VALUES, ATTRIBUTES AND PRACTICES OF DANCE ARTISTS IN INCLUSIVE DANCE TALENT DEVELOPMENT CONTEXTS.

ABSTRACT

There is a paucity of research focussed on understanding the qualities which underpin dance artists' practice in working with talented young dancers with disabilities. This study investigated what informs how dance artists work in inclusive dance talent development contexts. Four dance class observations were conducted to provide evidence of dance artists' qualities in practice. Six dance artists participated in semi-structured interviews. Thematic data analysis revealed four categories: the dance persona; values; attributes; and practices of dance artists. The dance persona was typified by characteristics such as being human, humility, altruism and confidence. Artists' values and attributes included celebrating difference, aspiring towards equality and relationality. Their practices were exemplified by varied differentiation strategies and an emphasis on reflection. These findings provide new insight into what drives artists working with dancers with and without disabilities and aids better understanding of best practice in this context.

Keywords: Pedagogy, values, attributes, talent development, disability

Inclusive dance practice ensures that all participants have an opportunity to dance (Reinders, Fletcher and Bryden, 2015; Amans, 2017). In an inclusive setting, dancers with and without disabilities are taught together in an environment which nurtures creativity, aids development of specific motor skills, improvisation, and set material, enables self-expression and fosters a sense of belonging (Darbyshire and Nilsen, 2001; Kaufmann, 2006; Whatley, 2007; Cone and Cone, 2011; Block and Johnson, 2011; Morris, Baldeon and Scheuneman, 2015; Zitomer, 2017; Cheesman, 2017). In the United Kingdom (UK), inclusion in the arts is informed by the Creative Case for Diversity by Arts Council England (2018). The aim is to ensure that diversity and equality are embedded into artistic practice and represent society by supporting the potential of artistic talent of people from every background. The Creative Case moves away from tokenistic inclusion of minority groups towards meaningful representation and inclusion of society through art. Similarly, in inclusive dance education, aesthetic and teaching principles are intertwined to create an inclusive pedagogy where valuing difference and having the opportunity to go beyond one's expectations are cornerstones to inclusivity (Østern, 2018). Inclusion allows everyone access to dance and equitable opportunities provided for everyone to flourish and reach their potential. Full integration is desirable, but appropriate adaptation and translation is usually necessary. A range of socio-political contexts and initiatives inform artists working in education, and specifically with dancers with and without disabilities.

There has been an increase in the provision of dance classes for participants with and without disabilities internationally (Cheesman, 2017). Yet, dance classes for young people with disabilities tend to be recreational and focus on creative dance rather than technical development (XXX and XXX, 2013). Although attitudinal and aesthetic barriers to dance exist for young people with disabilities, perhaps most significant is the lack of systematic training available (Verrent, 2003; XXX and XXX, 2013; Tomasic, 2014). Increasing focus has been placed on developing rigorous and sustainable dance training models for disabled young people (Dance 4, 2010; XXX and XXX, 2018; XXX, 2019).

Nevertheless, gaps still remain in terms of equal access to formalised dance training for young people with disabilities who may wish to develop their talent or potential (Verrent, 2003; XXX and XXX, 2013; Tomasic, 2014).

Defining talent is problematic, particularly in art forms where changes in aesthetic preferences make it difficult to predict what will be valued in the future. Talent in dance comprises physical, artistic and psychological factors (XXX, XXX and XXX, 2010), encompassing skills and attributes including fitness, flexibility, strength, creative and expressive ability, motivation and self-confidence (XXX et al., 2010; Chua, 2014; XXX, XXX, XXX and XXX, 2015; XXX and XXX, 2015). A young dancer does not need to possess each skill to be talented, as strengths in some areas can compensate for weaknesses. These skills can be trained, and identification of potential as opposed to existing talent is important, to avoid excluding dancers without prior training from development opportunities (XXX et al., 2010). Therefore, the role of talent development programmes is to provide high-quality learning opportunities that allow young people to fulfil their potential (Williams and Reilly, 2000).

