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**ROLE PERCEPTION DEVELOPMENT OF
AEROBIC DANCE AND BODY SHAPING
INSTRUCTORS THROUGH A PEDAGOGICAL
PROGRAM**

Long Abstract

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Abstract

The research engages in the development of instructor's role perception.

The research accompanies 40 participants in an Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Instructor's program and investigates the process they undergo during one academic year. The researcher is a coordinator in the instruction program, and expert instructor in the field of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping.

Research Goals: Developing a model of the proper role perception development; investigating situations in which role perception develops; Assessing participants' level of physical fitness and its development.

Methodology: Mixed-methods Research. The students examined in the beginning of the program, in its midst and in the end. Research tools: questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and two physical fitness tests.

Main findings: There are five main characteristics which contribute to the development of the instructors' role perception during the program: high instruction level, pedagogical capabilities, good musical hearing, acquaintance with anatomy and the physiology of the body and technical acquaintance with body shaping equipment. The level of physical fitness hardly changes after the program. Three main themes were identified: development in the instructor's characteristics and skills, development regarding the profession and development regarding the exercising audience/

Conclusions: The conclusions include a new Optimal Model of the Desired Role Perception of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Instructors.

The model includes 4 major components: (1) attitude to the profession; (2) attitude to the exercising audience; (3) characteristics and general instruction skills; (4) and characteristics and specific instruction skills.

The model was designed so as to serve as a paradigm for other instruction programs, including practical suggestions on how to "create" the optimal Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor and contribute to the development of teachers and instructors in other fields.

Key words: Role Perception, Instructors, Aerobic Dance, Body Shaping, Instruction Model.

1. Introduction

The research engages in the role perception development of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors throughout their course. The research focuses on the change and development of the students' role perception as they gradually become instructors. The research also examines the role perceptions of instructors who have already graduated from the course and coordinators training the students. The researcher is a coordinator in the instructor's program, and expert instructor in the field of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping.

Many people consider physical activity to be a leisure time activity. In Israel and the entire world there has been an increase in the awareness of a healthy life style. Women are mostly attracted to activities which take place in physical fitness center and studios. Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping are two excellent ways to maintain physical fitness. These activities provide professional instruction, good music, aerobic physical activity combining cardiovascular endurance and burning fat; body shaping as physical activity working on muscle endurance, strengthening and shaping the body. Women are interested in it and seek to become certified Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors. They enroll in a yearly academic program running in weekly sessions in the attempt to realize a dream and become instructors. They understand the difficulties and the efforts required as they go through the program. Before the program, the students had thought it was enough to like sport, rhythm and dance to become an instructor. The instructor's work seems to be fun, and an easy way to make some additional income, but the truth is far more complex. The external impressions of the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's work are not real.

This research sought to examine the role perception development process of the women choosing to become Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors in the instruction program. The need for this research emerged from the field. The program coordinator, who has engaged in the field of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instruction in the last 20 years, has seen the need for understanding the process of the students' development of role perception. In the beginning of the year, the students are in one state, and in its end, they reach a second state, where their role perception is formed and they are ready to start working as instructors in the field. A literature review yielded no research that was conducted on this topic.

As an academic issue, role perception development of Aerobics & Body Shaping Instruction training has not been sufficiently studied. Most Research engages in the participants and the benefits generated by physical activity. Newly published research emphasizes Aerobic Dance's contribution to physical, mental and cognitive development. The literature review for the purpose of this study has not come across any previous studies relating to role perception development for instruction in this field.

The research had three goals:

1. To develop a model of a proper Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors' role perception;
2. To explore the ways in which the instructor's role perception develops during the program;
3. To assess the fitness level and its development during the program.

The research questions were:

1. What are the main characteristics acquired in the program which contribute to the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception?
2. How does the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception develop?
3. To what extent does the physical fitness level change during the program?

The research questions derived from the research goals and the wish to examine the three directions: searching for criteria, investigating the development of role perception and evaluating the change in the participants' level of physical fitness in the beginning and the end of the process.

The research hypothesis was:

Through the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping program we expect to identify characteristics which develop and improve the participants' role perception as they gradually become instructors.

Research Variables:

- Independent variable:

Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping intervention training program

- Two dependent variables:
 1. The characteristics of expert instructor in Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping
 2. The role perception of student about Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor

The following chapter will engage in the theoretical perspectives, meaning the theories and concepts underpinning this research. This chapter presents a visual model which clarifies the relationships among the different theories. Finally, the chapter presents the gap in knowledge demonstrating the importance of the current research.

The methodology chapter presents the research paradigm and approach, the research design on all its stages, the research population, and intervention program, the research tool and data analysis.

The findings chapter presents the answers to the three research questions and to the research hypothesis.

The conclusions chapter includes the optimal model, factual and conceptual conclusions, practical implications, the research limitations and contribution to knowledge.

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AEROBIC DANCE AND BODY SHAPING INSTRUCTION

I.1. Preview

The body of this literature review was divided into three main parts: the first engages in role, role perception and Role theory; the second part engages in instruction and learning, and the third part engages in Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping.

The research engages in the development of role perception of instructors in an Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping pedagogical program. So far, research has examined the benefits of sports programs, and has not focused on the process and the changes in the role perceptions of students who become instructors.

A quote from Shakespeare’s play portrays people as actors on a stage who get different roles and have to play them. Becoming an Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor is a choice of a role that has to be played: “*All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players....*” (William Shakespeare, “**As You Like It**”, Act II Scene VII, cited in Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis, 1993 p. 28).

