Characteristics of talented dancers and age group differences: Findings from the UK Centres for Advanced Training

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Abstract

This study investigated differences in the characteristics of talented dancers in relation to age. Physical (handgrip muscular strength, leg muscular power, hamstring flexibility and external hip rotation), psychological (passion, self-esteem and anxiety) and social (the motivational climate) characteristics were assessed in 334 students enrolled on a talented scheme. The male late adolescence group (16-18 years) had greater jump height than the early (10-12 years) and mid-adolescence groups (13-15 years). For both sexes, the early adolescence group exhibited the lowest and the late adolescence group the greatest grip strength values. The late adolescence group reported lower self-esteem than the two younger groups, and the two older groups reported greater perceptions of ego-involving motivational climates than the early adolescence group. Results suggest that, as some characteristics of talented dancers differ across the adolescent years, talent identification and development criteria could be adapted according to age.

Keywords: dancing, adolescent, talent identification and development, interdisciplinary