

**PERSONAL OUTCOME AND LEADERSHIP  
AS DEFINING FACTORS OF SATISFACTION  
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COURSE  
"ARTS II: Overview of Greek Music and Dance"  
of the Hellenic Open University**

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was twofold:

- to assess the construct validity of the modified Greek version of the "Scale of Athlete Satisfaction" presented by Theodorakis and Bebetos (2003) in the broader academic research sector and specifically in the field of Open and Distance Learning, and
- to examine if variables such as sex, age, marital status and prior experience, influence the levels of students' satisfaction.

Participants were 144 students (55 men and 89 women) of the Hellenic Open University who participated in the course "Arts II: Review of the Greek Music and Dance", between the ages of 25 up to 67 years of age ( $M_{age}=42$ ,  $SD=7.62$ ). The scale consists of two factors: a) personal outcome and b) leadership. Results from factor analysis provided evidence for the construct validity of the scale developed by Theodorakis and Bebetos (2003). Additionally, results indicated differences between the age groups on the factor of "personal outcome" where the youngest age group had the lowest scores among all three and also, results indicated differences on the factor of "leadership", where men had higher scores than women. Overall, the study underlines the necessity of adaptation and usage of such an instrument in order to inform and educate educators, teachers and students about the factors that influence the learning process in combination with personal satisfaction and leadership behavior.

**Keywords:** Personal Outcome, leadership, age groups, sex differences.

**INTRODUCTION**

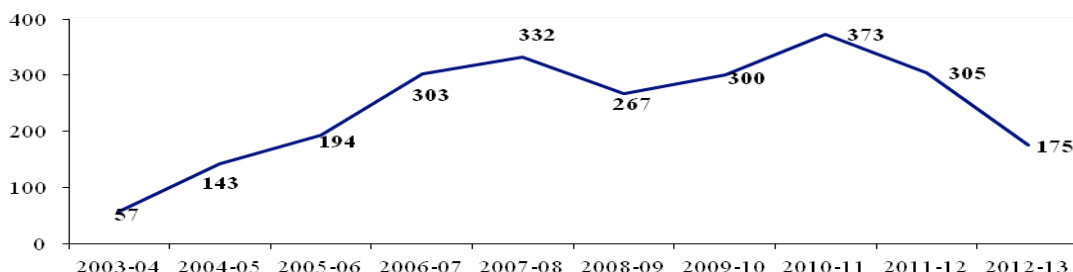
Distance learning gives students the opportunity to regulate important study factors such as place, time and pace, depending on their professional, social and personal obligations (Lionarakis & Likouriotis, 1998). It is especially beneficial for adult students to participate in distance learning educational programs (Askon, Johnston, Petty & Young, 2003).

The utilization of distance learning and new technologies offers important potentials for the study of dance. Nevertheless, there are various difficulties in the acquisition of certain kinetic skills. The reason can be traced in the nature of the specific subject and the necessity of the personal guidance of an instructor, which is required (Goulimaris, 2008).

The exploration of the compatibility or the distance learning methodology of Greek dances as both a kinetic skill and a cultural element has been the subject of many studies.

The results have showed that there is a possibility to teach Greek dances, with the simultaneous support of other educational programs, such as notation and the use of new technologies (Goulimaris & Filippou, 2007; Voutsina, Goulimaris, Bonatos & Genti, 2009). Webdance has been an effort to create an internet learning environment, with the use of the technology Web and 3D animation, aiming at the distance learning of two indicative traditional dances. The acquired experience has showed that the Web and 3D animation model can be applied to other European dances, inciting the interest of dance specialists, and that it can be used for the creation of attractive information portals about dancing (Bakogianni, Kavakli, Karkou, & Tsakogianni, 2007). The Greek Open University is the first tertiary educational institute to offer organized studies, with the use of distance learning. In this context, the course "Arts II: Overview of Greek Music and Dance" is taught to fourth year students, as part of the program "Studies of Greek Civilization" since the academic year 2003-04, initially as obligatory and then as optional. This specific course is the only dance lesson in the tertiary education, provided through distance learning. The participation of the students in this lesson, from its beginning to its classification as optional, has been increasing, although there is a relative recession the last years (picture 1).

