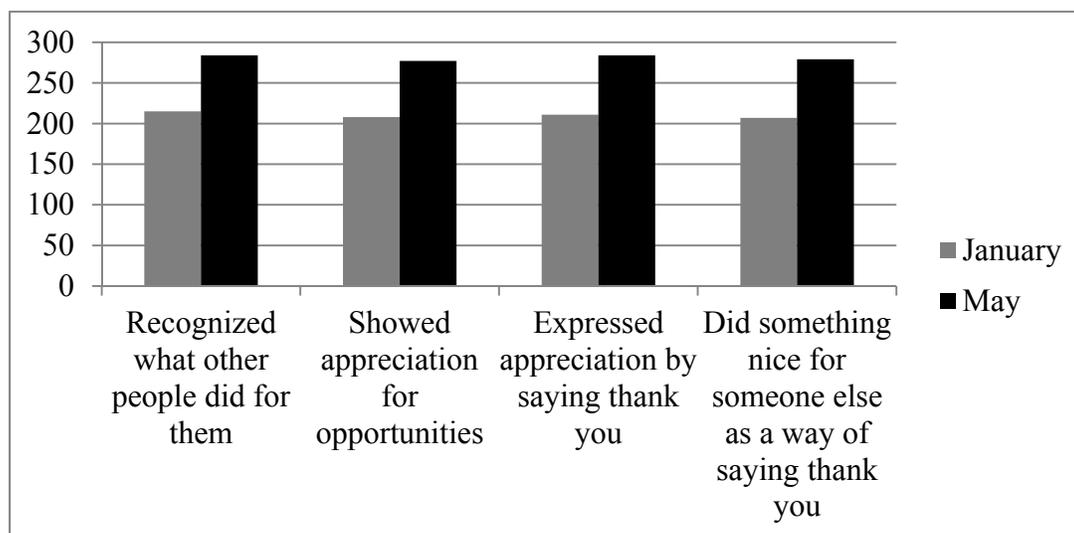


Figure 3: Gratitude

Self-control: interpersonal relates to how one expresses themselves through verbal, non-verbal, or physical actions to communicate with others. The results showed there was a difference of 70 points for all three questions between the beginning and end of the study. It seems the most improvement was shown for “was polite to adults and peers” although the difference here seems small. Figure 4 displays the results.

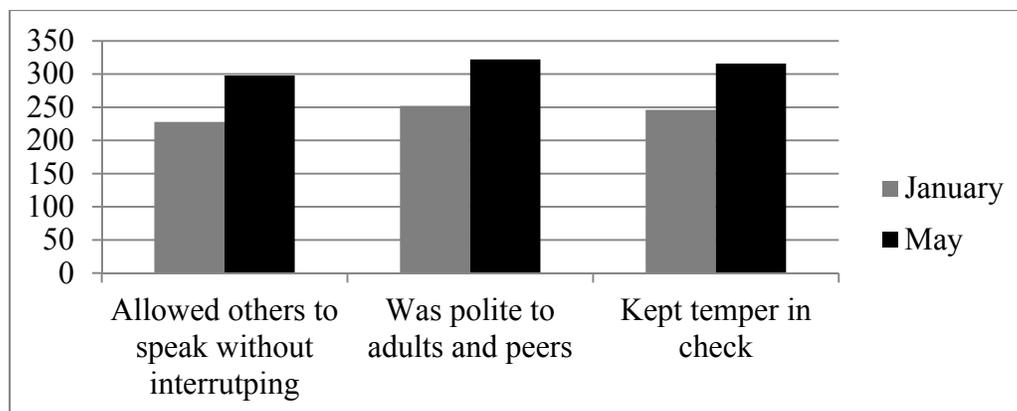


Figure 4: Self-Control: Interpersonal

Zest describes when a student takes an active interest in learning, actively participates, shows enthusiasm, and approaches new situations with excitement and energy. Figure 5 shows the accumulated compilation from the teachers' and the researchers' pre and post survey scores for each question within this trait. "Approached new situations with excitement and energy" improved the most with a difference of 56 points between pre and post surveys, while "actively participated" showed the smallest change for a difference of 48 points. "Took an active interest in learning" displayed a difference of 52 points. "Showed enthusiasm" resulted in a difference of 50 points. Figure 5 again displays the results for zest.

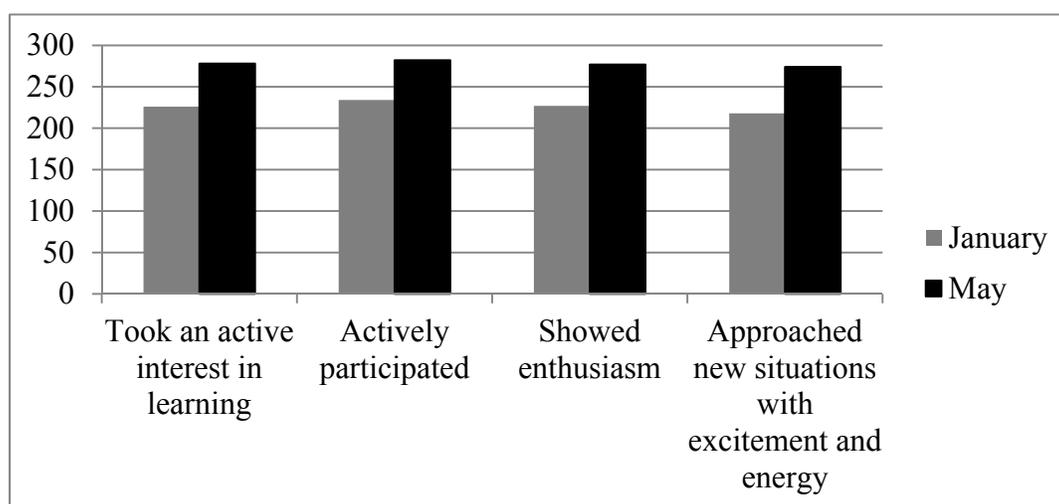


Figure 5: Zest

Optimistic people do not view challenges and obstacles as a road block, but tend to view them as an opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed (Gordon 108). There was a slight difference in changes for the three questions included under optimism. "Believed that efforts would improve his/her future" and "when bad things happen he/she thought about things they could do to make it better next time" improved the same amount (67 points) between the beginning and end of the study. "Stayed motivated even when things

didn't go well" was right behind the other two questions at a difference of 65 points between beginning and ending totals. Refer to figure 6 to see the complete bar graph for optimism.

