Focusing on Arts Education from the Perspectives of Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

The place of well-being has been the focus of arts pedagogy and research and practice of lifelong learning for some time. This is because arts education itself is seen as a challenge today, as it is included in performance-oriented curricula. They are based on the contradiction between organizing and maintaining high-quality learning experiences and achievements through a well-being perspective. Within the framework of this research, one of the sub-branches of art pedagogy – dance pedagogy – has been studied. Dance pedagogy has been chosen because, firstly, it still has implications of authoritarian pedagogy in its particular cultural environment, and secondly, dance pedagogy as a component of quality of life and healthy ageing in the context of lifelong learning is beginning to significantly strengthen its place. The purpose of this publication is to identify the components of well-being formation in an adult dance class from the teacher's point of view. This choice of focus was determined by the results of the previous research stage, where one of the criteria of well-being was identified in the dancers' interviews: the personality and professional mastery of the teacher, as well as the still current idea that the vital aspect of art pedagogy is how the teacher conceptualizes the pedagogical process. The respondents were selected during the nomination process, i.e., the candidates were nominated by the dancers and industry professionals themselves. Data were analysed using the qualitative data processing program NVivo 12.0. As a result, the dance teachers' vision of the pedagogical process was identified, which promotes the dancer's well-being, where the following criteria are established as an essential part of the pedagogical process: the student's personality understanding, involvement and preparedness, and psychological knowledge. The results of this research will serve as a basis for the creation of a professional development program for art teachers.

Keywords: art pedagogy, dance pedagogy, lifelong learning, NVivo, well-being

Introduction

Nowadays, the idea of improving one's quality of life through the offered lifelong learning opportunities, which allows to promote well-being both in a social context and by improving one's personality, maintains its relevance. This discussion becomes especially relevant in the context of the consumer society, since consumption is positioned as a space of experience, both present and surrounded by the modern person, in which he forms his own attitudes towards himself, others and the world (Medne et al., 2018). Most people take a proactive approach to healthy lifestyle; the global pandemic has increased attention to the latest health and wellness trends, in the context of which the cult of the body and a healthy lifestyle often exhibit an unhealthy interpretation. Therefore, in exhibiting well-being, it is important to be aware of the possibility that well-being, becoming a topical subject, involves the risk of becoming a commodity (Manchanda, 2017). Well-being is a sustainable condition that allows a person to live and develop qualitatively. Therefore, in many sectors, well-being in theoretical concepts becomes the subject of research (Zīsberga, 2022).

The place of well-being has also been the focus of arts pedagogy and research and practice of lifelong learning for some time. This is because art education itself is nowadays seen as a challenge, as it is looked after by Performance-Orientated curricula. Challenges are based on the contradiction between high-quality learning experiences and the organisation and maintenance of achievements through a well-being perspective. It is emphasized that the time has come to move beyond the perspective of defining quality, which focuses on policies that create the conditions for high-quality arts programmes, instead of using the perspective of experience, which focuses on the learning experience of students. This change of focus prioritizes student learning as the essence — the compass and measure of each art learning experience (Seidel et al., 2009).

Regular physical activity is important at all ages for people who want to promote their well-being. Within the framework of this research, one of the sub-branches of art pedagogy – dance pedagogy – has been studied. Csikszentmihalyi (1978) has already emphasized that artistic activities and experience in them are important for phylogenetic and ontogenetic development. Even nowadays, it is more often emphasized that self-expression is topical throughout life, and dance classes for adults are one of the possibilities of self-fulfilment (York-Pryce, 2014). Arts pedagogy increasingly emphasizes not only the level of abilities and skills, but also the importance of processes that occur mentally (Muceniece et al., 2021. Within the framework of this research, dance pedagogy has been chosen because, firstly, it still has implications of authoritarian pedagogy in the particular cultural environment (Latvia), and secondly, dance pedagogy as a component of quality life and healthy ageing in the context of lifelong learning is beginning to significantly strengthen its place. The purpose