Picture: 1  
Number of students per academic year



An important number of researchers study the various parameters of the educational procedure in the frame of the H.O.U. Goulimaris, Stoupakis and Filippou (2007) have investigated the way students evaluate the content, the educational material, the teachers and the library services in relation to the course "Arts II: Overview of Greek Music and Dance" and "History of Arts in Europe". The educational material has been evaluated as moderate, the content in a more positive way, the library services less positively and the consultant teachers in a very positive way.

There was no difference in the way students evaluated both the lessons in question. The positive predisposition, the security and the skillfulness of the students choosing the course "Arts II: Overview of Greek Music and Dance" create a certain tendency for them to participate in post-graduate studies about dancing, through the distance learning method. At the same time, the students gave a high evaluation to the teachers and a lower evaluation to the services of the H.O.U. Furthermore, the results recorded a small but existing correlation between the participation of the students in post-graduate studies and the evaluation of the course (Goulimaris, Bebetos & Filippou, 2010). An equivalent research among students of the same course investigated if their participation in distance learning post-graduate studies on Greek music and dance as well as their evaluation of certain aspects of the course (teachers, educational material, and content) is influenced by their assessment of the development perspectives offered. The analyses showed that the development perspectives constitute a differentiation factor for both the participation and the evaluation of the students (Goulimaris, 2011). The opinions of the post-graduate students who selected the course "Open and Distance Learning" on the role and mission of the consultant teachers of H.O.U. were studied in a research by Anastasiadis and Karvounis (2010). The results indicated the importance of the relations between students and teachers, the proper qualifications of the teachers on the subject, the emotional support of the students, their educational support, their evaluation and the preparation of the course.

The support of the teachers to the students who selected the post-graduate program "Studies on Education" were studied in a research by Vasalas and Andreadou (2010). The results showed that the students were satisfied by the support offered by their teachers and defined the amelioration context of their role. The importance of the communication between teachers and students was the subject of a study by Iliadou and Anastasiadis (2010) in the frame of the course "Open and Distance Learning". What was ascertained was that the students find the communication face to face more efficient, while they consider phone and e-mail communication positive. Students also evaluate fast communication as important and many of them are supported psychologically by the teachers. In addition, communication helps them to answer questions, to study more thoroughly and to organize their time more effectively. A study by Vasiliou-Papageorgiou and Vasalas (2005) on the support that the students of H.O.U. expect by their teachers detected that it is important for teachers to have communicational skill as well as proper qualifications on their subject, to understand the problems of their students and to give feedback during written assignments. The attitude and potential participation of the students of H.O.U. in the post-graduate course "History of the Art" was researched by Melita, Goulimaris and Stoupakis (2005).

They also researched the students' evaluation of the content of studies and the supportive services offered to them, so as to finish their assignments successfully. The results indicated a positive potential participation of the students in post-graduate studies. There was also a positive evaluation of the content of studies and a moderate evaluation of the rest of the factors. The factors which influence the participation of students of tertiary education in a distance learning post-graduate program on dance and the extent to which this participation is affected by demographic characteristics such as sex or former experience were researched by Goulimaris, Koutsouba and Giosos (2008). The results showed a moderate positive intention of participation, as well as certain differences among those who had a former experience on dancing and those who did not.

The concept of "satisfaction" has been the subject of study for many researchers from different scientific fields. Especially in the territory of management, the concept of "satisfaction" has been very popular for both academics and enterprise executives, including the dimensions of personal outcome and leadership (Theodorakis & Bebetos, 2003).

As mentioned by Chelladurai and Riemer, (1997), the above conceptual definition is based on need satisfaction. "Need satisfaction" is a term which has been widely used in theoretical models of satisfaction, it is directly related to motivation and it is produced when an individual has satisfied specific needs and/or motives (personal outcome & leadership), through his/her participation in various activities (Mannell, 1999).

The interest of studies by both researchers and executives, concerning the employment field, was focused on the analysis and application of the results towards two different directions: The satisfaction of the customers and the satisfaction of the personnel.