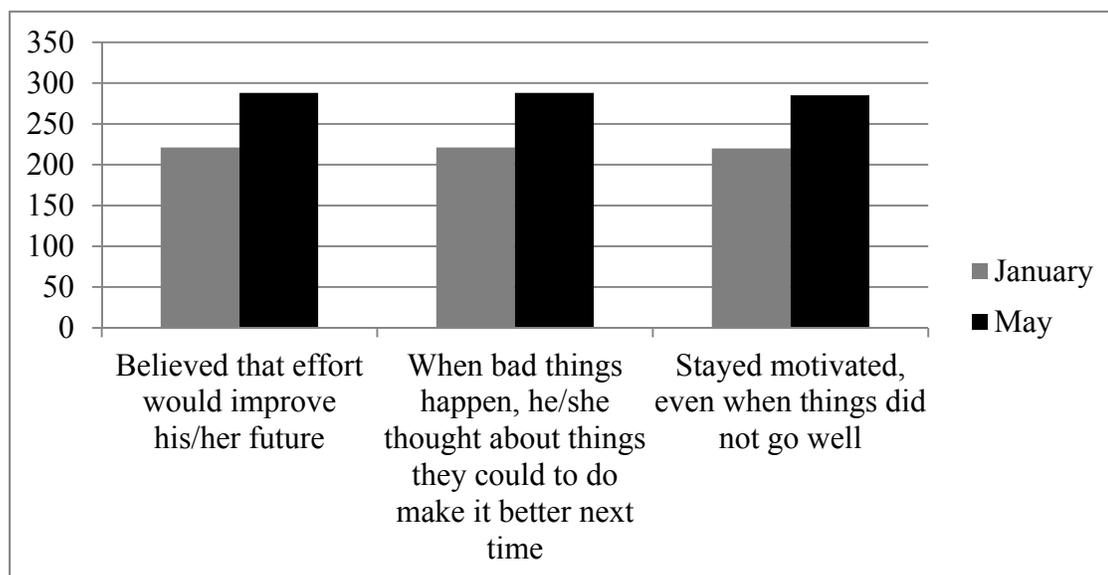


Figure 6: Optimism

As stated in the Literature review, social intelligence is the ability to understand someone else's feelings and comprehend their emotions. It forces us to acknowledge that other humans have emotions and feelings separate and different from our own. Social intelligence is the ability to understand someone else's feelings and comprehend their emotions. The results showed improvement in all three of these areas. "Adapted to different social situations" showed the most change of 66 points. "Was able to find solutions during conflicts with others" showed a difference of 65 points. "Showed that he/she cared about the feelings of others" demonstrated a change between the pre and post survey of 62 points. Figure 7 shows the results of the analysis for social intelligence.

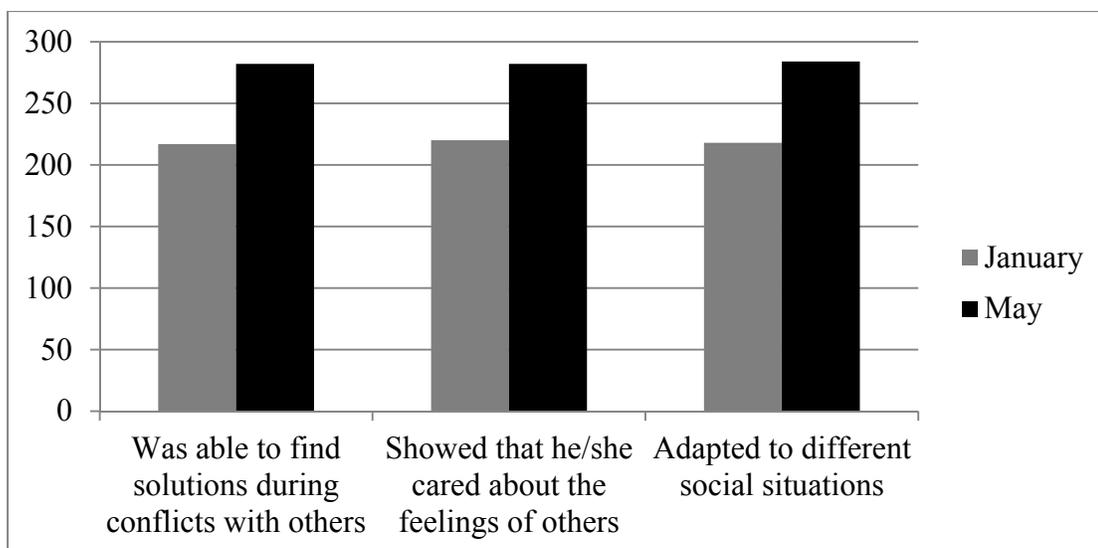


Figure 7: Social Intelligence

The final character trait is curiosity, which is being eager to explore new things and asking questions to further understanding. There was an improvement for curiosity, but results showed it changed the least between the beginning and end of the study. This may be due to the fact that only two questions were asked for this category while the other character traits had three to five questions per character trait. “Was eager to explore new things” demonstrated a change of 61 points between the beginning and end of the study. “Asked questions to help learn better” showed a difference of 67 points. Refer to figure 8 to view the bar graph of the results for curiosity.

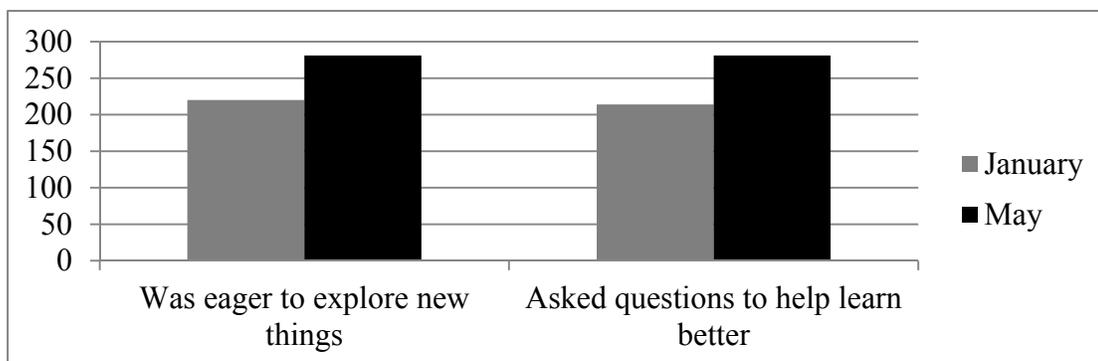


Figure 8: Curiosity

Based on the presentation of the data, the students demonstrated an improvement in all of the character traits. Figure 9 shows a comparison of the data side-by-side. The totals shown for each trait were calculated by adding the totals displayed previously for each question within a character trait. Grit and self-control at school or in class had the greatest changes, while curiosity and social intelligence changed the least.