of this publication is to identify the components of well-being formation in an adult dance class from the teacher's point of view. Such a choice of focus was determined by the results of the previous research stage (Zīsberga, 2022), where one of the criteria of well-being was identified in the dancers' interviews: the personality and professional mastery of the teacher, as well as the still current idea that the vital aspect of art pedagogy is how the teacher conceptualizes the pedagogical process. At this stage of the research, it was concluded that a dance teacher is an essential component in promoting dancers' well-being. However, scientific research highlights that the relationship between students and teachers in adult education has not been sufficiently studied (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014). The study of teachers' vision was chosen because it is considered a powerful tool for understanding teachers' work experience (Hammerness, 2004). The vision can serve as a guide for managing pedagogical practice, as well as means of assessing how far teachers can deviate from their ideals. Exploring it can help explain what assumptions teachers make; what they know about their assumptions; the pretexts why and how they can choose to change their practice; and even whether or not they choose to remain in the profession. It is a powerful tool to help teachers discover and identify their views and new approaches to promising new practices (Hammerness, 2001). In the context of higher education, it is emphasized that teachers have a great potential to promote students' emotional well-being by using learning innovations and consciously creating the learning environment (Baik et al., 2017). Based on the findings that the teacher's personality and professional mastery, as well as the current idea that a vital aspect in art pedagogy is how the teacher sees the pedagogical process (Siddins, 2021; Medne & Jansone-Ratinika, 2019), the perspective of the teacher was determined as the focus of the further research. The aim of this study was to identify how dance teachers themselves interpret the pedagogical focus of the dance class.

Methodology

To achieve the aim of the research, phenomenological research design was chosen, because phenomenology investigates the nature of experience, revealing how complex meaning or networks of meanings are formed from simple units of direct experiences. The main objective of such research is to reduce individual experience to a description of its universal nature – within the framework of this research: the content scope of the teacher's vision.

Sample. The type of sample chosen to achieve the objective of the study: purposive sampling (Cohen et al., 2007). The research sample consisted of 10 respondents – experts; the sample was selected during the nomination process, namely, the candidates were nominated by students and industry professionals.

Each expert was contacted individually by telephone. The nominated experts represented the following dance styles: classical dance ($n = 6$) and contemporary dance ($n = 4$). Work experience in both groups: 15–20 years ($n = 5$); 21–25 years ($n = 1$); 26–30 years ($n = 2$); 31–35 years ($n = 1$); 36–40 years ($n = 1$); 41–45 years ($n = 1$).

Research ethics. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical aspects of the research, and consent was obtained from the experts. At the beginning of the interviews, the interviewer provided information about the study, inviting participants to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. Study participants were informed that they were entitled to stop participating in the study at any time. During the interviews, information that could allow the identification of respondents was not asked, the interviews were coded and then transcribed anonymously. After transcribing, the audio files of the interviews were deleted.

Data analysis and synthesis were performed according to the type of narrative synthesis, which included three consecutive steps:
1) defined logical categories,
2) analysed data from each obtained category,
3) synthesized questions about all included logical categories (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006).

Results

Inductive coding (identification of topics and contexts by assigning code to the relevant passage of text) was used to identify the vision of teachers. During inductive coding, 25 codes were identified and defined: *support* (identified in all interviews, 114 times in total); *feedback* (identified in 9 out of 10 interviews, 63 times in total); *relationship* (identified in all interviews, 151 times in total); *emotional intelligence* (identified in all interviews, 115 times in total); *humour* (identified in all interviews, 43 times in total); *encouragement* (identified in all interviews, 78 times in total); *individual approach* (identified in all interviews, 200 times in total); *student's individual success* (identified in 9 out of 10 interviews, 61 times in total); *interest* (identified in all interviews, 56 times in total); *competence* (identified in all interviews, 202 times in total); *communication* (identified in 9 out of 10 interviews, 182 times in total); *balancing* (identified in all interviews, 131 times in total); *teacher's activity* (identified in all interviews, 77 times in total); *teacher's involvement* (identified in all interviews, 199 times in total); *teacher's personality* (identified in all interviews, 139 times in total); *experience* (identified in all interviews, 99 times in total); *positivity* (identified in all interviews, 159 times in total); *knowledge of psychology* (identified in 9 out of 10 interviews, 69 times in total); *result* (identified in all interviews, 175 times in