The satisfaction of the customers was considered most important, since it was found to positively influence the buying attitude of the customers (Granny, Smith, & Stone, 1992). Kolter (1991) regards customer satisfaction to be the most important indication for the profitability of an organization. Various studies also focus on the presumption that for an educational institute, students are its basic customers (IWA, 2007; Sakthivel et al., 2005; Hill, 1995; Zairi, 1995).

As a result, student satisfaction must always be taken into consideration by institutional commissions, due to the intense competition among institutional bodies (universities, colleges etc), as well as the globalization, the increasing confidence of the "customers" in higher educational institutes, the raise of the tuition and the classification of education as a marketable service (Kwek et al., 2010). Letcher and Neves (2010) mentioned that students' satisfaction helps them to build up confidence, which contributes to the development of useful dexterities and the acquisition of knowledge.

Researchers focused on the satisfaction of customers, presenting a great number of studies relating to physical activities. They have studied those who participate in physical activities actively (Alexandris, Papadopoulos, & Paliatia, 1999; Lentell, 2000), as well as those who participate as spectators (Madrigal, 1995; Theodorakis, Kambitsis, Laios, & Koustelios, 2001).

More specifically, according to Chelladurai and Riemer (1997), the satisfaction brought by participating in physical activities is the positive emotional situation which derives from the composite evaluation of the structures, the procedures and the results of the experience of the participation.

Also, according to the same researchers, the level of satisfaction is influenced by the personal standards of the participant, set before the experience.

The researchers conclude by saying that "these coefficients are influenced by the desires, the emotions, sense of righteousness, the former experiences and the expectations of the participant".

Based on the above, the investigation of the factors which effect or define the satisfaction of the students is considered important. Consequently, the aim of this study was bipolar:

- to adjust the questionnaire to a broader academic field and more specifically to the field of Open and Distance Learning Education and
- to examine if factors such as sex, age, family condition and former dance experience can differentiate the sample statistically.

## METHOD AND PROCEDURE

### Participants

The sample consisted of 144 students (55 males and 89 females) who participated in the course of "Arts II: Overview of Greek Music and Dance" of the Hellenic Open University, aged between 25 and 67 ( $M_{age}=42$ ,  $SD=7.62$ ). In addition, for the purposes of the study, the sample was divided into groups according to the age and family condition (table 1).

Table: 1  
Demographic characteristics of the sample

|       | Sex   | Marital Status |    | Age Group |       |    |       |
|-------|-------|----------------|----|-----------|-------|----|-------|
| Men   | 38,2% | Married        | 99 | 68,8%     | 25-37 | 46 | 31,9% |
| Women | 61,8% | Unmarried      | 45 | 31,3%     | 38-45 | 52 | 36,9% |
|       |       |                |    |           | 46->  | 46 | 31,9% |

### Questionnaire

For the purposes of the study, the questionnaire used and adapted to the Greek necessities was the "Scale of Athlete Satisfaction" (Theodorakis & Bebetzos, 2003; Bebetzos & Theodorakis, 2003). It included 10 questions, starting with the basic statement "*How satisfied/dissatisfied are you from.....*" and contained two dimensions:

- Leadership, which dealt with the way students perceive the leading profile of the teacher during the lesson. This factor consisted of seven questions (for example "the way my teacher treats me") and
- Personal Outcome, which included three questions related to the personal outcome of the student in the lesson (for example "my personal development and growth"). The students could answer each question through a 7-point Likert type scale, from absolutely dissatisfied (1) to absolutely satisfied (7). The questionnaire also included questions related to the age, sex and family status of the sample.

### Procedure

The questionnaire was handed out during the 4<sup>th</sup> and final advisory meeting with the teacher. Before the completion of the study, the students were informed about its purpose. Their participation was voluntary.

### Results

#### Factor Analysis Of The Satisfaction Questionnaire

For the preliminary examination of the structural validity of the satisfaction questionnaire, a principal component analysis of the main axes was used.