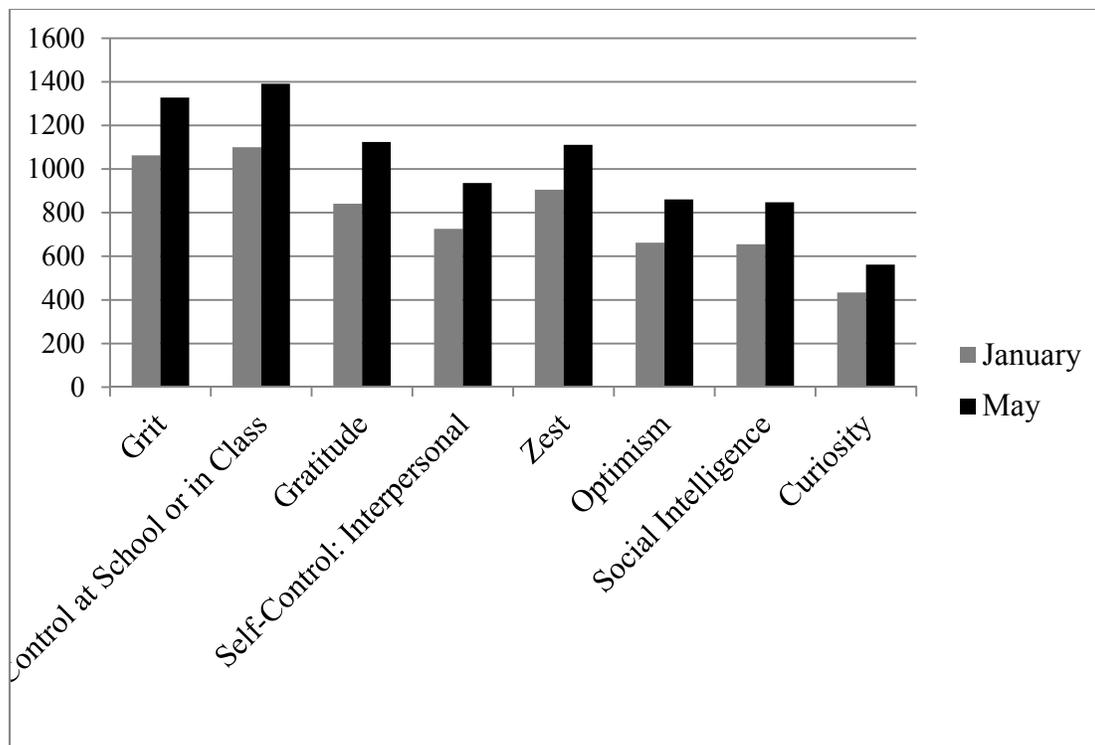


Figure 9: Overall Comparison

Students' Behaviors—Quantitative Analysis

Figure 10 shows the results and comparison between January and April of the number of times a student was tardy. There was considerably less tardiness in the dance class in comparison to tardiness for other classes. For the dance class, students were only tardy a total of five times, whereas, for the nondance class, students were tardy a total of

27 times in the period between January and April.

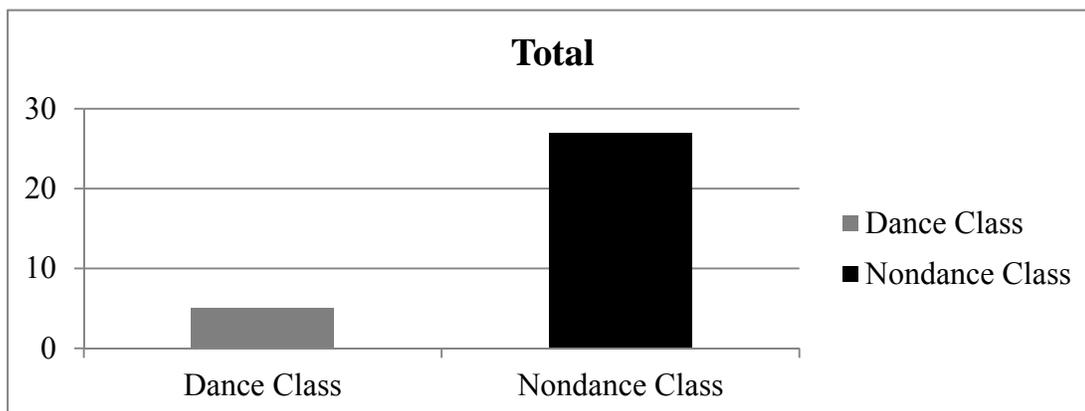


Figure 10: Number of times a student was tardy

The number of times a student was absent from the dance class during January and April were far greater than the non-dance class. Students were absent 31 times in the dance class and 17 times in the non-dance class. Figure 11 shows the results for the number of times a student was absent. This may be due to the fact that one student was absent quite often because her boyfriend was severely injured in a car accident. This student had other classes throughout the day and should have been marked absent. Maybe, the other teacher did not mark her absent because she knew the situation. Another student admitted that it was the end of the year and he was losing motivation.

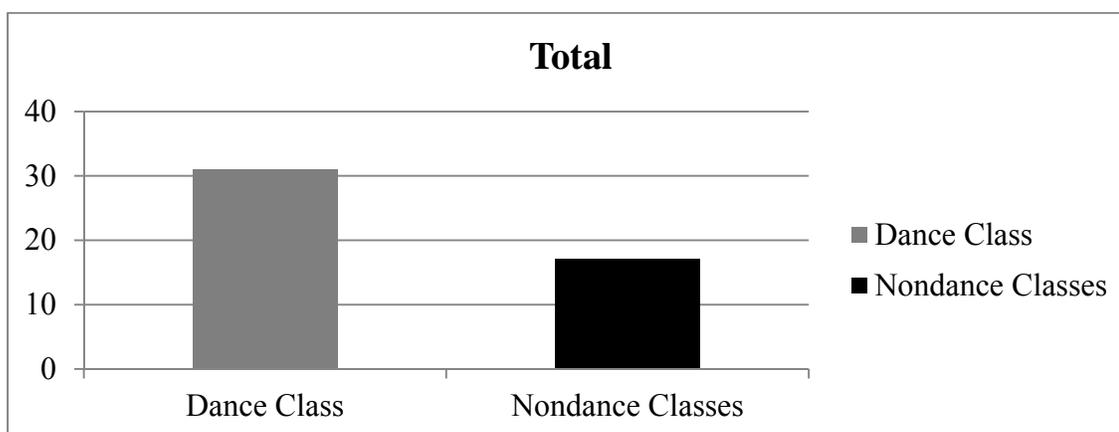


Figure 11: Number of times a student was absent

There were only three detentions given from January until April and all three detentions were given in January. One detention was given due to being tardy too many times, the second detention was about being too distracted during class, and the last detention was issued due to inappropriate use of the cellphone during class. There were no referrals issued between January and April for the dance class or for the nondance classes.