In the context of inclusive dance practice, previous research suggests that criteria used to identify talent amongst dancers with disabilities, and teaching methods used, are similar to those of mainstream dance talent development programmes (XXX and XXX, 2014). Whilst much literature outlines content for leading dance in inclusive settings (Cone and Cone, 2011; Benjamin, 2013; Morris, Baldeon and Scheuneman, 2015) and increasing focus has been placed on the importance of the influential role that teachers can play on dancers' and students' career aspirations (Pickard and Bailey, 2009; Chua, 2017), little is written about the qualities which dance artists draw on in their work. It is useful to know more about these qualities in pedagogical settings with regard to their underlying values, attributes and practices when working with young dancers with disabilities. However, the majority of literature in this area is concerned with general inclusive dance settings, and reveals the qualities of dance artists, educators and teachers implicitly, through their own research

enquiry (Cheesman, 2012, 2017; Benjamin, 2013; Morris, Baldeon and Scheuneman, 2015). Gathering the experiences, perspectives and insights of several dance artists will provide greater understanding of the kinds of values, attributes and practices that typify work in inclusive talent development environments specifically.

Values form a belief system that inform how we think (Fraleigh and Hanstein, 1998). Tone Østern (2018) suggests that values of inclusive dance pedagogy require a blend of inward-and outward-facing factors, determination and willingness to change oneself, and activism to shift perceptions of dancing bodies. Values may relate to inherited teaching approaches, historically through a transmission-based model in which teachers pass knowledge to students via didactic methods. In some settings, these approaches have evolved to support students' autonomous learning (Lemos et al., 2017). Research across educational domains suggests learning, motivation and engagement are optimised by employing problem-based learning approaches alongside traditional formats (Belland, Ertmer and Simons, 2006; Strobel and van Barneveld, 2009). Importance is placed on the individual's engagement with dance, where participation can advance dance-specific skills, support health and wellbeing, and enhance social outcomes (Alpert, 2011). Therefore, learning about and through dance can help people make meaning and understand their place in the world. Artists' values inform their attributes and guide practice, shaping the approaches that a dance artist employs in working with people with disabilities (Albarracin, Johnson and Zanna, 2014). By exploring the values and attributes of artists, approaches to best practice in the context of inclusive dance talent development may be better ascertained.

METHOD

The focus of this study was to explore the qualities of dance artists, working with people with disabilities who exhibit exceptional potential in dance. Focus was placed on the values that artists possess, whilst seeking examples of how their personal qualities were operationalised in practice. A

qualitative, descriptive research design framed observations of class practices and interviews with dance artists.

Six dance artists were purposely recruited for this study. Participants were selected based on their experience of working with dancers with disabilities and their reputations as exemplars of best practice.

Table 1: Participants' descriptive data. Names are used as pseudonyms.

The artists' early training included participating in dance at a local dance school or being a member of a youth dance company. All the artists without disabilities trained at a conservatoire; the dance artists with disabilities participated in non-linear training opportunities they curated themselves, matching typical routes to a career in dance described in the literature (XXX and XXX, 2013; Whatley and Marsh, 2018). The artists stated that much of their pedagogical training derived from professional experience in teaching dancers with and without disabilities. All the artists had experience working with children and young people, in settings which centralise socialisation and wellbeing, as well as training contexts which focus on the young people's development towards dance careers.

This study was approved by a Higher Education Institution's ethics committee and participants returned informed consent forms before taking part in the research. Although no direct data was collected from the class participants, they were asked to complete informed consent with parental permission where appropriate, prior to the class observation. Artists and class participants were able to opt out of the project, and class participants could ask the researcher to leave the studio, should they feel uncomfortable.