**Table: 2**  
**Principal component analysis: Loadings on Leadership and Personal Outcome factors**

| Questions   | Leadership | Personal Outcome |
|---|------------|------------------|
| The way I am performing within the course                 |            | .75              |
| 1. How my professor treats me                             | .74        |                  |
| 2. My personal growth and development                     |            | .89              |
| 3. My professor's ability to teach me                     | .79        |                  |
| 5. The guidance provided by my profeso                    | .80        |                  |
| 6. The respect and fair treatment I get from my professor | .80        |                  |
| 7. Form the knowledge that I got from the course          |            | .83              |
| How my professor deals with problems                      | .81        |                  |
| 9. The support that I get from my professor               | .84        |                  |
| 10. The leadership provided by my professor               | .83        |                  |
| Total Variance Explained                                  | 46         | 23               |
| Eigenvalue  | 4.6        | 2.3              |
| Cronbach's alpha  | .92        | .78              |

From the analysis, two factors emerged, which explained 69% of the variability of the satisfaction of the students (Table 2). It needs to be noticed that the variables in the present study, showed similar loadings to those mentioned by Theodorakis and Bebetos (2003), and Bebetos and Theodorakis (2003).

#### Reliability Analysis

In table 2, there is a concise presentation of the reliability control results, concerning the satisfaction questionnaire. The analysis showed that in relation to leadership the Alpha Cronbach coefficient was .92 and in relation to personal outcome the  $\alpha$  Cronbach coefficient was .78. The results indicated that the questions in both factors had a very satisfying internal cohesion.

#### Variance Analyses For Independent Samples Towards More Than One Factors

From the variance analysis towards two independent factors, the "age group" and the "personal performance", it appeared that there was no statistically important interaction between them ( $F_{2,134}=0.412$ ;  $p=0.663 > 0.05$ ).

It also appeared that there was a statistically main influence only towards the factor "age group" ( $F_{2,134}=6.621$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). The Scheffe multiple comparison test showed that the students belonging in a younger age group scored lower in relation to those belonging in the middle or older age group (Table: 3).

**Table: 3**  
**Mean & Standard Deviation of age groups**

| 25-37                  |           | 38-45                  |           | 46->                   |           |
|------------------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|
| <i>M<sub>age</sub></i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M<sub>age</sub></i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M<sub>age</sub></i> | <i>SD</i> |
| 5.7                    | 1         | 6.1                    | .64       | 6.3                    | .56       |

From the variance analysis towards two independent factors, the "family condition" and the "leadership", it appeared that there was no statistically important interaction between them ( $F_{1,136}=1.213$ ;  $p=0.273 >0.05$ ). It appeared though, that there was a statistically main influence only towards the factor "sex" ( $F_{1,136}=4.542$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). From the means, it was indicated that males scored statistically higher than females (Table: 4).

**Table: 4**  
Mean & Standard Deviation among sex groups.

| Men      |           | Women    |           |
|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| 6.74     | .43       | 6.61     | .44       |

### T-test analyses for independent samples

To check whether there were statistically important differences towards the two satisfaction factors "personal performance" and "leadership", owed to former experience of the participants in Greek dance and music, T-tests for independent samples, were performed. The results indicated that former experience constitutes a differentiation element towards the factor "personal performance" (table 5).

From the means, it was indicated that those who had former experience presented a statistically higher score ( $M=6.3$ ,  $SD=.54$ ) towards the factor "personal performance" in relation to those who did not ( $M= 5.9$ ,  $SD= .81$ ).

Similar results came out towards the factor "leadership", where those who had a greater experience scored higher ( $M= 6.7$ ,  $SD=.34$ ) than those who did not ( $M= 6.3$ ,  $SD= .46$ ).

**Table: 5**  
Control of the differences between the factors "personal outcome" and "leadership" in relation to former experience in Greek music and dance

| Factors          | t   | df  | p     |
|------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Personal Outcome | 2.7 | 138 | .007* |
| Leadership       | 2.6 | 136 | .005* |

## DISCUSSION

One of the aims of this study was the initial control of the adaptation, and structural validity of the questionnaire "Athletic Satisfaction" in a broader academic research field and more specifically, in the field of Open and Distance Learning Education.