Student Interviews—Qualitative Analysis

The other data collected were analyzed at the end of the study by the researcher. This data included the student interviews. While analyzing this data, the researcher searched for recurring patterns, themes, and ideas while transcribing answers to the students' interviews. The themes that were discovered after reading through the answers were: self-growth and self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, connections between students' behaviors and learning in school, and growth extending beyond school.

According to Daniel Goleman's book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More Than IQ*, states that self-awareness is when "people are aware of their moods as they are having them, these people understandably have some sophistication about their emotional lives" (48). Self-growth and self-awareness are the first themes that will be discussed from the student interviews.

Many of the participants commented on how they saw themselves at the beginning of the study compared to how they felt at the end of the study. All of the names used in the following text are fictitious. Arianna stated, "Before I had no confidence, but now after taking this class it has changed how I view myself. I am more confident and I can do more things now." Adam said, "By being in dance, I learned that I can be myself,

and be comfortable with who I am.” He also said, “My self-esteem has increased and by being here it allows me to be more confident in other areas.” Mallory added, “I can improve in every aspect of my life. I was always in my comfort zone and I didn’t want to get out. Now, I challenge myself to do anything.” Ivy continued on, “I see myself able to do more things that I thought I couldn’t do. I feel a lot better because at least I tried.” Karly stated, “I thought I wasn’t that important or special, but this class has helped me a lot to overcome fears and insecurities I didn’t even know that I had.” Annie said, “I’ve learned that I am really brave. This class gave me self-confidence and I am not scared to make a mistake.” Eighteen out of the twenty-two participants commented on being able to accomplish more due to an increase in self-awareness or self-esteem.

The second theme to develop from the students’ interviews was related to interpersonal relationships, which is being able to work effectively in groups, understanding others, and communicating successfully with others. Adam stated, “Now, I am more accepting of others because before I would judge others, and in my head I would judge others to find comfort. Now, I want to get to know them more. I was self-centered and it was all about me, myself, and I.” Juliet added, “In the past, I didn’t accept people for who they are. Now, in this class, we help each other, so we don’t feel afraid of what others might think of us.” Denise mentioned, “I do feel that I am a better person. This is due to teamwork. Teaching and learning choreography has taught me to understand others.” Annie admitted, “I wasn’t interested in helping others. People didn’t ask me how I was, so I didn’t feel the need to do it for others.” She goes on to say, “I was disconnected to others. Sometimes I was rude. I was more into social media to see who they were instead of getting to know who they really were.” Amanda noted, “I learned

how to apply constructive critics [criticism] to my daily life inside and outside the dance class. I learned I can adapt easily to different situations and difficult ones too.”

The third theme that developed from the students’ interviews was connections between students’ behaviors and learning in school. Some of the participants commented on how their grades or academics have improved. Kaylee began by saying, “Being in dance really helped me academically because I wanted to participate in the recitals, and if you have a failing grade you do not participate. So, I tried to be caught up on all my school work.” Ivy mentioned, “I saw that other dancers were having fun in the December recital and I missed that opportunity. So, I set new goals and I wanted to pass all my classes with A’s and B’s.” Denise added, “Before I talked a lot in class and I turned in homework late. Now, I don’t talk a lot in class and I turn in work and do what I am suppose [supposed] to do.” Annie noted, “I wasn’t interested in school. I was failing all my classes and I wasn’t interested in after school activities. I didn’t mind if my teachers gave me after school detention.” Ivy observed, “Now, I feel I can do more things and actually graduate. I used to think that I wasn’t going to graduate because my brother didn’t graduate. Dance has made me actually start trying and I applied it to my other classes and my self-image even increased.” Denise admitted, “Now, I don’t talk back and I listen when teachers are talking.”

Many participants commented on how dance has helped them to improve their behavior. Kaylee admitted,

I never thought good behavior would get me anywhere, but it has gotten me further. Dance has helped me grow. I was really negative and now I am more positive. I can do something and not just take up space, plus I don’t have “slacker” tattooed on my forehead anymore.

Arianna stated, “Before, if I started something new I felt like quitting, but now I keep going and [do] not give up. I can accomplish more things now.” Denise confessed, “I realized that I really need to improve my behavior, stay on track, and to rearrange my time to not waste time.” Briella wrote, “I learned that I really needed to wake up and put on some batteries and be more focused.” Amy said the following about her attitude,

I changed as a person. I used to have a lot of attitude, but now I am more respectful to others. Being in dance is about having a good attitude and learning how to be successful. When I realized that, I saw that I needed to change my attitude. Now that I have dance, I am happy after class and my boyfriend notices. He thinks that I had good news.

A few of the participants commented on how they applied what they learned in dance class to other areas of their lives. The fourth theme is growth extending beyond school. Mallory wrote,

They say dance class is easy stuff, but now that I came here we are taught about life. We don’t only focus on dance, but every aspect of life. You have to use the tools that you already have and the tools that someone else can provide to you. I didn’t realize that before. I just kept everything to myself.

Arianna added, “I started to be more attentive to life.” Kaylee said, “I came in with a negative mind, and as I kept going I saw that I wasn’t so bad at all.” Adam, Amanda, Faith, Hailey, Jules, and Ivy, all learned about taking on new challenges and being persistent. Adam noted, “I can be myself in an environment where I am not judged. If people jump halfway, I jump full.” Amanda continued on with, “I take on new challenges now because I am not that afraid little girl anymore. I don’t break as easily. I am capable of achieving my goals and dreams by being persistent and dedicated to what I do.” Faith wrote, “This class has motivated me to be better.” Hailey said, “I learned that it is normal to fail because failing is an attempt at success.” Jules learned that perseverance is key to success. She stated,

I've always been a big procrastinator, however, with dance I believe this changed. While learning choreography, I realized I couldn't rehearse "the next day" I had to rehearse every day. Slowly, this behavior became standard for all my classes and now I procrastinate less.

Ivy had this to say about being persistent and optimistic,

In life you need to be optimistic and have a persistent mind. You have to keep trying and when a trial doesn't work, you have to keep your head up. I learned that if I put my mind to something I can do it. Not to judge it after the first few days.

Angela and Denise commented on being enthusiastic and positive. Angela said, "I am more enthusiastic and positive. I am ready to learn something new." Denise added, "You need to always have a positive attitude and always see the positive side of things." Annie said while she cried, "I learned that I can do more, achieve more than I thought. I used to limit myself, but now I am really proud of myself."