A two-stage data collection process was employed where firstly, four participants' classes were observed. Classes were held at different locations of varying duration between 60 and 90 minutes. Two sessions comprised workshops for young people aged between 13 and 27 years; two sessions formed company class with adult professional dancers with and without disabilities. Doing so offered insight into practices employed within the professional setting and a sense of how inclusive learning might be scaffolded from youth participation towards professional employment. Observations were structured to watch delivery methods and how these enabled class participants to advance their understanding through cognitive and embodied means. In order to minimise the effect of the observation, the researcher discretely sat on the floor in the corner to reduce their physical presence. Observation notes were made after the session and a supportive and engaged attitude was adopted to help the artist and dancers feel at ease in being watched. Through the practical choices made by the artist, an insight into their beliefs and qualities was sought. As a dance educator with experience of working with young people in inclusive settings over the last 20 years, the researcher employed inductive analysis strategies whilst observing the artists. First-order themes such as the artists' confidence to go off plan emerged through this analysis. A priori knowledge of inclusive dance education is therefore acknowledged. As Vikki Krane and colleagues (1997, p. 216) suggest, the aim was to utilise implicit knowledge to 'understand the phenomenon … from the context and meanings of the participants,' in this case the dance artists working with the dancers. Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba (1985) propose that existing knowledge and experience of the investigator is vital in cultivating rich descriptive accounts in qualitative research. To help aid dependability of the decision-making process during the observations, a reflective journal was kept, to record emergent themes, the evidence of them in practice and the rationale for including them as something to further explore within the interview process. The observations were scheduled prior to interviewing the dance artists to allow emergent research themes to be integrated into discussions.

The second data collection stage involved individual semi-structured interviews with the six artists lasting between 45 and 90 minutes. The interviews covered themes such as background, training, values in inclusive dance practice, consideration of personal qualities and pedagogical practices in dance and their application within a talent development setting. Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time, and did not have to answer questions if they felt uncomfortable. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and, with the observation notes, returned to the participants for review.

Artist-checked observation notes and interview scripts were uploaded to a qualitative data analysis programme and thematically analysed using an inductive approach to coding the data (Patton, 2002). Raw data themes were extracted from the participants' interview commentary with class observation data, and items were coded into first and second order themes before being categorised into higher order themes. The higher order themes emerged as the dance persona, values, attributes and practices. The term 'dance persona' arose directly from one of the artist's narratives during the interviews and directly represents their voice in this research. It was chosen as a descriptive theme as it captured the other artists' descriptions of their characteristics including, being human, dance as art, having humility, being honest, patient and altruistic, practising kindness and self-compassion and having confidence in one's skills. The second-order themes which typified the artists' values, included celebrating difference and aspiring towards equality and finding gratifications in the work they do. Themes which describe the artists' attributes were developing a learning ethos, curiosity, having high expectations and striving towards excellence and relationality. The artists' practices focussed on differentiation, communication, and planning and reflection. These were categorised to account for the discursive nature of the interview process between participant and researcher. In order to make sense of the findings in the wider context, results were further considered in relation to existing literature with the aim of determining what best practice in inclusive dance talent development contexts might be.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

THE DANCE ARTIST PERSONA

The dance artist persona was a term that arose from one of the artist interviews and describes

qualities that the other artists perceived they aim towards and try to embody as dancer, maker and

educator. Some saw their dance artist persona as intrinsic to themselves, practised in everyday life.

Others saw this as a persona they 'put on' whilst teaching. When asked what qualities were

important in an artist working with dancers with disabilities, the artists most often thought of people

they worked with and described their inspiring qualities. They explained that the qualities they

respected in others and hoped to possess themselves, transcended pedagogical contexts and were

paramount in both traditional inclusive dance environments and talent development settings with

dancers with disabilities. The artists explained that these characteristics were beliefs that informed

how they worked in dance with people of all abilities and ages in all the learning contexts they were

engaged in, paralleling themes in the inclusive education literature as well as wider community dance

approaches (Band et al., 2011; Chua, 2015; Cheesman, 2017; Zitomer, 2017).

Being human was typified by the artists explaining that dancing was where they could most be

themselves. They stated the importance of aiming towards empathy in their dance practice by trying

to experience the world from different perspectives, as a means to understand themselves and

understand humanity more widely. Alison summarised that dancing 'helps *me* to practice

relationship, it helps me to be the person I want to be, to share things that I feel are important, to be

in a space where I can hear different … perceptions.' The artists being able to relate to others, human

to human despite differences and unified by a common interest in dancing, was a central feature of

the dialogue. Helen explained that the teaching role has to be 'down to earth', where participants

work and research together, and dancing is normalised for all involved. All the artists acknowledged

that their own mistakes were a common occurrence. The flaws in the artists' practice helped to

create their humanness and enabled an environment where people were allowed to be themselves.