This research will engage in the development of role perception hence calls for a definition of the term "role perception". "Role Perception" seems to include one's beliefs, perceptions and expectations of oneself regarding the "role", and the way in which it influences the individual and others in the environment (Bitman, Marom, Atar and Lahav, 1993; Immanuel, 2005).

Dueck (2008) argued that role perception is the person's vision of the role; hence each person has to have a role perception. Role perception derives from understanding the role and thinking about it, and it can help a person set priorities and cope with routine dilemmas. Avneyon (2010) defines role perception as a variety of views, attitudes, insights or expectations about the role which has to do with the person's status and a specific position in the organization.

The researcher believes role perception is a combination of all of the above, in a nutshell: understanding, perception and vision expressed subjectively towards the role and its application, while considering what is expected by society.

If the research title represents the topics in which it engages, its concepts, usually hide within it. This research title is "Role Perception Development of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Instructors through a Pedagogical Program"

In order to provide the readers with the areas to which this title pertains, following are some concepts:

A pedagogical program – pertains to theories from the field of education.

Instructor – the domain of instruction.

Developing role perception – the field of psychology and sociology

Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping – the field of Physical Education

These domains led the way to four major theories and three important concepts, two of which were interconnected, and therefore joined.

I.2. Main Theories

Role Theory engaging in the various roles in society, and the way in which roles are created and developed (Moreno, 1946; Blatner, 1997). Role theory is a perspective in sociology and in social psychology that considers most of everyday activity to be the acting out of socially defined categories (e.g., mother, manager or teacher). Each social role is a set of rights, duties, expectations, norms and behavior a person has to face and to fulfill. The model is based on the observation that people behave in a predictable way, and that an individual's behavior is context specific, based on social position and other factors. The theatre is a metaphor often used to depict role theory (Mead, 1934).

Moreno (1946) discussed three developmental stages of role construction: role taking, role playing and role creation. Blatner (1997) compares these three stages to the world of theater, where an actor first learns the text, then assimilates the playwright's and the director's concepts and only then feels free to "forget" what he has learnt, which is the most advanced stage. These stages are related to the research engaging in the development of the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception.

Social Learning approach – imitation Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping rely on imitation as part of the learning process (Bandura, 1977; Cohen & Friedman, 2002). Bandura's basic assumption (1963) draws on the individual's social nature. He maintains that the way in which an individual learns, grows, and develops is impossible to conceive without proper knowledge of the social environment in which he lives. The individual's learning process is mostly affected by the environment, through an automatic process described as socialization. Through socialization, an individual acquires the behaviors and values which are common in his group of affiliation.

Bandura (1977) did not oppose those basic assumptions, yet argued there are other modes of learning, such as observing and knowledge of other individuals' behaviors. Bandura referred to those individuals whom one observes and from whom one learns as *models*. Throughout life, all of us rely upon models in order to learn, and we all act as models for others.

Social Cognitive Theory - Self-Regulation in learning according to which a person actively controls learning and reinforces self for behavior (Bandura, 1977; Lichtinger, 2011).

In this research we focused on self-regulation in learning, which is an active process, whereby the learner sets goals and attempts to control cognition, motivation, behavior and the environment based on his/her goals and feedback received from the environment (Lichtinger, 2011).

Regarding the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors' program which encourages the process of self-regulation in learning, generates positive influence on the program participants' motivation. The students develop a sense of self-efficacy, interest and value to their learning. The researcher integrates self-regulation in learning in her program.

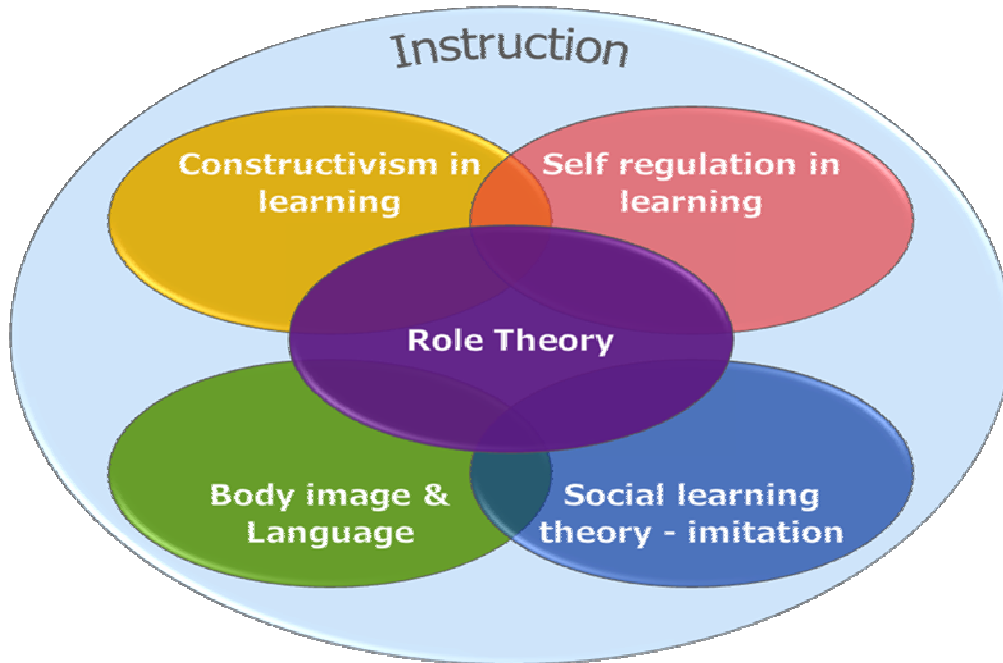
Constructivism in learning is a process whereby the learner's knowledge is constructed gradually in the course of active learning (Piaget, 1952; Vygotsky, 1962; Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Raviv (2001), too, argues that learning is an independent process undergone by the learning individual exclusively, through personal, internal, and mental processes. As soon as knowledge is acquired, it becomes the learning individual's personal asset. It is related to the research, since the learning process at the training program is partly constructive, namely, the coordinator and instructor of the "Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping" training program provide the students with tools such as basic steps and terminology, various teaching methods, etc. The students are required to practice and construct new combinations based upon the acquired knowledge. In this process, the participant becomes active, constructing by herself, or with the assistance of colleagues, her own subjective knowledge.