Behavior Observation—Qualitative Analysis

Components of work ethic, interpersonal relationships, and growth in confidence were the three themes that emerged from the teachers' observations of improved student behaviors. Multiple teachers wrote down similar comments for the students, but they were documented only once in the following table to represent a specific type of comment. The three themes that emerged from the comments are the headings found in the table. One teacher commented on Mallory's work ethic, "she seems to be motivated about school, mainly because she participates in the school talent show and because of her dance class." Another teacher mentioned Denise's work ethic. This, "student seems more aware that her behavior and lack of work are affecting her grade." Scott's teacher mentioned, "He continues to have a positive attitude even in times of high stress." View Table 2 for the complete list of the teachers' responses about improved student behaviors.

Table 2: Teachers' Responses of improved student behavior

Components of Work Ethic	Interpersonal Relationships	Growth in Confidence
Formative work is being submitted complete and on time.	Effective with studying/collaborating in groups	His confidence levels have increased and he is proud of who he is.
She raised her grade from a B to an A. She is working hard and getting decent grades that are above the class average.	Her ability to verbally communicate and present in front of the class has shown great improvement.	Her confidence levels have increased.
She is resisting distractions and has better focus in class. She has improved her interest and attention in class.	She is more of a leader now, so students are looking up to her.	
Attendance has improved.	She has welcomed me every day this last week.	
She placed herself at a table where she talks less to peers.	She has shown improvements in her willingness to help others.	
She is not easily influenced by others.	Patient with others.	
Her responsibility in class has improved.	Friendly and helpful	
Respectful, mature, follows directions, turns in homework, and is responsible.	Ask the teacher more questions.	
Student seems to be more focused in class and tries to understand the material rather than just memorize the material.	Asks peers questions.	

The final comment was by Briella's teacher. She said, "The student is losing the "I don't care" attitude. She seems to be getting along better with her classmates because of this attitude change. There has been a lot less eye rolling and bored looks."

When teachers were asked in what areas do students still need to improve, two themes emerged. These themes were taking more responsibility for learning, and gaining more self-control in the classroom. Multiple teachers wrote down similar comments for the students, but they were documented only once in the following table to represent a specific type of comment. The two themes that emerged from the comments are the headings found in the table. Six teachers commented on students being on their cell-phones or on an electronic device when they were not supposed to be on them. One teacher stated, "Student needs to refrain from being distracted by technology in school and at home. Reading comprehension is severely lacking, yet student is always on her cell-phone." "Pushing through until the end of the year" was another area where many teachers mentioned a need for student improvement. In fact, nineteen teachers observed behaviors such as, the number of times a student was absent or tardy has increased, perseverance, time management, and not allowing other students to distract them. Once, the end of the year comes around students are only focused on summer break and they lose focus for everything else. One teacher wrote about a student's work ethic,

Procrastination is the one big negative that the student needs to change. She has the willingness to work, however, it is on her own terms and when she feels like it. She needs to start taking all her work seriously from the get go and not the end.

Another teacher observed, "It would be good for her to ask more questions in class and be proactive in her learning." A few teachers would like to see the student

taking more initiative in their learning. View Table 3 for the complete list of the teachers' responses of behaviors that still need improvement.

Table 3: Teachers' Observations: Behaviors that still need improvement

Taking more responsibility for learning	Self-control
Attendance is suffering again and attention in class is depreciating. Student is acting more "silly" than normal, but knows to stop quickly.	The student needs to watch her language.
Student does not speak to the following an absence to get caught up.	Time management
Pushing through to the end of the year.	Student seems to not be able to focus on school work and seems obsessed with personal concerns.
Not getting distracted with the cell-phone or computer.	The student still socializes at times when she should be doing her work.
She was tardy more often this month.	Her procrastination is the one big negative that the student needs to change.
She has too many absences this month.	
Focus and confidence on individual work, staying on task, and the desire to provide the best work possible at all times rather than the last minute.	

Overall, most of the students and teachers saw positive improvements in their academics and behaviors. By the end of April several of the participants began to change their negative attitudes into a positive one and most participants felt their confidence levels increased. Work ethic was an area where participants improved the most. Students

began turning in work on time, became more focused in class, actively participated in class, and resisted distractions.

By the end of the semester students needed to keep pushing through until the end of the year. More students were on their phones and were talking more in class. Students were also absent more often at the end of the year. The researcher spoke to one of the students and he said, “I was losing motivation for school at the end of the year.” One question is whether students would have been absent less had the study been conducted at the beginning of the school year.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of dance involvement on high school students' character traits and behaviors. The study involved twenty-two, dance level I students, ranging from ninth to twelfth grades. Sixteen teachers volunteered to fill out behavior observation forms for the twenty-two participants. The study consisted of both qualitative and quantitative research. Student character trait survey, student interviews, and teacher observation forms were used to collect data. The researcher, who was also the students' dance teacher, filled out the on-line survey and behavior observation form as well. This study was conducted to help answer the three essential questions: Can the dance program help students grow and develop in ways not possible in an academic classroom? How are character traits such as social intelligence or curiosity possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? How are other student behaviors such as school attendance or office referrals possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program?

This study has shown that dance involvement does have a positive impact on students' character traits and behaviors. However, the students' behaviors did not improve throughout the semester. In fact, the participants have all shown improvements between the pretest and the posttest scores from the character trait surveys. The number of absences increased for both the dance class and the nondance classes, but significantly more for the dance class. The number of times a student was tardy also increased for both

the dance class and the nondance classes, but considerably more for the nondance class. Thus, another important question would be to determine why the students in the dance class had more absences from school than they had in the nondance classes, and why the number of times a student was tardy increased for both situations. It would be important to repeat this study for a longer period of time during the first part of the year instead of the last part of the year, with a different dance curricula, different dance teacher, and without an extrinsic reward such as the opportunity to perform in the end-of-the-year dance recital.

Implications of the Study

Dance does appear to have a positive impact on students' character traits. These results need further study for a longer period of time because the longer study might produce greater changes within each character trait. In this study the number of times a student was tardy and absent was higher than expected. One important question to note is if the study took place in the first semester of the school year, the number of absences may have been lower. Two of the student participants admitted that their work ethic decreased as the end of the school year approached. Adam said he was "becoming less responsible at school and at home because school was coming to an end." Faith mentioned that "she has had no free time, so she is getting little sleep, and she is starting to get distracted." Many students "check out" a few weeks before school ends, so further study needs to be done, possibly during the first part of the school year.