total); *optimal use of one's resources (consciously)* (identified in 9 out of 10 interviews, 33 times in total); *use of one's resources (unconsciously)* (identified in 8 out of 10 interviews, 13 times in total); *self-awareness* (identified in all interviews, 103 times in total); *ability to overcome difficulties* (identified in all interviews, 91 times in total); *trust in the student* (identified in all interviews, 37 times in total); *knowledge* (identified in all interviews, 95 times in total).

The results of the code frequencies obtained in the study show that the interviews broadly and in detail describe the aspects characterizing the relationship, individual approach, the competence of the teacher, the results, the involvement of the teacher, positivity, and communication. Certain codes, such as trust in the student, optimal use of one's resources, humour, are used less frequently. This can be explained by the intention of the authors of the study to use as many different codes as possible at the beginning of the analysis in order to describe the different indicators of teacher's vision in more detail and breadth. Therefore, in the initial phase, the most complete list of open codes was developed, covering the entire range of topics described in the publications. At a later stage of coding, they were combined in meaningful broader codes, because the program NVivo allows you to group meaningful similar codes into hierarchical codes. In other words, inductive coding was followed by hierarchical coding, which was necessary in order to combine codes related in meaning. Therefore, the program analysed the code ranges (according to the codes) using Jaccard's coefficient. As a result, the relationship between the open and hierarchical codes linked to each other was obtained and three hierarchical codes were identified.

By summarizing the codes identified by each expert in the interviews, the consistency of the expert opinions was examined using the Kendall concordance coefficient (with the Kendall W (tau_c) test in the SPSS Statistics Trial program). The coefficient shall reflect how similar the peers have used each code and how close the peer reviews are to each other (code frequency for interviews). If there is a high degree of convergence of views, then it can be considered that all experts have accentuated each code equally frequently and that their overall assessment is close to the true one (Legendre, 2010). The concordance coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, so closer it is to one, the greater the coherence between expert opinions. It can be concluded that the opinions of the experts of this study in all code interpolations range from 0.699 (code *teacher's involvement*) to 0.989 (code *positivity*), so all the codes are close to 1 and thus should be interpreted so that there is a correlation between the expert assessments for all the codes. The relationship between open and hierarchical codes and the concordance coefficient for each code are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Hierarchical and open codes identified in interviews

Hierarchical codes	Subcodes	Number of interviews	Number of codes	Kendall's W (tau_c) test
Student's self-efficacy	Support	10	114	0.786
	Encouragement	10	78	0.816
	Individual approach	10	200	0.781
	Individual success (student's)	9	61	0.831
	Interest	10	56	0.921
	Balancing	10	131	0.887
	Result	10	175	0.797
	Optimal use of one's resources	9	33	0.891
	Ability to overcome difficulties	10	91	0.883
	Trust in the student	10	37	0.795
Personal self-efficacy	Emotional intelligence	10	115	0.858
	Humour	10	43	0.879
	Competence	10	202	0.799
	Teacher's personality	10	139	0.891
	Experience	10	99	0.865
	Positivity	10	159	0.989
	Knowledge of psychology	9	69	0.901
	Use of one's resources	8	13	0.799
	Self-awareness	10	103	0.889
	Knowledge	10	95	0.901
Cooperation	Feedback	9	63	0.779
	Relationship	10	151	0.859
	Communication	9	182	0.897
	Teacher's activity	10	77	0.799
	Teacher's involvement	10	199	0.699