I.3. Concepts

- **Instruction** includes such concepts as guidance, counseling, training, personal development and group development (Oliva & Pawlas, 1997).
- **Body Image** is a set of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and sensations, which an individual holds in relation to his or her body (Treger, 2009).
- **Body language** non-verbal communication; a set of movements and gestures constituting a behavioral ensemble expressing the individual's internal

experiences and occurrences, affecting the atmosphere and the surroundings (Halperin, 2011).

Figure 1: Main theories and concepts



The model presents the theories and concepts in a unique way. It is made to show how the concepts are interconnected. Instruction appears as a comprehensive, overall concept. Role theory is in the center, above the other theories and concepts and in addition, there is an overlap between self-regulation in learning and constructivism and between imitation and body image and language.

To clarify the visual model, and the connections between the theories and concepts, we will begin with the issue of instruction. Instruction is comprehensive and includes all theories and concepts. All theories and concepts are examined in the framework of the program's pedagogy, and that is why instruction received the broad circle which surrounds everything else.

When we move in, we see that role theory is somewhat above as it includes the process of role perception and all references to the instructor's role. All other concepts under it could not exist in this research without it.

Self-regulation and constructivism in learning overlap as they are both active processes where the learner is in the center. In self-regulation, the coordinator does her best to integrate and promote self-regulation in learning by setting goals,

providing feedback to the students, emphasizing the significance of exercise and practice and creating new combinations, increasing their motivation via personal and group discussions and creating a pleasant, positive climate.

As far as constructivism is concerned, the program coordinator is an expert instructor in the field, by she allows each student to develop at her pace based on her personal traits. For instance, if a student comes from the field of Flamenco dancing, the coordinator will allow the integration of dance movements into the structure of the Aerobic Dance lesson. The same is true for someone who comes from the area of athletics. In other words, the coordinator provides the basic tools, but allows for space and personal development for each student while encouraging and supporting them. In the program, the students and the group are in the center, and the program constitutes the framework and grounds for the required development.

Imitation, body image and body language appear in the model's lower part. Body image and language were joined together since they are connected to the subject of Physical Education and the instructor's image in the eyes of her exercising audience.

Furthermore, they overlap when it comes to imitation. Overlap is created as imitation, body image and language are part of the learning process in the program and have to do with the relationship between a person and his/her body. Imitation is one of the ways to learn the movements and the exercises required in Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping lessons. The students in the program learn from the coordinator what and how to perform through observation and imitation. Naturally the activity includes explanations and experiencing, but still, imitation is the simplest and clearest way in the learning process during the program. Body image and the significance of body language are addressed in the program to a great extent, and included in the syllabus. An instructor must have a positive body image, or she must, at least convey the message that she has a positive body image. Body language and movements are important to the instructor's image and her relationship with the group, and it is used in large parts of in the instruction in the program.

I.4. Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping

This research engages in the process of the development of Aerobic Dance and Body shaping instructors and hence, it is important to clarify these terms.

Kanitz (2004) provides a simple rationalization, according to which Aerobic Dance consists of movements borrowed from the world of dance, gymnastics, and martial arts, such as hops, jumps, skips, and stepping forward, sideways, and backward, to the beat of music.

Aerobic Dance is physical exercise adapted to a rhythmic type of music, manifested by performing sets of movements and dance steps in order to develop and enhance aerobic fitness (Halperin & Yankelovitz, 2006).

Body Shaping (Halperin, 2010) is training under load, intended to shape and accentuate muscles' contour line, toward a firm, well-built, fine-looking body. Halperin & Yankelovitz (2006) further state Body Shaping is performed while employing a certain load, so as to tone and shape the muscles, as well as to enhance their endurance. The body training exercise complements aerobic exercise with additional significant benefits, such as general endurance development, balancing various muscle groups, increasing metabolism while reducing fat tissues, maintenance of bone tissue density, enhanced posture, as well as protecting the body from injuries. Table 1 summarizes the differences and similarities of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping (Kanitz, 2004; Halperin & Yankelovitz, 2006; Halperin, 2011).

Table 1 portrays the difference between Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping, from each exercise's main goal of, its pace, bodily requirements, and so forth, providing a clearer picture toward a proper understanding of each exercise's grounds.

Table 1: Comparison of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping

Criterion	Aerobic Dance	Body Shaping
Exercise Type/Main Goal	Aerobic exercise; heart-lung endurance; burning of fats	Muscular endurance development exercise
Pace of Exercise	Intensive exercise accompanied by rhythmic, delightful music which dictates the pace of the lesson	Exercise may be intense, mild, or slow, depending upon the instructor's lesson plan; music is important, but not vital.
Bodily Requirements	Correspondence of movements to the rhythmic music; movement memory; varying coordination; group coordination	A high degree of accuracy in starting positions and exercises; focusing on the core, namely, the body center; balancing muscle groups, order of exercises planning; symmetry
Aids	May be performed with music only with no aids, but a combination of aids (steps) is possible, if necessary	Using aids such as dumbbells, various bands, balls, etc.
Required Degree of Accuracy	Accuracy is required, as long as safety is maintained. Similar, but not identical movements may be performed	High degree of accuracy is significant for correct performance of each exercise.
Common Characteristic(s)	Visual imitation of the instructor and following his guidance	Visual imitation of the instructor and following his guidance

Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping are the core issues in an Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Instructors Training program.