Another factor that could have contributed to the changes in behavior was the "teacher." Nine participants did credit the dance teacher or the activities that were completed in dance class as helping them gain more confidence and perseverance. The

researcher, “teacher” was the primary person responsible for integrating the character traits into the classroom. According to the study by Mary Williams, students say that model teachers are never authoritarian, communicate high expectations, really listen, communicate their commitment through actions, and really care about student learning (23). The characteristics of a “model teacher” match McCutchen’s “creative learning environment.” This environment is where the teacher establishes an affirming, productive environment for students, sets and maintains safe boundaries, shows willingness in taking risks, and builds trust and support (326). “Students do their best work in a safe, nurturing, and positive environment” (McCutchen 326). The improvement in the students’ character traits could possibly be attributed to the positive influence of the teacher. Thus, in future studies, it would be important to use different curricula and a different teacher.

Extrinsic rewards may have also contributed to the behavioral changes. Four students specifically mentioned that they wanted to improve their behavior and grades so they would not lose the privilege of dancing in the recital. If students are failing or have poor behavior they will not dance in the May recital and will need to complete a project to make up the points. This may explain why some participants indicated they became more responsible as the study progressed.

Limitations for the Study

Although, the study did seem to have an effect on students’ character traits, it is important to note a few limitations from the study: potential research bias since the researcher was also the teacher, small sample size, and lack of reliability and validity of instruments. Since, the researcher was also the participant’s dance teacher, potential research bias may have been taken place. Further research needs to be completed when

the researcher is not the participant's teacher. It would be important to repeat the study with more participants involved and also for a longer period of time. A small sample size of participants was used in the study with only two males and twenty females. A larger sample size with equal numbers in both genders would be vital for future studies. Since, the researcher used the report card from the KIPP Foundation for the on-line character trait survey it is important to note the lack of reliability and validity of instruments used to collect data. Besides the on-line character trait survey, the instruments that were used to collect data in this study were created by the researcher. More research needs to be done on whether or not dance appears to have a positive impact on students' character traits.

Recommendations for Further Research

According to this study, it is evident that character education does have a positive effect on students' character traits and the resulting behaviors. As stated in the Introduction chapter, Paul Tough describes "character as being innate and unchanged, a core set of attributes that define one's very essence." (59). In contrast to his book, Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman describe character as "a term that does not have a fixed meaning. Character may simply be defined by what someone does not do" (5). What if character was defined as a set of malleable traits? The KIPP character growth card was designed to present character to students not as a set of fixed traits, but as a series of constantly developing attributes where students will aspire to improve on these traits (Tough 98). Some believe intelligence is malleable, so is character intelligence malleable too? If teachers, parents, and the community teach kids to pay attention to character, then their character will improve as well.

This study is not conclusive and there are still many questions that need to be answered. For example, how would the students' character traits change in the absence of implementing character traits into the classroom? Further research should be conducted comparing schools where character education is present in some of the schools and absent in others. This study involved dance level I students from ninth to twelfth grades, so in what ways may age and maturity affect students' behaviors? Another recommendation would be to examine the influence of extrinsic rewards on students' characters. Would the students' character and behaviors change in a positive or negative way without the influence of extrinsic rewards? Finally, it would be worth researching the role of the teacher, the parents, the community environment, and home situation each play in affecting students' character and behaviors. Such studies should be done both in classes that include and those that do not include character building content.

Conclusion

Finally, it is evident that a connection between involvement in dance and building character does exist, but this study has only skimmed the surface. There is much more research needed if dance is to be recognized as an art that develops imagination, teaches students to make sense of the world, develops skills and attitudes necessary for the workplace, teaches how to problem solve, and builds confidence. The key component to the study is that it is important to develop long-lasting character traits that are deemed necessary for success, both in school, the workplace, and in the future.

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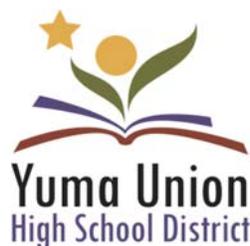
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APPENDIX A

PRINCIPAL'S LETTER OF APPROVAL

Yuma Union High School District
3150 South Avenue A
Yuma, Arizona 85364

Thomas Safranek
Principal



Governing Board:
Phillip D. Townsend
Bruce Gwynn
Linda Munk
Teri Brooks
Yira Hoffmann

Est. 1909

October 26, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Ms. Megan Hoggarth has my approval to conduct a study on our campus attempting to correlate student involvement with a dance program and positive character development. I have reviewed her proposal, and agree that this study could provide informative data relative to the benefits of student participation in electives, fine arts, and/or extracurricular activities.

Please contact me should any further information or approvals be required.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Safranek", written over a horizontal line.

Tom
Safranek
Principal
San Luis High School

APPENDIX B

APPROVAL LETTER FROM
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

APPROVAL LETTER FROM
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

DATE: February 3, 2016

TO: Megan Hoggarth, MA
FROM: University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB
PROJECT TITLE: [828442-4] Connection Between Involvement in
Dance and Building
Character: An Analysis of Student Behavior.
SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION APPROVED
APPROVAL

DATE: February 2, 2016
EXPIRATION DATE: February 2, 2017
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this project. The University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB has APPROVED your submission. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on applicable federal regulations.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of February 2, 2017.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherry May at 970-351-1910 or Sherry.May@unco.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB's records.

APPENDIX C
CONSENT FORMS

UNIVERSITY of
NORTHERN COLORADO



*College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Theatre Arts and Dance*

Student Assent form for Human Participants in Research

University of Northern Colorado

Thesis Title: Connection Between Involvement in Dance and Building Character: An Analysis of Student Behavior.

Researcher: Megan Hoggarth, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

Research Advisor: Dr. Sandra Minton, University of Northern Colorado,
sandra.minton@unco.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study of the connection between involvement in dance and building character. I am asking you to take part in this research study because you have shown some interest in participating and because you are currently enrolled in the high school dance program as a Dance I student and are between the ages of 14-18. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: My research is about finding a possible connection between involvement in dance and improvements in student behaviors and character building. Three questions that will be targeted are: (1) Can the dance program help students grow and develop in ways not possible in an academic classroom? (2) How are character traits such as social intelligence or curiosity possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? (3) How are other student behaviors such as school attendance or office referrals possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? The researcher will assess the possible quality of the dance program by completing a pre/posttest survey of your behaviors, a pre/posttest survey of your character traits embodied in dance class and in one other academic class, and you will complete a student interview towards the end of the semester

Time Commitment: By participating in this study you will need to fill out this assent form, your parent will need to fill out a consent form, you will take part in a student interview towards the end of the study, you will ask another teacher to fill out their characteristic surveys pre and post, and mainly, be yourself in class. The estimated time of the interview may take up to an hour.