8

Dance as art acted as a central pillar for the artists. A dance as art approach centralises the understanding, making and performing of dance for its own sake, where participants can develop expression and critical engagement in dance through kinetic experience, dialogue and appreciation of the art form. (McCutchen, 2006).

Humility was a thoroughly-discussed characteristic, practised by the artists in how they talked of other practitioners they perceived as excellent and strove to emulate. In introducing them in this project as potential experts in their field, many rejected the terms 'expert' and 'excellence', explaining their striving towards best practice and the process of learning through working with others. For example, Alison would seek to ask questions of the dancers' movements and decision-making, placing herself in the role of learner alongside the class participants, before drawing on what she had learned to drive the whole class's movement material forward.

Honesty referred to ensuring that expectations were met. Helen stated, 'you have to be quite transparent, I think you have to be quite up front with people and clear.' Lisa perceived honesty in practice through the teaching dialogue with a dancer, giving an instruction and despite the response perhaps being small or taking time to arrive, the response from the dancer themselves was authentic.

Altruistic qualities were described by Helen stating that she liked to, 'stand up for people that maybe don't have a voice'. In the literature, numerous dance educators reflect on the importance they place on empowering students with disabilities to have a voice through their dance participation (Cone and Cone, 2011; McGrath, 2012; Benjamin, 2013; Cheesman, 2017). Self-acceptance is a value which informs practice for dance artists and participants with disabilities coming to terms with being visible and joining in, when perhaps they might have historically hidden away (Buck and Snook, 2018). Through the inclusion of students with disabilities, artists create an environment of praxis in which people with and without disabilities can question their preconceptions about disability as part of

healthy discourse. Such dialogical and physical exchange through talking about or making dance, can build towards transformative change, where presumptions about what someone believes can shift. Martin Seligman and Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (2000) identify altruism as a group-level subjective experience valuing civic virtues and moving individuals towards responsibility, tolerance and contributing to the common good. A wider societal awareness came from the artists' intentions and practices in class which ensured the place of everyone in dance.

Kindness and self-compassion were pertinent themes arising from the discussions with artistic directors specifically. Alison spoke of affording herself kindness, particularly in navigating the political context of disability as a person without a disability herself - not to excuse her mistakes but to ensure that she accepts her shortcomings and reflects on how to make it better next time.

Patience was a characteristic which three of the artists remarked upon. Helen stated, 'you just can't expect to have things happen straight away. They can take years.' Vocational dance training at tertiary level tends to operate in a three-year cycle; class lengths are traditionally 90 minutes long. The structure and pace of dance education foregrounds people without disabilities, and focusses on time; yet, throughout the literature ensuring sufficient time for learning is a key feature of successful dance practice with people with disabilities (Whatley, 2007; Band et al., 2011; XXX and XXX, 2014). Students with learning disabilities often require more time to cognitise instructions and apply feedback. Physically disabled people may require time to translate material, or negotiate space or other dancers in the space. The artists in this study remarked on the importance of planning moments in dance phrases to allow for physical transitions, and material to be assimilated and become manifest in the dancers' bodies. An example from Helen's class allowed for the re-orientation of the chair's wheels to accommodate a directional change in the choreography of a travelling floor dance.

Confidence was a common theme for all artists in shaping their personas as educators. In common with previous dance talent research, deep knowledge, familiarity and exposure built the artists' confidence (XXX, XXX and XXX 2014; Chua, 2015). As well as their training, experience was the foundation for these artists' confidence and as they gained more experience, the artists felt they had more tools to draw from especially in unexpected moments. Their confidence came from trying out ideas, going wrong and starting again. Much of the literature relating to the education of students with disabilities in mainstream settings identifies the need for young educators to feel confident and really this can only be attained through increased training, exposure and experience (Morris, Baldeon and Scheuneman, 2015; Sharma and Nuttal, 2016). Building experience takes time and learning about how to deliver dance in inclusive settings is perceived as a process of exploration; acknowledging the journey towards expertise can aid confidence. As Jane explained, 'I understand that I am on a journey – and if everyone in the room agrees to be on that journey, we discover together.' By perceiving the artist persona as a process of research and investigation, confidence can build with experience of dance in an inclusive context.