To determine the content framework for the teacher's vision, an action was performed in the programme that allows you to determine the distribution and succession of the most common code interrelationships. The program set up a scheme reflecting interrelationships in thematic blocks, the order of which is in accordance with their interdependencies. The results refer to the three blocks of code interrelationships, where the order of the codes indicates their relationship, as well as the subordination between them and the succession. When analysing the interrelationship of codes in each of the three blocks, the subject of their content was initially formulated as the personal effectiveness of the teacher and the effectiveness of the student, however, continuing with the analysis it leads to the conclusion that the content of each block corresponds to the explanation of the concept of self-efficacy of Bandura (1995), namely, self-efficacy influences

what a person chooses to do, how much effort is made to achieve it, how persistent he is in facing difficulties, how complex the objectives are, therefore the code blocks are redefined as the teacher's self-efficacy, students' self-efficacy and cooperation.

The obtained results indicate the three blocks of code interrelationships: teacher's self-efficacy, student's self-efficacy and cooperation, which also coincides with the results of the cluster analysis results. **The Teacher's Self-Efficacy Block** consists of two sub-code blocks: *Competence* and *Positivity*, where *Competence* is related to the codes *Teacher's personality* and *Emotional intelligence*. Code *Positivity* is associated with codes *Emotional intelligence* and *Self-awareness*. Code *Teacher's personality* is related to codes *Experience* and *Knowledge* (as equally significant for symmetric sizes). On the other hand, code *Emotional intelligence* creates connections with codes *Experience* and *Knowledge, Knowledge of psychology* and *Humour*. Code *Self-awareness* is linked to code *Emotional intelligence, Knowledge of psychology*, which in turn is linked to codes *Humour* and *Optimal use of one's resources*. Analysing the results obtained, it can be explained that teachers, using professional competence in their work, promote positivity in dance classes, which respondent S formulates as follows: *you have to be kind and positive to all those people, if they have come to you, because they want to come to you and do it*, and respondent L describes it as follows: *I really care what happens to those people. I always say, if you go out of the dance class more satisfied, happier or have discovered something, then I've done my job*. The results allow to conclude that the relationship of the teacher's personality code with the codes *Competence, Positivity, Emotional intelligence* and *Experience* is identifiable. In order for positivity to be formed in dance classes, experts emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence, because for each person positivity is formed as a result of subjective perception, and the teacher's ability to perceive this set of subjective needs is a direct manifestation of emotional intelligence, through which, using professional competence, appropriate tools are sought to work productively with students. Respondent S describes it as follows: *there is very, very nuanced work to be done there,* while Respondent Z describes it as follows: *You have to feel it very delicately. It's such an extremely subtle thing,* but the respondent O describes it like this: *because we read people more, instantaneously, because we speak on a different level.* The code *Experience* and the code *Knowledge* are also clearly interrelated. Experts emphasize that it is the experience that determines the choice of the type and method of knowledge application in specific situations, which respondent Z describes as follows: *absolutely technical knowledge and know things. Know the subject.* In turn, respondent B describes it as*: that's my path of knowledge, as far as I can, let's say, come up with more. How else to explain, how else to show it so that they would, let's say, understand.* The code *Humour* was used by respondents individually, according to their pedagogical vision and their personality, but the results

