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LOWER LIMB INJURIES DURING A 6-MONTH PERIOD IN PRE-PUBERTAL AND PUBERTAL GREEK TRADITIONAL DANCERS*

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to record lower limb injury frequencies in young Greek Traditional Dancers. Lower limb injury incidents were recorded using questionnaires in a total of 432 students (145 males and 287 females) with mean age 13.0±2.2 years were followed for a 6 month period. The results showed that only 2.8% of the sample had an injury related to traditional dancing (p < 0.05). All injuries in boys occurred at the ankle joint while girls displayed injuries at the ankle and the knee (p< 0.05). However, non-statistically significant difference was observed in the location of injury between two genders (p >0.05). In conclusion, a very small percentage of injuries was observed in students of elementary, secondary and high school who perform Greek Traditional Dances. Therefore, participation of young children to Greek traditional dancing is highly recommended.

Key words: Injury, Students, Dance, Frequency, injury rate

*An extended Summary Plus English version is freely available at www.hellenicjsport.com
Introduction

Traditional dance is one of the most alive elements of our civilization, one of the most important demonstration of each country and it is connected with the history, the civilization and the progress of the society (Mavrovounotis et al, 2001). In Greece, the previous decade traditional dancing was mainly performed in countryside, while later, Greek Traditional Dance it seems to be transferred in the city as spectacle. This fact led to the spread of teaching traditional dances and at the same time increased the number of the persons who were occupied with Greek Traditional Dances (Prantsidis et al. 2005).

Methods

A total number of 432 students participated in the study; 145 males (group A) (33,6%) and 287 female (group B) (66,4%) with mean age 13,0±2,2 years. All students participated in dance teams for more than six months.

All students from 13 dance teams of public schools and private dance teams of North Greece completed a questionnaire. The first 8 questions were related with the anthropometric and training characteristics of the students. The other 10 questions were related with the frequency and the region of injury, the confrontation and the need to stop dancing.

Results

The anthropometric and training characteristics of both groups are presented in table 1. From the analysis of the results no significant difference was between the two groups. The majority of students (42,4%) were dancing for more than 2 years (χ²=76,19, p<0,05) (figure 1).

From all students only the 2,8% had an injury related to traditional dancing (χ²=385,33, p<0,05). Three of them (25%) were males and 9 (75%) females (χ²=3, NS). All injuries in group A (25%) were related with ankle joint. In group B, 4 (33,3%) were related with the ankle joint and 5 (41,7%) with the knee joint. However no statistically significant difference was observed in the location of injury between two genders (χ²=2,86, NS) (Figure 2).

Table 1. The anthropometric and training characteristics of students (mean ± SD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>13±2,2</td>
<td>12,9±2,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of training</td>
<td>2±1,3</td>
<td>2,1±1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (cm)</td>
<td>157,3±11,8*</td>
<td>150,2±11,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight (kg)</td>
<td>49,3±10,2*</td>
<td>44,1±10,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of training (times/week)</td>
<td>1,5±0,8</td>
<td>1,5±0,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration (min)</td>
<td>1,3±0,5</td>
<td>1,3±0,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant difference between the two groups (p<0,05)
Discussion

Our results indicate that the percentage of injuries in young Greek traditional dancers is low. Moreover there was no difference in the presence of injury between the two sexes. Our results are in agreement with these in the literature. Dance comparing with other sports has a very low percentage of injuries and it is in the 12th place of the list out of 18 sports in adults and in the 6th place out of 10 sports according to the importance of the injury. The factors which cause injuries are many and are connected with the difficulty of each sport.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the percentage of injuries in students of elementary, secondary and high school who perform Greek Traditional Dances is low. Therefore, Greek traditional dancing is highly recommended in young children.
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