INCLUSIVE DANCE ARTISTS' VALUES

Celebrating difference and aspiring towards equality are phrases which foreground the artists' values in which everyone has access and opportunity to dance. Alison explained that categorisation was problematic as people's preferences about who they are and what they do, change. She explained that categories arise from societal preconceptions about 'still seeing beauty as a particular aesthetic around certain lines, certain colours, certain composition… while we're making comparative judgements … we're always going to be in a place where we're having to prove,' that quality and excellence can be achieved in inclusive performance work. The concept of difference as a normalised part of human nature to be celebrated was a cornerstone to inclusive artists' beliefs in this study by placing equity at the heart of practice. These principles are echoed by others (Allan, 2014; Østern, 2018) and in many dance contexts, difference is confronted and celebrated (Whatley, 2007;

11

Cheesman, 2012, 2017). Anthony Nocella (2008) explains this as a value of disability pedagogy in which socially constructed binaries of able-disabled and normal-abnormal are not useful. Everybody has different abilities, and the values of dance artists in the present study created an environment in which the prevalence of the able-disabled dichotomy could be deconstructed.

The artists highlighted stories in their careers where they advocated for dancers with and without disabilities. 'It's got to the point now where we just have to keep making a noise, we have to be a little less polite and a little more visible,' said Kate. The artistic directors spoke of their desire to represent society more equivocally in their work to capture the richness of human experience. Lisa proposed that, 'art does have an important part to play in society. That what happens … in the studios and in the theatres … can trickle down into society and make those changes.' Through their roles as dance artists, advocacy was a core value of their practice to voice ideas about how we should view inclusivity, the future of inclusive dance practice and providing a voice for participants through art itself. For artists in this study, the importance of difference captured the creative potential of the moving body; 'they're different people with different things to say, there are different bodies with different ways of dancing, and different ways of … creating things … it's really, really interesting and exciting' (Lisa).

Gratifications were a final cornerstone of the artists' values in their practice. Gratifications are activities we like to do and describe activities in which time stops, our skills match the challenge we face, and we are aware of where our strengths lie (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Gratifications help us to understand how we function and view the world because of what we place value on. In this study, gratifications were characterised by witnessing and savouring the joy that their participants found in dancing. Through this positive experience, the artists acknowledged the worth of other people's efforts and appreciated their experiences but implicitly understood their role in aiding dancers to reach their full potential. The role that the artists' values played in informing how

they practised in class were intrinsic to this concept. For example, different interpretations of movement material were celebrated across all the classes that were observed, representing a key value of the artists in action. These celebrations would include verbal expressions such as "wow, that's a really great solution", as well as a simple, affirmative hand placed on the shoulder of a wheelchair user with limited verbal communication. At other times, the artists would stop the class to observe one particular class participant's response to a task. As such, participants' success brought gratifications for the artists, especially when they persevered and were able to perform a difficult movement or work with different people. Furthermore, Lisa remarked that she found great joy in realising that her values were adopted by the participants because of the way she worked with them, perhaps suggesting a taxonomical relationship between one's values and practices. One informs and can reaffirm the other. Certainly, such insight suggests ways in which shared group values may also arise from how people are supported and enabled to engage in dance. For Lisa, seeing her values manifest in the practice of others as a result of her actions was a gratifying experience.

INCLUSIVE DANCE ARTISTS' ATTRIBUTES

The artists' attributes describe factors which manifest from the people they are and the values which they possess, often explained by the artists as outcomes of what they do in class and what they believe more philosophically.

The learning ethos was central to the artists' attributes as they acknowledged that learning occurs for them through the act of doing, practising and working with dancers with disabilities. Alison said, 'I'm learning all the time … from friends that give me permission and who accept me with all the different colours.' Kate stated that her learning never stopped. As an artist with a disability, she wanted to know how movement felt. Being open to change and remaining curious intersected with her learning ethos of lifelong learning with the people she works with. For the dance artists without disabilities, they wanted to learn more from dancers with disabilities, in order to educate more widely about

disability, to create more opportunities and simply for the choreographic outcomes that might be possible.