I.5. Gap in Knowledge

As an academic issue, role perception development of Aerobics & Body Shaping Instruction training has not been sufficiently studied. Most Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Research engage in the participants and the benefits generated by physical activity. Newly published research examined the influence of Aerobic Dance and body shaping on various populations, and emphasizes Aerobic Dance's contribution to physical, mental and cognitive development. Research conducted in Japan proved improvements in the cognitive performance of adults (ages 65 – 75) who participate in an Aerobic dance exercise program (Hozumi & Kimura, 2012). Research by Leelarungrayub et. al. (2011) found that six weeks of aerobic dance exercise improves blood oxidative stress status and increases interleukin-2 in previously sedentary

women (Leelarungrayub et al, 2011). Another research which examined an Aerobic program combined with Body shaping by using weights followed men and women for three months. The results indicated an improvement in both strength and endurance tests, before and after engaging in the activity. Additionally, the psychological questionnaires indicated participants' well-being improved (Schiffer et al., 2009).

In contrast, earlier research engaged in damage and injuries cause by Aerobic dance. Researchers discussed the voice strain experienced by aerobics instructors. They examined 54 aerobics instructors, who were found to experience hoarseness and even loss of voice as a consequence of a strenuous use of their voice (Long, Williford, Olson, & Wolfe, 1998). An earlier research examined prevalence and types of injuries among those engaging in Aerobic Dance found that people aged 40 and younger reported a larger number of shin bone injuries, while participants, aged 41 and older, reported a greater number of lower back injuries (Rothernberger, Chang, & Cable, 1988).

It appears that the literature presents no reference to the Aerobic Dance's instructor's role perception development, and hence the significance of this research.

CHPATER II: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND VALIDATION OF AN AEROBIC DANCE AND BODY SHAPING INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The Methodology chapter pertains to the process from the theoretical review to the collection of data. The chapter seeks to answer the following questions: Why were specific data collected? Which data were collected? Where, when and how were the data collected? How were the data analyzed? (Hussey & Hussey, 1997).

II.1. Research Paradigm and Approach

The research will use mixed quantitative and qualitative research methods, in order to investigate development of role perceptions program Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Program participants while considering the perspectives of practicing instructors' and the program coordinators' perspectives.

Mixed methods research is a design for collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative or data in a single study to understand a research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Creswell (2009) emphasizes that in the mixed research design, the investigator collects both forms of data at the same time during the study and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results.

It appears that the first research goal of developing a model while identifying the criteria developing throughout the program required a positivist paradigm, in quantitative research. The same is true for the third research goal, attempting to evaluate the level of physical fitness and its development in the course of the program. In contrast, the second research goal seeks to investigate the ways in which the instructor's role perception develops, required post positivist paradigm in the qualitative research approach.

The explanation for using both quantitative and qualitative research tools is that the former provide the raw factual information regarding the development of role perception, and the supporting qualitative research will provide basic information and primary insights in the beginning, and later, profound insights pertaining to the reality and the significance of the quantitative findings.

II.2. Research Design

The research was conducted during Wingate Institute annual program for students who wish to be certified as Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors. The program started in October 2011 and ended in July 2012. The research lasted to additional months, to the end of September 2012, so that the interviews with the program graduates and coordinators (see the Research Population section).

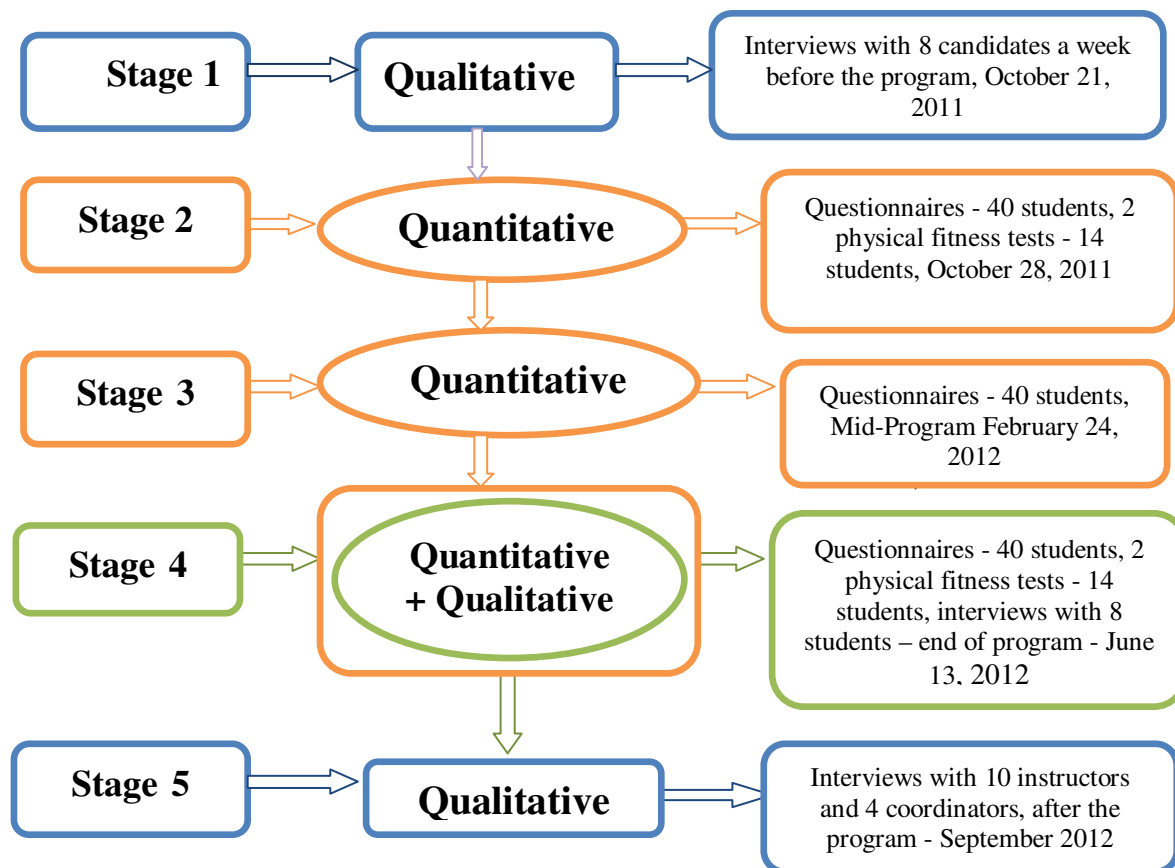
The research was conducted in this way, as it focuses on the development of role perception during the program. First, the researcher sought to collect the data in the best possible way. Only after focusing on the program did the researcher make time to interview the instructors and the coordinators.