Risks: The risks in this study would be no greater than those that generally accompany a dance class. It is important to note that I already evaluate you throughout the school year to make adjustments and improvements for the following semester. The only difference between this thesis project and your everyday class is that I will be assessing your behavior changes and changes in your character traits and interviewing you between the beginning and end of the semester. **If you participate, you agree to take on all risks involved and the instructor, school, school district, and University are not liable.**

Confidentiality: All consent and assent forms will be stored in a locked file cabinet in Christy O'Connell Black's office, a co-coordinator of the Dance Education MA, in Crabbe hall and will be destroyed after 3-5 years. Any notes, information, or papers on a computer will be protected by a password. A coding system and fictitious names will be used to protect the participant's identity in all data.

If you have any questions: The researcher conducting this study is Megan Hoggarth. If you have any questions later, you may contact me with the information listed above. Please retain a copy of the assent form for your records.

Participation is voluntary. If you begin to participate, you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact the Office of Sponsored Programs, Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-2161.

Statement of Assent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Print Child's Full Name	Child's Birth Date (month/day/year)	Age
-------------------------	-------------------------------------	-----

Parent/Guardian's Signature	Date (month/day/year)
-----------------------------	-----------------------

Researcher's Signature	Date (month/day/year)
------------------------	-----------------------

Printed Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent	Date (month/day/year)
--	-----------------------

This assent form will be kept by the co-coordinator of the Dance Education MA for at least three years beyond the end of the study.

Thank you for assisting me with my research. Sincerely,

Megan Hoggarth

UNIVERSITY of
NORTHERN COLORADO



*College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Theatre Arts and Dance*

Parent Consent form for Human Participants in Research
University of Northern Colorado

Thesis Title: Connection Between Involvement in Dance and Building Character: An Analysis of Student Behavior.

Researcher: Megan Hoggarth, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

Research Advisor: Dr. Sandra Minton, University of Northern Colorado,
sandra.minton@unco.edu

Your child has been asked to participate in a research study of the connection between involvement in dance and building character. Your child has been asked to take part in this research study because they have shown some interest in participating and because they are currently enrolled in the high school dance program as a Dance I student and are between the ages of 14-18. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing for your child to take part in the study.

What the study is about: My research is about finding a possible connection between involvement in dance and improvements in student behaviors and character building. Three questions that will be targeted are: (1) Can the dance program help students grow and develop in ways not possible in an academic classroom? (2) How are character traits such as social intelligence or curiosity possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? (3) How are other student behaviors such as school attendance or office referrals possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? The researcher will assess the possible quality of the dance program by completing a pre/posttest survey of your child's behaviors. Another teacher who also has your child in class will fill out the character trait survey pre and post. In addition, your child will also participate in an interview exploring the questions posed in this study.

Time Commitment: Students interested in participating in the study will need to fill out an assent form, while their parents will fill out a consent form. The participating students will be interviewed towards the end of the semester, which will last about an hour.

Risks: The risks in this study would be no greater than those that generally accompany a dance class. It is important to note that I already evaluate your child throughout the

school year to make adjustments and improvements for the following semester. The only difference between this thesis and a traditional dance class is that your child will be assessed pre and post in terms of his or her character traits and behaviors, and will also be interviewed towards the end of the semester. **If your child participates, you agree to take on all risks involved and the instructor, school, school district, and University are not liable.**

Confidentiality: All consent and assent forms will be stored in a locked file cabinet in Christy O'Connell Black's office in Crabbe hall and will be destroyed after 3-5 years. Christy O'Connell Black is one of the co-coordinators of the Dance Education MA. Any notes, information, or papers on a computer will be protected by a password. A coding system will be used to identify participants in all data. When writing the thesis, the researcher will use only fictitious names for participants.

If you have any questions: The researcher conducting this study is Megan Hoggarth. If you have any questions later, you may contact me with the information listed above. Please retain a copy of the consent form for your records.

Participation is voluntary. If your child begins participation you or your child may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you or your child are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like your child to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact the Office of Sponsored Programs, Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-2161.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent for my child to take part in the study.

Print Child's Full Name	Child's Birth Date (month/day/year)	Age
Parent/Guardian's Signature	Date (month/day/year)	
Researcher's Signature	Date (month/day/year)	
Printed Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent	Date (month/day/year)	

This consent form will be kept by the co-coordinator of the Dance Education MA for at least three years beyond the end of the study.

Thank you for assisting me with my research. Sincerely,

Megan Hoggarth

UNIVERSITY of
NORTHERN COLORADO



*College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Theatre Arts and Dance*

Permiso para participación humana en un estudio

Universidad del norte de Colorado

Tesis: Conexión entre danza y creando carácter: Un análisis del comportamiento de alumnos.

Investigador: Megan Hoggarth, estudiante de Universidad del norte de Colorado.

Concejero del estudio: Dr. Sandra Minton, Universidad del norte de Colorado,
sandra.minton@unco.edu

Su hijo/a ha sido seleccionado para participar en una investigación sobre la Conexión entre danza y creando carácter. Ha sido seleccionado porque ha enseñado interés en el estudio, porque estas en clases de danza en la preparatoria y estas entre 14-18 años de edad. Por favor lee esta forma y haz preguntas si tienes dudas antes de aceptar la participación de su hijo/a en esta investigación.

De que es la investigación: Mi investigación se trata de encontrar una conexión entre: estar en danza y la mejoría de comportamiento y carácter. Las tres preguntas principales son: (1) ¿Un programa de danza puede ayudar a alguien crecer y desarrollar de maneras no posibles en un salón tradicional? (2) ¿Cómo puede ser afectado la inteligencia social o curiosidad por participar en un programa de danza? (3) ¿Cómo puede afectar el comportamiento, como atender a clases y referencias académicas cuando participas en un programa de danza? El investigador evaluará la cualidad del programa de danza haciendo una encuesta, antes y después, del comportamiento del alumno, el carácter en clase de danza y otra clase tradicional. Finalmente, el alumno será entrevistado al final del semestre. Igual, otro profesor que también tiene a su hijo/a en clase llenará la encuesta de personalidad y comportamiento. Y finalmente, tu hijo/a será entrevistada.

Duración del compromiso: Participantes interesados en participar tienen que llenar una carta de permiso. El participante será entrevistado final del estudio cual durara aproximadamente una hora.