Curiosity was a prevailing attribute and parallels it emphasis in the literature (Darbyshire and Nilsen, 2001; Cheesman, 2012, 2017). In the current study, curiosity was illustrated by developing ways of moving based on disabled bodies and observations of classes were typified by Tone Østern's (2018) descriptions of a working laboratory where ideas are explored. As with other literature describing how dance pedagogy might be approached with people with disabilities, a flexible approach was a key attribute in order to consider how to overcome challenges which might be faced by participants with disabilities (Darbyshire and Nilsen, 2001; Kaufmann, 2006; Koch, 2010; Benjamin, 2013; Zitomer, 2017). Martin Seligman (2004) remarks that curiosity is a key strength that helps to build wisdom and knowledge about the self, the wider context in which one works and one's place in the world. It derived directly from the learning ethos that permeated the artists' practice by them being intrigued by ambiguity. The artists' curiosity was manifest in many ways. The artists emphasised their openness to change within a dance session. Kate explained that 'we kind of know that there's several plans in our head, but we also know that walking into that room means … that it might all just be completely different to what you envisioned'. In her class, Kate set a task for the class participants to explore. The task lent itself to quite contained gestural material, and yet one dancer's response was much more expansive, travelling the length of the room. In fact, that response became the basis for the group's warm up for that session. Such adaptability is echoed in the dance education literature, and together suggests that the ability to respond and change is important across learning contexts be that in mainstream education, talent development contexts or inclusive dance settings (Darbyshire and Nilsen, 2001; XXX and XXX, 2014; Zitomer, 2017).

Alison explained her approach as being 'clear about what you can see and acknowledge the stuff you can't see, hear what's being said and acknowledge to yourself what's not being said.' Alison

contributed to and acknowledged debate about inclusive dance practice, but was wise enough to spot the gaps and look for the opportunities to shift her own and others' perceptions. The gaps in the discourse provided the chance to be curious and to find alternative ways of doing, seeing, listening and making. The artists' curiosity was fuelled by avoiding preconceptions about the people they worked with, worrying less about the nature of a disability and any perceptions of deficit but highlighting participants' strengths. The principle of discovery was a central characteristic to the artists' practice and typified how their curiosity was framed in the studio. Numerous examples of discovery were seen in the observations. Kate's curiosity was piqued by the potential of exploring a movement transition that the dancers were struggling with. She asked them what felt natural in that movement, and where the movement should go next, followed by asking them what would happen if they did the opposite. The dancers explored movement solutions as part of the group's problem-solving approach. The ambiguity in this one moment brought out the artist's curiosity especially in exploring the different solutions that different dancing bodies can bring about. Exploratory learning was common in all the sessions observed for the current study, echoing Sarah Whatley's (2007) findings that students with disabilities in Higher Education preferred conceptual introductions to movement rather than prescribed movement outcomes. This practice supports ways of knowing which are not predicated on skill transmission but as Michelle Zitomer (2016b) explains embraces how knowledge can be embodied through exploration of the dancer's kinaesthetic attention.

High expectations and striving towards excellence were a priority for all artists in this study. The desire to challenge everyone who came to their classes was important regardless of whether they were first-time recreational attenders, dancers in training or professionals. Alison acknowledged that such challenge was characterised by 'a quality and clarity of artistic expression through the body.' This was echoed by others, whereby training and experience could enhance these factors, but the heart of the artistic intent shaped high-quality art and participation.