II.2.1. Research Stages

Quantitative and qualitative methods which were used according to the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping program schedule. The research was divided into five clear stages: a week before the program began, in the beginning of the program, half way

through the program, in the end of the program and shortly after its end. The following figure presents the research stages, according to the schedule.

Figure 2: Research Stags in Chronological Order



The research design presented in the above figure includes qualitative stages, quantitative stages and a combined quantitative and qualitative stage. All research tools were prepared in advance. This was done with the help of a statistics expert or the research literature. Most research stages were conducted during the program, and only the fifth stage was conducted after the program was over.

II.3. Research Population

The research population included 40 students (aged 19 and above) participating in an annual Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Instructors' Program. The research examined the 40 students' development of role perceptions in three time points: in the beginning of the program, in its midst and in its end.

The program is a Wingate Institute program. The Wingate Institute is the Leading, most professional College for training Physical Education teachers and instructors for the various sports domains.

The research population was divided as follows: 14 students, participants in the researcher's program in the Ashdod Wingate Institute extension. The other 26 students took the program in other extensions (Jerusalem and Rishon LeZion).

The researcher's group included 14 participants (the entire group) took two physical fitness tests; of them, 8 participants were interviewed.

The research included two additional samples including:

- 🌈 10 former students (aged 21 and above) who had graduated from the program and serve as instructors for over a year.
- 🌈 4 program coordinators, with roles identical to that of the researcher. The researcher interviewed the two coordinators working in the extensions where the program participants filled the questionnaires, and added two others, working in the Tel Aviv extension and the Wingate Institute.

II.4. Intervention Program

The research includes an intervention program which is an addition contributed by the researcher and approved by the Sports Administration. The program's curriculum is good, but highly technical. The intervention program seeks to contribute to the program participants and help them pass the program and acquire the role perception required of a professional instructor in a smooth manner. A personal approach, being a role model, creating group interaction, conducting workshops, sharing personal stories and real life examples creates a supportive, pleasant atmosphere so as to advance the students to the transition to their new role.

II.5. Research Tools

The research tools are divided into quantitative and qualitative tools.

The quantitative research tools consist of questionnaires and two physical fitness tests for the research population. The qualitative research tools include interviews with the research participants

II.5.1. Quantitative Research Tools

- **Questionnaires** administered in the beginning of the program, mid-program, and end of program to 40 students.

The questionnaires were especially devised for the current research, with the help of a statistics expert and are based on previous interviews with program candidates and their expectations of the Aerobic Dance and Body shaping instructor's role.

- **Physical Fitness Tests** at the: beginning of the program and at the end of the program. The two physical fitness tests rely on familiar tests reported in the literature and they are valid (Mackenzie, 1997).
1. BMI – Body Mass Index provides a quantitative estimate whether a person is underweight or overweight or average.
 2. Tecumseh Step Test (Mackenzie, 2002) – measure of cardiovascular fitness level.

II.5.2. Qualitative Research Tools

Semi-structured interviews in this research were conducted:

- ✚ at the beginning of the program and end of the program - 8 students;
- ✚ with program graduates already working as instructors - 10 participants;
- ✚ with coordinators teaching in instructors' programs – 4 participants.

These interviews were especially developed for this research and are based on the research questions and goals, on preliminary interviews conducted by the researcher before the research began, based on her experience, and with the help and support of a statistics expert and a mentor who have accompanied this research through its stages.

In this research, the researcher used three types of triangulation: Time Triangulation, Methodological Triangulation & Combined levels of Triangulation.

II.6. Data Analysis

The quantitative and qualitative data were collected separately by the researcher. Quantitative data were collected via questionnaires, and two physical fitness tests. Their results were written on pages collected by the researcher. Qualitative data were collected via interviews which were recorded by the researcher.

Each type of data was analyzed separately.

The quantitative analysis includes statistical measures such as ANOVA and t-test, and was conducted with the help of a statistics expert. Qualitative data analysis included transcriptions of the interviews and content analysis. The analysis stages which served for eliciting the themes followed the following analysis stages: (1) Holistic reading of the data; (2) Organizing and minimizing the data; (3) "Breaking" the data into smaller

units of analysis; (5) Re-constructing the data and conceptualizing; (6) Holistic re-reading of the data; (7) Verifying the data (8) Writing (Kacen & Krummer-Nevo, 2010). The researcher also integrated the analyses to reach an optimal model and conclusions.