show the relationship with the codes *Optimal use of one's resources, Knowledge of psychology and Knowledge.* It can be concluded that humour is often used as an instrument within the framework of professional competence, which promotes both the creation of a social atmosphere and the development of positivity, as an instrument for overcoming difficulties, and as a communication tool, which respondent R characterizes as *very important. I think it's easy to teach. Not to make the heavy load even heavier. It's this sense of humour that helps,* while respondent X describes it as: *of the people who come, they say they like that kind of humour,* but respondent G emphasises that: *it somehow attracts, it's a personality with a sense of humour, it attracts, it encourages, it creates that positive field around that teacher.* Code *Knowledge of psychology*, is related to codes *Self-awareness, Optimal use of one's resources, Experience,* which could be explained that in pedagogical work with the student the professional assessment of the student's resources is essential, and using experience and knowledge of psychology as a working tool, often using humour, it is possible to promote positivity, which respondent R describes as follows: *The smallest thing you see, then you have to say, then you have to praise, and so, that person, first of all, he feels appreciated, noticed, and gradually he collects, let's say his own set of strong sides, which he might also be aware of,* and the respondent S emphasizes this as follows: *I have always said that the teacher should be more of a psychologist than a teacher, the psychological thought is the main thing for us. Because the subconscious is working for you all the time,* while the respondent L emphasizes it as follows: *essentially, through dancing, I want to bring a person closer to himself. Let him understand who he is, and so if you understand what you're doing in dancing, you can dance well.*

The student's self-efficacy block consists of two subcode blocks: *individual approach* and *result.* Code *Individual approach* is linked to code *Balancing*, which is linked to two codes: code *Ability to overcome difficulties* and code *Individual success.* Code *Ability to overcome difficulties* is linked to code *Encouragement.* Code *Individual success* is linked to code *Trust in the student.* Code *Result* is linked to code *Support* which is linked to codes *Individual success* and *Interest.* Code *Interest* is linked to code *Trust in the student.* In turn, code *Interest* is linked to code *Use of one's resources.* The results obtained can be explained that balancing is an essential pedagogical tool that can effectively achieve results and goals. It is important to realize that students set most of the goals according to their individual subjective vision of life, according to which an individual approach is required, which is also repeatedly emphasized by the experts in the interviews, for example, the respondent O describes it as follows: *individual work with him. And then we see the result. In ballet, unfortunately, in ballet school, it can't, it's not, I, I really, I've been talking about it for twenty years. (We) need to change the system if we want to raise stars. If we want to raise Corps de ballet, then nothing needs to change,* or for example, respondent G describes it as follows: *in my opinion, (it's) individual work,*

really, understanding. I see the questions for the specific person there again, and then, applying, from the answers I hear, I can again understand how I act, how I speak, what tasks I give him, but the respondent L describes it as follows: *all dance teachers are probably also therapists, and we work one-on-one,* but respondent S emphasizes it as follows: *how much everyone wants it, whether he wants it for himself, whether he wants to know (the subject) more deeply or... I look and try, I try to approach each one individually.* Also visible is the code *Balancing* relation with codes *Ability to overcome difficulties* and *Support*, which could be explained by the previously analysed theory of individual dynamic balance of well-being content, which is based on the opinion that in order to regain balance (homeostasis), a person has to match his/her resources with a challenge, and the teacher is this balancing factor, which, with his/her support and encouragement, promotes the ability to overcome difficulties and challenges, which in turn contributes to the student's achievement, development and growth, which the respondent S defined as follows: *everything depends on the thinking how deeply he/she approaches the process. Those who enter superficially will not want to change anything either. But person who goes deeper, he's ready for various changes,* but the respondent R describes it as follows, also highlighting the risk of burnout in the work of the teacher: *with such kind of human attention. And there, too, care must be taken so that the same teacher does not leave with them. Because it's not easy either. Raise your energy, understand your competence frameworks, somehow and don't take on more than you are capable of.* In order to successfully balance the pedagogical process, experts, as one of the approaches, choose an individual approach that logically provides cooperation between the teacher and the student, therefore, when analysing the relationship between the codes, a third thematic block of codes was logically formed: **Cooperation**, which is linked to both other thematic blocks: *Teacher's self-efficacy* and *Student's self-efficacy*. Code block *Teacher's self-efficacy* is linked to code *Teacher's engagement* and *Communication*, where code *Communication* is linked to code *Relationship*. In turn, code block **Student's self-efficacy** is linked to codes *Communication, Relationships, Teacher's activity* and *Feedback*. When explaining the obtained results, one can see the central role of communication in the ability of the teacher to form a relationship with the student, the intensity of this relationship is formed from the level of teacher's involvement, as well as the formation of feedback. Experts choose communication as a tool to balance the process, to promote the formation of well-being, which respondent I explains as follows: *also to say how, let's say, what is the goal you want to achieve, and then if they say, well, in order to achieve it, then you have to do this and that,* or respondent X explains as follows: *with communication I can help, it works* or respondent S describes it as follows: *to show visually what it looks like, then to try to talk it over with him, see we will have to work more on this, less on that,* as well as to be able to adapt the pedagogical work as effectively as possible for each student individually, which

