



# **THE APPLICATION OF THE ORIENTAL DANCE WITH PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

**Anamarija Žic Ralić**

**Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of  
Zagreb, Croatia**

**Ana Gajnik Vrdjuka**

**Centre for the education of children and youth Karlovac,  
Croatia**

## STUDIES OF PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN LEISURE ACTIVITIES SHOW:

- They are less involved than people without intellectual disabilities (Dattilo and Schleien, 1994; Duvdevany , 2002)
- The dominant role of professionals and parents in deciding what activities will take place at leisure time (Crapps et al., 1985).
- Leisure time of adults with ID are often not fulfilled with appropriate contents, especially content that they have been chosen (Bratkovic, 2002).
- Initiation of leisure activities and sense of control and autonomy in these activities play an important role in the inclusion of people with ID in leisure activities in the community, have an impact on their self-concept and experience of empowerment (Duvdevany , 2002).



# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND OBESITY OF PERSONS WITH ID

- The increased health risks arising from physical inactivity, and perceived greater presence of obesity (Rimmer and Yamak, 2006; Stanish et al., 2006)
- In individuals with a higher degree of intellectual disability, there are more sedentary and less physical activity (Phillips and Holland, 2011)
- Persons with Down syndrome participate in significantly less physical activity than people with disabilities who do not have Down syndrome (Phillips and Holland, 2011)
- There is a higher rate of obesity in persons with ID than in the general population, especially among women, the elderly and those with less severe disabilities as well as in people with certain genetic disorders associated with obesity (eg Down syndrome) (Rimmer and Yamak , 2006)



# ORIENTAL DANCE AS AN LEASURE TIME ACTIVITY

- Provides a good cardiovascular workout and increases the flexibility and strength of the body. It focuses on the muscles of the torso, particularly the abdominal muscles, improves leg strength, and strengthening postural muscles that maintain an upright posture and helps regulate body weight (Kraus, 2009 )
- Oriental dance is suitable for people of all ages and body composition, including adults with ID often have lower mobility and coordination, and often overweight.
- The oriental dance respects each person as an individual, and the beauty of the uniqueness of ways in which each person performs the movement.



# INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN THE ORIENTAL DANCE AS AN LEISURE ACTIVITY OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY :

- To gain experience of equality and inclusion
- To socialize, make friendships and experience belonging
- To improve their physical mobility,
- To feel joy,
- To fulfill free time
- To adopt socially valued role of active adult person
- To contribute to the experience of life satisfaction
- To rise their quality of life



# THE AIM AND THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- The aim of this research is to investigate the application of oriental dance from the perspective of persons with intellectual disabilities and their parents.
- The research questions:
  - What are the experiences of persons with ID after participating in the activities of oriental dance?
  - What is the perception of parents about participant's mobility, body posture, spacial and lateral orientation, before and after orinetal dance program?



# PARTICIPANTS

- 7 persons with ID who have chosen the oriental dance as their leisure activity
  - 5 women and 2 men
  - Age range of 20-40 years
  - All live with their own families
  - All are included in the half-day program activities for adults in Workshop Zaprešić which is part of the Center for Rehabilitation Zagreb
  - Beside ID participants have
    - Down syndrome (2), cerebral palsy (1), ADHD (1), unspecified personality disorder (1) and epilepsy (1)



# ORIENTAL DANCE WORKSHOPS

- 48 sessions of oriental dance were carried out continuously three times a week during three months as an activity during half-day program of Zaprešić workshop
- Before the workshops participants socialize and drink tea or coffee. Upon completion of the dance workshops participants had time to rest where they like to discuss learned dance movements.
- Participants with ID could express personal preferences and make independent decisions about clothing, scarves, personal appearance and level of involvement during the oriental dance workshops.



# ORIENTAL DANCE WORKSHOPS

- Each session consisted of three stages:
  - 1st stage contained the warm up exercises for every body part (15min)
  - 2nd stage contained the 10 basic movements of oriental dance (20min)
  - 3rd stage contained a relaxation exercise (10min).
- The basic is to start with correct position of the body with the head and back straight and shoulders down and slightly tilted backwards – body posture
- Always starts on the right side
- Perform chest wall movement, up and down and shoulders back and forth
- Movement of the hips (shimmy) is performed by gently shifting the weight from one hip to the other (top-down) and moving hips back and forth standing in the correct position



# METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

- Interview with participants of oriental dance (7)
  - Do you love to dance the oriental dance?
  - Did you move more easily after the workshop of oriental dance?
  - Do you have proper body posture after you have completed the belly dance workshops?
  - Do you know to show *up and down, left and right, back and forth*?
  - Do you know the body parts after the workshops of oriental dance?
  - How do you feel after a workout of oriental dancing?
  - Do you have pain feeling, after completing belly dancing?
- Parents of participants gathered in focus group before and after the program of oriental dance.
- Interviews and focus groups are recorded, and transcribed.