CHPATER III: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the research findings. First the quantitative findings will be presented and they will be followed by the qualitative findings. The findings to be presented are those that provide answers to the research questions and the research hypothesis.

III.1. Quantitative Findings

1. The first quantitative finding seeks to answer the research question: *What are the main characteristics acquired in the program which contribute to the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception?* Additionally, it seeks to refer to the research hypothesis: *Through the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping program we expect to identify characteristics which develop and improve the participants' role perception as they gradually become instructors.*

Statistical analysis such as t-test and ANOVA were conducted, generating tables which include all the data obtained in the beginning, middle and end of the program.

Five main characteristics were found to contribute to instructors' role perception: high instruction level, pedagogical capabilities, good musical hearing, acquaintance with anatomy and the physiology of the body and technical acquaintance with body shaping equipment. It appears that these characteristics are those which develop the most in the course of the instruction program.

The following are two figures depicting the five characteristics and the major variables testifying to the development of the students' role perception during the program.

Figure 3: Possible Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors' characteristics

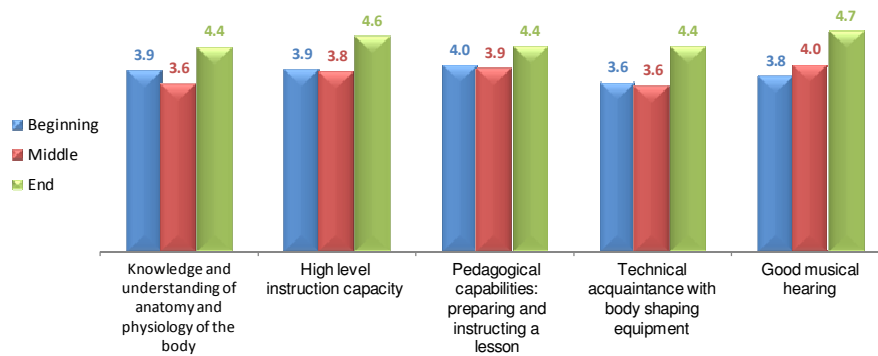
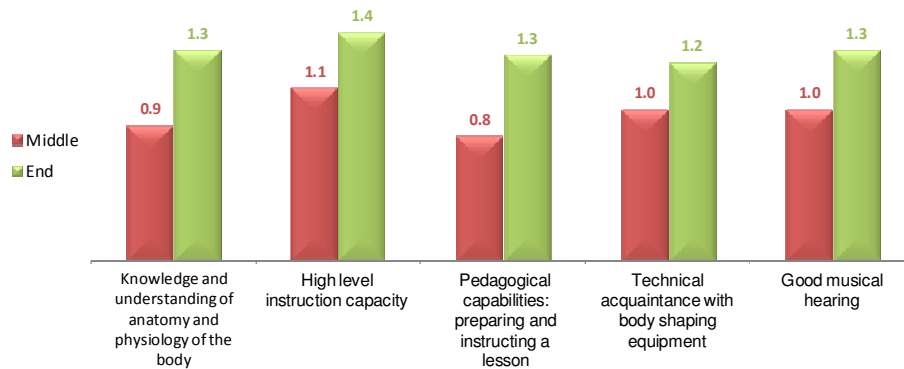


Figure 4: Change in attitude following the program regarding the significance of the characteristics to an Aerobic Dance instructor



2. The second finding seeks to answer the second research question: *"To what extent does the physical fitness level change during the program?"*

The findings of physical fitness tests show that the level of physical fitness has hardly changed, meaning, the improvement in physical fitness level is not significant.

The program is an focuses on instruction and takes place once a week, emphasizing more the process of turning the students into instructors, and less the improvement in their physical fitness.

III.2. Qualitative Findings

The qualitative Research Question: *How does the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception develop?*

How and in which domains, has there been a development during the program, which led to the desired role perception.

Three main themes were identified from the three sources of information: students, instructors and coordinators. Each theme includes categories.