respondent L explains as follows: *either they have different goals and we try to talk about those goals, I ask them questions*, or respondent R describes it as follows: *it always allows you to go in some depth, and also to communicate much more in such intangible categories, which are those human things, which is all this mutual chemistry here*. Code *Communication* links previously analysed code blocks, and interacts with the largest amount of codes in the obtained results.

The program performed code mapping to triangulate the results. The mapping was done by aligning each hierarchical code to its subcodes. Choosing this mapping type shows the relationship between hierarchical codes and classifiers, as well as the relationship between subcodes. The mapping results lead to the conclusion that the hierarchical codes and subcodes are interrelated and can be used to identify and monitor the vision of the teacher. However, its further use would require verification of internal coherence and reliability on a statistical basis.

Discussion

After evaluating the results of the research, it can be concluded that in the dance class for adult students the well-being is formed as a direct and purpose-fully directed action of the teacher, which is determined by the vision of the teacher. The pedagogical approach defined in the teacher's competence is used in the dance class as a tool to balance student's resources and overcome challenges. Thus, it can be assumed that the teacher is the balancing component in the student's individual resource – challenge – dynamic balance system. The pedagogical activity of the teacher is the balancing component of the student's resources and challenges, which, with support and encouragement, contributes to the student's ability to overcome difficulties and challenges, which in turn contributes to the achievement of the student's goals, development, and growth. Thus, the basic relationship: the vision of the teacher – the student's well-being in its current, general and individual scope – can be seen as an interaction between challenges and resources for both the teacher and the students. Thus, a dance class in the context of lifelong learning can be seen as both a space for experience and an opportunity.

In turn, the cooperation between the student and the teacher is both a peda-gogical background and a pedagogical technique that promotes the development of the students' well-being in the dance class.

The teacher's self-efficacy is directly related to his/her pedagogical vision and the use of individual pedagogical tools. These conclusions are consistent with the results of other studies, which conclude that the pedagogical mastery of the teacher is what determines both the well-being and professional development of the students (Medne, 2022).

Conclusions

This study looks at the vision of dance teachers in the context of lifelong learning as a means of research based on art. The aim of the study was to identify the pedagogical techniques of experts identified during the nomination process that contribute to the well-being of students. The study analysed 10 interviews and identified 25 codes: support, feedback, relationships, emotional intelligence, humour, encouragement, individual approach, student's individual success, interest, competence, communication, balancing, teacher's activity, teacher's personality, experience, positivity, knowledge of psychology, result, optimal use of one's resources, self-awareness, ability to overcome difficulties, trust in the student, knowledge. Three thematic circles were identified in the interviews:

1) it is the social and professional role of the teacher that is leading the construction of the student's well-being and acts as the organizer and promoter of this construction,
2) the knowledge of psychology is identified as an essential resource, and
3) the professional vision of the teacher determines his/her pedagogical approach.

This research was carried out in the dance teacher population of Latvia, common topics were identified in the interviews and coherence of views was established, however, it would not be correct to generalize the results of this research to the wider dance teacher community. Thus, the secondary discussion of the research is more about the identification of teaching methods to promote the well-being of students than the repetition of specific discoveries.

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