Relationality was a key attribute that the artists perceived as an outcome of their inclusive approach. The artists' perceptions of relationality were considered from different perspectives; as a form of physical and emotional support for others; providing a sense of belonging; and helping foster meaningful relationships amongst the dancers they worked with. Artistically, a group of dancers provides a wealth of creative possibilities, but can bring challenges. Yet by facing these challenges together by enjoying the process of problem-solving, overcoming differences in opinion and finding common ground, a sense of community develops. Helen described this simply as 'a collective practice.' Such reciprocity was enhanced by a person-centred approach commonly discussed in inclusive dance education literature (Koch, 2010; Zitomer, 2016b; 2017), in which participants' needs were carefully understood and acted upon by the dance artist or educator and the participant was known for who they are. Fostering a sense of belonging amongst participants through social processes and collaborative approaches ensured what other authors describe as effective disability pedagogy (Nocella, 2008; Zitomer and Reid, 2011; Cheesman, 2017; Zitomer, 2017). For Helen, this kind of support through 'the amazing bonds, trust, that support network all feeds the process,' whereby building a community through dance practice aided the creation of good quality work. The dialogue around the dancing was important in getting to know people and offering reciprocal support to each other.

INCLUSIVE DANCE ARTISTS' PRACTICES

The artists' class content and delivery were wide-ranging although listing these is beyond the scope of this paper. There are, nevertheless, common characteristics that appear important for underpinning practice.

Differentiation practices were central in ensuring practical and equitable access to material for dancers with and without disabilities, a key feature of effective teaching practice in most pedagogical settings (Tomlinson, 2001). Modes of facilitation were varied, spanning open-ended, improvisatory

approaches to didactic teaching of dance phrases. This approach required the artist to draw out the

dancer's idiosyncratic movement patterns whilst challenging them to go safely beyond their dancing

habits and is echoed in other artists writing about their practice (Benjamin, 2013; Cheesman, 2017;

Buck and Snook, 2018). In the current study, scaffolded tasks were a key feature in enabling

differences between people to be navigated. Movement instruction tended to be generic to enable

open-ended interpretation of the task; for example, Lisa taught her participants about the notion of a

battement tendu. By using a combination of a modelled standing and seated example with verbal and

onomatopaeic images as well as a drawing of a rocket taking off from its dock, she hoped to capture

the sensation of the lower limb releasing and extending forward. The class participants' responses to

this varied in direction, velocity and use of body part and yet for most class participants, dynamic

accuracy was fully achieved. Feedback for individual dancers enabled further differentiation as

needed although it was important for dancers to discover their own responses and reflect on the

learning that took place. Whilst the dancers did not look the same, they fulfilled the aim of the activity

and developed what Charlotte Darbyshire and Stine Nilsen (2001) refer to as building embodied

knowledge through playful translation. The diversity of translated responses provided differentiated

experiences for the students. There was a sense of playfulness in the dancers' explorations by

increasing the pace of movement and offering opportunities to connect with other dancers.

Facilitating translation of material and individual responses to instructions was placed at the centre of

the artists' practice.

Effective communication with dancers was important to the artists' practice and a prevalent topic in

previous research (Darbyshire and Nilsen, 2001; Cone and Cone, 2011; Wilhelmsen and Sørensen,

2017). Language choice was carefully considered to ensure understanding and artists repeated

themselves to ensure movement objectives were clear. The artists recalled they would carefully plan

the language they used so it was appropriate and accessible. As experience grew, language choice

became more available to the artists because of their familiarity with it. They were able to be

responsive to people in the moment and adopted a coaching role in which dialogue was central to their teaching approach. Questioning was a key feature of the artists' practice, used to reveal new movement possibilities. Kerry Chappell (2011, p.67) documented educators' use of questions to stimulate creativity amongst students where 'questions accompany and challenge the students whilst they are moving, improvising and performing to promote a connection between the moving body and the thinking mind'. In the current project, questions got the dancers active in their decision-making whilst dancing. Questions prefixed with 'how can we…?' and 'what if we try…?' peppered the artists' practice and brought about adventurous movement solutions.

Planning and reflection were important factors for the artists. Knowing in advance about the movement, cognition and communication abilities of participants appears common in other research amongst dance artists working in inclusive settings (Band et al., 2011; XXX and XXX, 2014; Zitomer, 2017). For Helen, this materialised in planning for the practicalities of moving out of a wheelchair to be on the floor. Lisa thought about how she was going to deliver material to ensure that her class was practically accessible to participants' needs. Alison remarked, 'I have a very clear intention for every session, whether that's a … physical goal or creative task or I want the group to experience a certain thing … I have a very, very clear intention. I now, increasingly, have no idea how I'm going to get there.' Meticulous planning and reflection seemed crucial in ensuring that participants remained at the forefront of the artists' practice and as Ralph Buck and Barbara Snook (2018) suggest, the opportunity to reflect on practice enables reconnection with one's values and ensures the inter-relationship between values, attributes and practices.