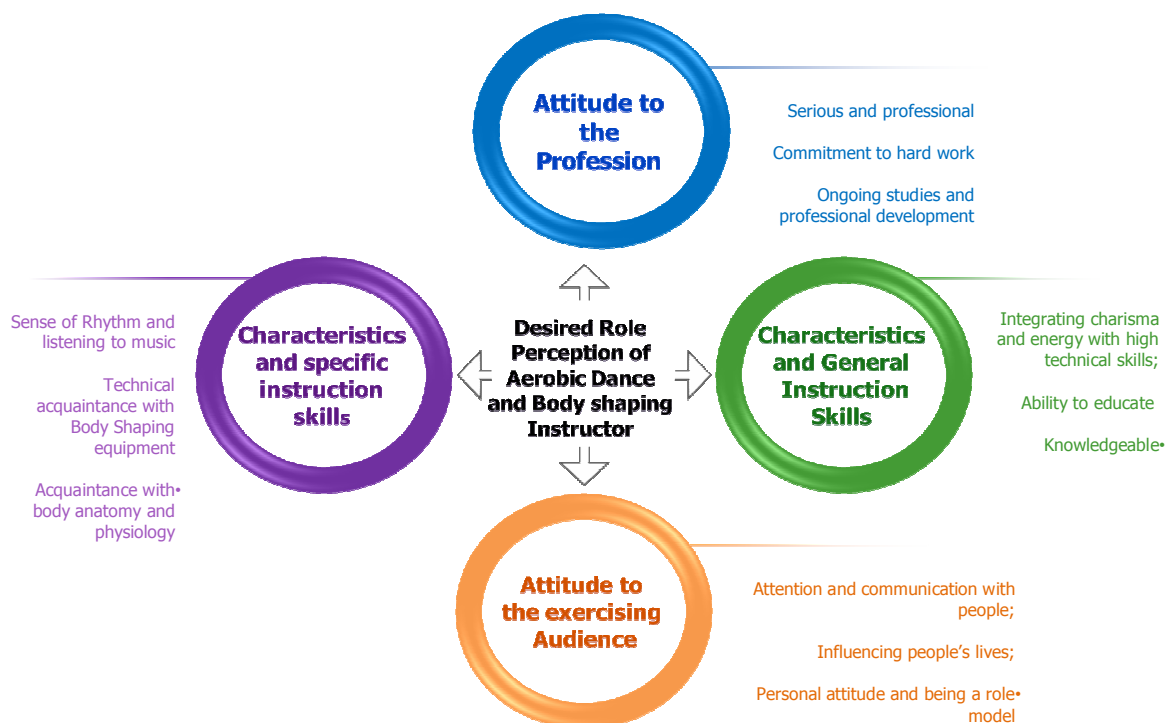
- 1. Development in the instructor's characteristics and skills** – combination of charisma and energy with high technical skills, the ability to educate for physical activity in a variety of perspectives, knowledgeable, sense of rhythm and listening to music.
- 2. Development regarding the profession** – seriousness, professionalism and commitment to hard work, ongoing learning and professional development.
- 3. Development regarding the exercising audience** – attention and communication with people, influencing their lives, personal attitude and being a role model.

CHPATER IV: CONCLUSIONS

IV.1. The Optimal Model

Deep thinking and organization of the data while relating to the research data, theories and concepts underpinning this research yielded a model which consists of four major links, the components of the optimal instruction model, contributing to the desired Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors' role perception: characteristics and general instruction skills, characteristics and specific instruction skills, attitude to the profession and attitude to the exercising audience.

Figure 5: The Optimal Model of the Desired Role Perception Development of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Instructors



This model constitutes the components of the "basket" which an ideal Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor has to carry. The four links are significant and if one of them does not exist, the instructor will not be "optimal" as she ought to be. "Damage" to one of the links will result in a less worthy instructor.

IV.2. Factual and Conceptual Conclusions

In the following section, the research questions will be presented, and each question will be followed by a factual and conceptual conclusion and in the end, an overall conceptual conclusion will be presented.

1. What are the main characteristics acquired in the program which contribute to the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception?

Factual conclusion – the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception develops in three domains: development of skills and competences, development regarding the profession and development regarding the exercising audience.

Conceptual conclusion – the three domains of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception development led to the components of an optimal

instruction model for the development the desired Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors.

2. How does the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor's role perception develop?

Factual conclusion – emphasis on the development and strengthening of five criteria
Contribute to the development of role perception and leads to the creation of the optimal Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor: Pedagogical ability to organize and manage a lesson, high level instruction capability, knowledge and understanding of the body's anatomy and physiology, good musical hearing and Technical acquaintance with body shaping equipment.

Conceptual conclusion – the five criteria which contribute to the role perception of the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor constitute two components that have to do with the instructor's competencies and characteristics in the model for the development the desired Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping role perception.

3. To what extent does the physical fitness level change during the program?

Factual conclusion – the program includes a weekly encounter emphasizing instruction and therefore, the level of physical fitness does not increase during the program.

Conceptual conclusion – the level of physical fitness is not emphasized in the program, but it still pertains to the optimal instruction model and specific instruction skills.

An overall conceptual conclusion – all the criteria and areas of development lead to four major components:

- 🚩 attitude to the profession;
- 🚩 attitude to the exercising audience;
- 🚩 characteristics and general instruction
- 🚩 characteristics and specific instruction skills

All these constitute the desired role perception of the Aerobic dance and body shaping instructor.

IV.3. Practical Implications

IV.3.1. Specific Recommendations for Participants and Coordinators of the Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Instructors' Progra

1. Expectations have to be coordinated in the beginning of the program. The coordinator has to explain what the students are to expect in the program, and expectations have to be explained mutually and with considering all participants so as not to stress the students or cause them to drop out of the course.
2. It is important to explain to the students that an important part of their role as instructors is to build good, warm relationships with their exercising audience.
3. The students have to be encouraged to engage in physical activity beyond the program so as to maintain the level of physical fitness.
4. The students have to be encouraged to engage in physical activity beyond the program so as to maintain the level of physical fitness.
5. The coordinator must emphasize the significance the students' self-confidence and ability to stand in front of an audience, so as to lead them to a better, higher state of instruction.
6. The coordinator has to be encouraged to emphasize the variables and components emerging from this research to lad the students in the direction of optimal instruction.
7. During the program and in its end, the coordinator has to encourage the students to keep learning and getting updated so as to develop in the field.

IV.3.2. General Recommendations for Instruction Programs and Education

1. Although this research is preliminary and unique in the field, and it cannot constitute solid grounds for Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instruction in particular and sport instruction in general, this research recommends considering the model with its four components: attitude to the profession, attitude to the exercising audience, characteristics and general instruction skills, and characteristics and specific instruction skills, understanding them and enhancing them in the framework of sports instruction programs. These four components are recommended for instruction programs, in addition to the development of the instructor's proper role perception. General instruction

skills are required of all sports instructors, whereas specific instruction skills are particular to the sports field. For instance, a basketball instructor must master specific skills including control of the ball, eye-hand coordination and so forth. The components of attitude to the profession and the attitude to the exercising audience are of great significance as well. The researcher recommends the integration of the four model components in programs for instructors who have been practicing in the field.