Riesgos: Los riesgos de este estudio no son más grandes que los que acompañan una clase de danza. Es importante notar que yo ya evalué a su hijo/a durante el año escolar para mejorar para el próximo semestre. La única diferencia entre este estudio y la clase es que yo escribiré sobre su hijo/a comportamiento. SI TU PARTICIPAS, ENTONCES ESTAS DE ACUERDO DE LOS RIESGOS INVOLUCRADOS DEL PROFECOR, ESCUELA, DISTRITO Y UNIVERSIDAD NO SON RESPONSABLES.

Confidencialidad: Todos los permisos serán en un lugar bajo llave en la oficina de O'Connell Black and serán destruidos en 3-5 años. La señora O'Connell es una de las coordinadoras de danza en educación. Todas las notas, encuestas y trabajos serán seguros con clave de acceso. Un número de código será usado para hacer participante. La investigadora usara nombres falsos para todo su tesis

Si tienes preguntas: La persona que va conducir el estudio es Megan Hoggarth. Si tienes preguntas, puedes contactarla. Por favor de mantener una copia para sus records.

Participación es voluntaria. Si su hijo/a participa en esta investigación, aun puede salir del estudio en cualquier tiempo. Tu decisión será respetada y no resultara en ninguna pérdida de benéficos que tengan. De haber leído lo mencionado, tiene la oportunidad de hacer preguntas. Firme abajo si le gustaría que su hijo/a participe en este estudio. Una copia de esta hoja se le será entregada para sus records. Si tiene preguntas o preocupaciones sobre la selección y tratamiento en este estudio, favor de contactar a la oficina de Programas Patosinados, Kepner Hall, Universidad del norte de Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-2161.

Declaración de consentimiento: Yo he leído la información mencionada y he recibido respuestas a mis preguntas. Yo le doy permiso que sea parte de este estudio.

Nombre completo de hijo/a	Día de nacimiento (mes/día/año)
Edad	

Firma de padres/guardián	Fecha (mes/día/año)
--------------------------	---------------------

Firma del investigador (mes/día/año)	Fecha
---	-------

Nombre y firma de investigador obteniendo el contacto (mes/día/año)	Fecha
--	-------

Esta hoja será guardada por la co-cordinadora de educación en danza por lo menos tres años.

Muchas gracias por asistirme con mi estudio.

Sinceramente, Megan Hoggarth

UNIVERSITY of
NORTHERN COLORADO



College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Theatre Arts and Dance

Teacher Consent form for Human Participants in Research
University of Northern Colorado

Thesis Title: Connection Between Involvement in Dance and Building Character: An Analysis of Student Behavior.

Researcher: Megan Hoggarth, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

Research Advisor: Dr. Sandra Minton, University of Northern Colorado,
sandra.minton@unco.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study of the connection between involvement in dance and building character. I am asking you to take part in this research study because a student suggested your name and we have that student in common. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: My research is about finding a possible connection between involvement in dance and improvements in student behaviors and character building. Three questions that will be targeted are: (1) Can the dance program help students grow and develop in ways not possible in an academic classroom? (2) How are character traits such as social intelligence or curiosity possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? (3) How are other student behaviors such as school attendance or office referrals possibly affected by participation in a high school dance program? The researcher will assess the possible quality of the dance program by completing a pre/posttest survey of your student's behaviors. You will also complete this same survey pre and post for the same student.

Time Commitment: You will need to fill out the student's characteristic survey pre and post. I will be giving you due dates when the surveys need to be completed. The estimated time to complete the character trait survey pre and post is about 20 minutes.

Risks: The risks in this study would be no greater than those that generally accompany filling out any assessment forms that pertain to a student. **If you participate, you agree to take on all risks involved and the instructor, school, school district, and University are not liable.**

Confidentiality: All consent and assent forms will be stored in a locked file cabinet in Christy O’Connell Black’s office in Crabbe hall and will be destroyed after 3-5 years. Christy O’Connell Black is one of the co-coordinators of the Dance Education MA. Any notes, information, or papers on a computer will be protected by a password. A coding system will be used to identify participants in all data. When writing the thesis, the researcher will use only fictitious names for participants.

If you have any questions: The researcher conducting this study is Megan Hoggarth. If you have any questions later, you may contact me with the information listed above. Please retain a copy of the consent form for your records.

Participation is voluntary. If you begin to participate, you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact the Office of Sponsored Programs, Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-2161.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Print Your Full Name

Signature

Date (month/day/year)

Researcher’s Signature

Date (month/day/year)

Printed Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent

Date (month/day/year)

This consent form will be kept by the co-coordinator of the Dance Education MA for at least three years beyond the end of the study.

Thank you for assisting me with my research. Sincerely,

Megan Hoggarth

APPENDIX D
RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

CHARACTER TRAIT SURVEY

1. Code name of the person completing the survey.

2. Code name of the student.

3. What is the current grade level of the student?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

GRIT

4. Finished whatever he/she began.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Stuck with a project or activity for more than a few weeks.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. Tried very hard even after experiencing failure.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Stayed committed to goals.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. Kept working hard even when he/she felt like quitting.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

OPTIMISM

9. Believed that effort would improve his/her future.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. When bad things happened, he/she thought about things they could do to make it better next time.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. Stayed motivated, even when things didn't go well.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SELF-CONTROL AT SCHOOL OR IN CLASS

12. Came to class prepared.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. Remembered and followed directions.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. Got to work right away instead of waiting until the last minute.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. Paid attention and resisted distraction.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SELF-CONTROL—INTERPERSONAL

16. Remained calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. Allowed others to speak without interrupting.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. Was polite to adults and peers.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. Kept temper in check.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

GRATITUDE

20. Recognized what other people did for them.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. Showed appreciation for opportunities.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. Expressed appreciation by saying thank you.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

23. Did something nice for someone else as a way of saying thank you.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

24. Was able to find solutions during conflicts with others.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. Showed that he/she cared about the feelings of others.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. Adapted to different social situations.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

CURIOSITY

27. Was eager to explore new things.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

28. Asked questions to help learn better

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. Took an active interest in learning.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

ZEST

30. Actively participated.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. Showed enthusiasm

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

32. Approached new situations with excitement and energy.

1-almost never, 2-very rarely, 3-rarely, 4-sometimes, 5-often, 6-very often, 7-almost always

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

BEHAVIOR OBSERVATION FORM

1. Code name for the person completing this form.

2. Code name for the student.

3. Behavior report for which month?
 January
 April
4. How many times has this student been tardy for this month?

5. How many times has the student been absent for this month?

6. How many times has the student been issued a detention for this month?

7. If the student has been issued a referral, what was the reason for the referral?

8. How many referrals does the student have?

9. In what areas has the student shown signs of improvement?

10. What positive behaviors have you seen in this student?

11. In what areas have you seen that this student still needs to improve on?