# QUALITATIVE ANALYSE

- The following steps were used (Mesec, 1998)
  - Underline the answers relating to aspects of research topics,
  - Coding sorted responses,
  - Edit and sort statements with respect to the research questions
  - The attribution of concepts to encoded statements
  - Join the related concepts into categories.



# QUALITATIVE ANALYSE OF TRANSCRIBED MATERIAL RELATING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION 1:

- What are the experiences of persons with ID after participating in the activities of oriental dance?
- the following categories are provided:
- **Competence** – subcategories: better dancing, better knowledge of lateral and spacial directions, better knowledge of body parts.
- **Positive feelings** – statements: *I like to dance; I am happy when dancing; I feel better, I am proud on myself; I have more friends, I am more satisfied with myself, I put more attention on my appearance*
- **Body outcomes** - better movement, better posture, and pain, participants referred about less pain in legs and back, or no more pain.



# QUALITATIVE ANALYSE OF TRANSCRIBED MATERIAL RELATING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION 2:

- What is the perception of parents about participant's mobility, body posture, knowledge of body parts and directions: left-right, up-down, forward-backward **before** the oriental dance?
- categories: mobility, orientation, self-concept
- **Mobility** - subcategories: Difficulty movement, Improper posture, Fatigue, Pain, Obesity, Dance.
  - Parents report that the participants mostly have difficulties in mobility, they all have improper body posture, most quickly get tired, present pain in the back and legs, and there is obesity in five participants. However, all seven participants loves to dance.



# QUALITATIVE ANALYSE OF TRANSCRIBED MATERIAL RELATING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION 2 BEFORE:

- **Orientation** – subcategories: knowledge of the body parts and knowledge of directions.
  - According to statements of parents, participants are capable of showing basic body parts. The directions were passed by two participants, while others are not familiar with terms left and right, back and forth, up and down
- **Self-concept** – parents report pozitiv self-concept in five participants, while the two have a negative self-image. The three participants care about their appearance.



# QUALITATIVE ANALYSE OF TRANSCRIBED MATERIAL RELATING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION 2 AFTER:

- categories: mobility, orientation, self-concept and feelings and mood
- **Mobility** – subcategories: easier moving, less tired, lost weight, more attention paid to proper body postures, no longer complain about the pain, less complains about the pain and dancing.
  - In all subcategories parents reported improvement according to the first focus group, even in the dance, which is like in the first focus group highlighted as a favourite activity, and is now happily and often performed.



# QUALITATIVE ANALYSE OF TRANSCRIBED MATERIAL RELATING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION 2 AFTER:

- **Orientation** - parents report on the progress of participants in understanding all directions and have knowledge of all parts of the body.
- **Self-concept** - subcategories confident in themselves and more attention paid to their appearance.
- **Feelings and mood** contains statements about positive feelings such as happiness and pride, positive moods such as vitality, calmness and a better mood and lack of anger



# THE ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1. Adults with ID expressed satisfaction with participation in oriental dance. They report on progress in the skills, knowledge, and physical mobility. Express positive feelings and positive mood related to dance. Also notice that the pain in is less present or is no longer there.
- 2. Parents of participants before the program of oriental dance report about their poor physical mobility, obesity, poor posture, complaints about pain, partly known spacial and lateral orientation and mostly positive self-concept.
- After the oriental dance workshops parents of participants notice that they are more better in physical mobility, they lost weight, put more attention on proper body postures, less complain about the pain, better in orientation, have better mood and are more happy than before.



# CONCLUSION

- This shows that oriental dancing can be interesting, motivational program for mastering the different skills in adults with ID
- Experience success and satisfaction in movement can be associated with improved motor skills, willingness to learn and the development of self-confidence and awareness of their own abilities.



# CONCLUSION

- Participants experienced satisfaction with the successful achievement of realistic goals, competence and autonomy which can contribute to finding a personal identity, adopting the role of adulthood, increase social interaction and improve the overall lifestyle.
- One indicator of the adequacy of oriental dance as a leisure activity is that all the participants who have chosen this activity, participated in it until the end. No one gave up, no one found it too hard.