2. Another possible recommendation has to do with the domain of education. If we compare this model to models of teachers' role perception, we can see that this model enhances, adds and provides a different perspective for teachers. The teaching components will be referred to as "teaching" instead of "instruction", and so the components will be attitude to the teaching profession, attitude to the pupils, teaching skills and characteristics and general and specific teaching skills. The point is that instruction is easier in terms of the exercising audience, as the participants come willingly and even pay for the lessons. The pupils' audience is obliged to attend the lessons, and they are not always interested or enthusiastic. Nevertheless, the teacher's attitude to his pupils is important.

IV.4. Research Limitations

This research has some limitations, and attempts were made to minimize them.

The research tools – since the research is preliminary, no existing research tools were found (apart from quantitative research tools measuring physical data). This limitation was minimized by the researcher conducting a preliminary interview a year before the research began, and used the candidates' statements. Additionally, after a discussion with colleagues, the researcher wrote a summary about the role perception in the eyes of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor. The information was submitted to a statistic expert, specializing in the construction of research tools, who was made aware of the research goals and questions. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were built with his help.

The research population – a number of difficulties and limitations arose in this domain. In the mid-program second questionnaire, not all 40 participants were present due dropout, absenteeism, refusing to fill the questionnaire. Thus a situation was created that the 40 students who filled the first, second and third questionnaires were

not the same students. The limitation was minimized by changing the method of analysis, so as to adjust to the situation.

Except for the research population, there were two additional samples: instructors who were already practicing in the field and coordinators training instructors. The number of instructors was small (4), because the Sports Administration in Israel is very strict about the certification of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping coordinators. The coordinator is required to meet a long list of criteria and consequently, there are but a few such coordinators. Interviews with the four coordinators were long and detailed to overcome the limitation.

Researcher's position – in this research, the researcher was involved in the research, which was conducted in her place of work, and part of it was conducted with students whom she trains to become Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors. Furthermore, the instructors she interviewed are her former students. There was a need to create a situation whereby the students and the instructors would feel good about telling the truth and not say things that might sound good to the researcher. To overcome the limitation, before each interview, the researcher told the interviewee that the interview was only for research purposes, and would not affect anything beyond that. It was emphasized that the most important thing was their genuine feelings and thoughts.

Generalizability – this research is preliminary in the field of the development of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors' role perception. The research led to the development of an optimal model of the desired role perception. Due to lack of studies in the field and difficulties in comparing the model to other models, practical recommendations can be made, but the results are hard to generalize. Since the current research is a mixed-methods research, the qualitative part is problematic and cannot be generalized. To minimize the limitation, the quantitative research part presents valid research tools and a generalizable research population. The research is both valid and reliable (validity and reliability data are presented in the Methodology chapter), and the design of all research tools was done by a statistics expert.

IV.5. Contribution to Knowledge

This is the first research which examines the development of students' role perception in the framework of an Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping program. Contribution to knowledge is theoretical. The research helps understand the variables which improve in the course of the program and domains in which the role perception develops. Furthermore, contribution to knowledge is also applied as the research findings and model can be used to develop and enrich the instructors' program. We can understand better what to emphasize in training instructors and thus create a program that will emphasize the four model components. From the applied perspective, many practical conferences are held for the enrichment of instructors in Israel and around the world. Most conferences aim for instructors to upgrade and learn about innovations in the field of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping. The conferences are important, but still there are issues such as the attitude to the exercising audience and the development of general instruction skills which are not addressed at all. This research, then, adds both theoretical and applied aspects to the existing knowledge.

IV.5.1. Innovations in the Research

There are a few innovations in this research

- ✚ The research topic – as explained earlier, the topic is innovative and preliminary and no specific research has been conducted regarding this topic.
- ✚ The theories – this research relied on theories from familiar fields, and were integrated into this research. The innovativeness is in the theoretical model presented in this chapter: The Optimal Model of the Desired Role Perception of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping Instructors.
- ✚ The research tools – questionnaires and interviews were especially designed for this research by a statistics expert.
- ✚ Innovative findings – some of the findings in this research are innovative as the topic has not been researched before. For instance the great significance attributed to the attitude to the exercising audience, which had not been documented before this research and a model in the area of developing Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructor which had not existed before.
- ✚ Developing new insights – it is important to invest in new instructors' components (which are in the model), and not only in the specific

professional domain in which they engage, meaning though the professional conferences are important, there must be other ways to enrich the instructors.

IV.5.2. Originality

Since this research is innovative and preliminary in its field, it can also be considered original. This research topic is innovative, its focus and design including the construction of the research tools which had not existed before make it original. The research does not rely on previous studies, as there are no specific matching studies. It is the creation of something new that has not existed before.

IV.5.3. Research Significance

The significance of this research lies in reducing the gap in knowledge in the field. The research helps understand things which were neither academically explained nor documented in the past. The contribution to academic knowledge can help us understand the development of instructor's role perception better.

In Israel, this research is academically significant in programs for the certification of sports instructors and coaches. The research will specifically contribute to Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping students in the Wingate Institute and other colleges working with the Israeli Sports Administration. By understanding the research findings and the instruction model, it will be possible to improve and upgrade the instruction program. The model can be used as an optional model for the development of an instructor's desired role perception.

The universal significance of the research is that it contributes to knowledge in academic institutions engaging in training sports instructors round the world. The optimal model of the desired role perception of Aerobic Dance and Body Shaping instructors may serve as a springboard for the development of other models that are lacking in the field. The model can be applied according to the practical implications and recommendations presented in this chapter.

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