IMPLICATIONS

The focus of this study was to explore dance artists' qualities as educators of people with disabilities, with the particular aim of understanding artists' values, attributes and practices and how this may impact effective pedagogy within a talent development context. Importantly for these artists, there

was little differentiation between the values, attributes and practices they thought they drew on in leading dance in inclusive dance settings compared to talent development contexts for people with disabilities. An underlying factor for all the artists in this study was the celebration of difference by aiming to work towards greater equity of opportunity and access to dance participation and very specifically for young people with disabilities who wish to realise their potential. As such, it appears vital that artists working with young people with disabilities understand the principles which inform the social model of disability in informing, at least in part, the ethos of their continued learning and professional development. This grounding value also informed the notion of a 'dance artist persona', a range of qualities which acted as cornerstones to what the practitioner believed and how they chose to relate to, and create dance with, people with disabilities. The qualities of kindness, generosity, patience, honesty and humility typified the 'affective support' reflected in other dance talent research (Chua, 2017, p.11) and more general inclusive dance practice (Buck and Snook, 2018). These qualities are perhaps descriptive of the dance artist's professional identity and warrant further exploration.

Experience was a key factor for the dance artists in feeling confident in what they do. The range of the dance artists' experience ranged from eight years to 28 years. By practising for this length of time, the artists had experienced people in different settings and with wide-ranging abilities. The pure range of experiences that the artists encountered enabled them to build a toolbox of dance content, and ways of working. Whilst some of these devices can be taught in professional development and tertiary education settings, the opportunity to try things out, make mistakes and refine one's own approach under supportive guidance but without judgment from others, is vital in work-based settings. The viability of work experience, apprenticeships and programmes of study which support learning in the workplace might allow such experience to develop amongst young artists leading dance with people with disabilities and is worthy of implementation in the sector.

Each artist explained the importance of learning with their participants and ensuring that they had time to reflect on their experiences meaningfully. This appeared as a rigorous process that was implicitly situated in the moment of teaching and more formally acknowledged in the planning and development of future dance sessions or in the progression of their practice. Practising self-compassion, acknowledging one's fears and failings, and always seeking ways to overcome and adapt practice was important.

The application of these findings lies in dance artists exploring characteristics found here in their own practice which feel relevant and authentic to them. It is feasible that these findings can be a focus in artists' professional development training programmes, in particular encouraging artists to reflect on their own persona and values, and the attributes that drive their practice. What is not clear from this project is how artists come to these defining qualities, and specifically what experience and knowledge brings these qualities about. Further longitudinal research in the antecedents of these qualities is warranted.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study suggest that the dance persona, values, attributes and practices of dance artists underpin the qualities they exhibit when working in inclusive learning environments. When considering these research findings in light of the current literature, there appear to be similarities between dance artists' qualities in inclusive dance education contexts and dance talent settings for children and young people without disabilities. More differentiated understanding of artists' qualities in talent development settings specifically for young people with disabilities can be better understood once more systematic pathways for talented young dancers with disabilities are available. Meanwhile, it would be useful to explore dance artists' qualities with mainstream dance educators, to determine the characteristics which might specifically differentiate artist-led pedagogy with people with disabilities from their generalised movement education. This may allow for greater emphasis in

training artists to transfer their skills and better support young dancers with disabilities artistically.

The results of this study present the potential for considering how artist training and recruitment of

dance artists working in inclusive educational settings is supported. Importantly, these findings offer

insight into the possible taxonomical relationship between artists' values, attributes and practices,

whereby when values become manifest in class, authentic practice emerges and perhaps acts as an

indicator of best practice within inclusive dance education within and beyond the talent development

context, to include both private and public sectors of dance education and professional practice.

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