The results of the factor analysis confirmed the existence of two factors, as they were mentioned by Theodorakis and Bebetos (2003). Furthermore, the high internal cohesion of the two factors certifies the credibility of the questionnaire. This means that more researchers, teachers or administrative executives of academic institutes, could use the specific instrument in order to measure the level of satisfaction of their students.

As concerns the differentiation among age groups, the results showed that the older the age group the more orientated it appears, in relation to its personal development and performance. Older studies in the broader academic field of the tertiary education support that one of the basic factors which increase the general satisfaction of students in such institutes are the chances which are offered to them for personal, academic and professional improvement (Aldemir & Gulcan, 2004; Navarro et al., 2005). The researchers of this study believe and daresay that the older the persons implicated in the process of further academic learning the more stable and determined they are, in relation to their general personal improvement and the efforts required achieving it. There are similar results in the athletic environment (Theodorakis & Bebetsos, 2003; Bebetsos & Theodorakis, 2003). In addition, the results showed that males appeared to be more satisfied towards the factor "leadership" than females. The literature review presents conflicting results (Aleamoni, 1987; Aleamoni & Hexner, 1980). In one of his researches, Wachtel (1998) reports that there are no sex differences among students, towards the leadership profile, in the educational procedure. In his research, Tatro (1995) stated that females presented higher scores than males. Koushki and Kuhn (1982) support the exact opposite. Besides, there are researches supporting the differentiation according to the sex of the teacher, with females evaluating higher a teacher of the same sex (Feldman, 1993; Centra, 1993). As for Greek researchers, the studies have not presented any sex differences (Theodorakis & Bebetsos, 2003; Bebetsos & Theodorakis, 2003).

In this study, the researchers daresay that the general stereotypes concerning the role of males in Greek society influence the perception of students towards the leadership profile as presented by the males in the educational procedure. Finally, the t-test analyses showed that there are statistically important differences towards both factors of the questionnaire, as concerns former experience. As for the personal outcome, the researches support that greater experience gives an individual larger percentages of security in relation to personal outcome (Bebetsos & Theodorakis, 2003; Bebetsos, Theodorakis, & Tsigilis, 2007). As a result, the evaluation index of an individual with former experience is higher than that of an individual with less experience.

In conclusion, this study and its results are considered as positive and encouraging towards the direction of the adjustment of an instrument measuring the satisfaction of students and the recording of the results in the broader academic field in Greece. A further investigation of such an instrument, as well as the research for other aspects such as the quality of studies, and institute's quality which may influence this satisfaction, are considered to be necessary.

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## SYSTEM EXPERTISE TRAINING COURSES IN PRIVATE SECTOR: Can They Be Given Online?

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### ABSTRACT

It is widely known that there are many schools in the private sector offering courses in Computer Technology, Computer Engineering, Information Systems and similar disciplines in addition to Universities presenting such courses. The private sector programs are extremely popular with students already studying at university as well as being of great interest to previously graduated university students. The first purpose of this study is to determine the percentage of university students who attend these education programs. Both previously graduated and presently studying students have been included. Secondly it aims to understand the reasons behind the attendance of such courses by students who are already studying a similar curriculum or have previously studied and graduated in similar and related fields. In the light of this information, some suggestions have been made about giving these courses as online.

**Keywords:** System expertise, Training, education, curriculum, private sector training, online education.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, computer related education involving system expertise in the fields of Computer Engineering, Software Engineering, Information Systems and other have become widespread at many Universities. In addition, similar lectures and training courses are now also being provided by many organizations in the private sector due to popular demand. Interestingly, when details of the attendees of the private courses were examined it could be seen that most participants were either simultaneously studying the same or similar curriculums at a University, or had previously graduated from a University in the same or a related field.

This study aims to look firstly at the actual percentage of students who are involved with such mentioned education, and secondly to determine the reasons behind this particular education situation. In order to reach a conclusion firstly a survey was conducted among 266 System Engineering students participating in a private sector training course. Then, the curriculums of the private sector training courses and the related fields of the universities were investigated and compared to understand the reasons. In the first section of the paper, the results of the survey have been shown in numbers and tables. In the second section, in order to be able to examine the reasons why engineering students participate in extra training courses in the private sector, the curriculum and the course duration of the mentioned schools have been compared.