

Original Article

Assessing the Differences between Dancers and Non-Dancers in Psychological Well-being, Quality of Life, and Perceived Stress

Aarya Ramesh Nair

¹Global Indian International School SMART Campus, Punggol, Singapore.

Corresponding Author : aaryanair2006@gmail.com

Received: 29 September 2024

Revised: 07 November 2024

Accepted: 24 November 2024

Published: 10 December 2024

Abstract - Dancing is a potent expressive medium that supports mental health and fosters a strong sense of self and other interpersonal connections. The joy of movement fosters creativity, mental resilience, and physical fitness. Furthermore, enjoyment of dance leads to feelings of relaxation and a sense of being in the moment, which will dependably diminish anxiety and promote good feelings. This approach to improving man that goes beyond the physical control of the body will not only enhance health but also stimulate personal awareness. Finally, dance becomes the means of developing the self and healing interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts to enrich personal and mutual human life. The study investigates differences in psychological well-being, quality of life, and perceived stress between dancers and non-dancers. The study was conducted on 72 respondents (Dancers = 45, Non-dancers = 27). Responses to the standardised questionnaires assessing psychological well-being, quality of life and perceived stress were collected from the respondents. Findings from the study revealed a significant difference in quality of life and years of practice, psychological well-being and years of practice, wherein years of practice included non-dancers and dancers with 4 years and above of practice.

Keywords - Dancers, Non-dancers, Psychological well-being, Quality of life, Stress.

1. Introduction

For thousands of years, as far back as the earliest human civilisations can be traced, dance has played a significant role in communication, storytelling and celebration. Bearing a centuries-old tradition, spirituality, and cultural identity, the history of Indian classical dance is a strong narrative. Classical Indian dances are basal to historical texts and rituals, signifying the vastness and richness of Indian Tradition. While the classical dance of feet from Bharatanatyam blends into the emotional and graceful storytelling of Kathak, every style is a masterpiece and an embodiment of art filled with the ability to tell a story that people worldwide love (Yadav, 2024). Enacting stories from old books like the Ramayana and Mahabharata, these dance forms were closely associated with religious rituals (Ramaswamy, 2018). With the passage of centuries, Indian dance has continued to develop, keeping its cultural character while fusing tradition and modernity ([Solved] Stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata Provide the Content, 2019). Dance is also an essential spiritual practice, connecting the physical and sacred space; individuals experience emotions, share experiences or connect with others through dance in rituals that ease their spirits (DPU SLA, 2024). It is a type of creative expression that speaks to

some very primal human emotions and experiences: happiness, grief, and love, all truths that cannot be summed up in the fickle world of language alone. Dance is more than a form of entertainment; it is an essential part that contributes to the cultural identity across different parts in which its values, beliefs and history are reflected (Herança – History, Heritage and Culture Journal, 2024). Dance, as a form of nonverbal communication, engages people to express themselves or even narrate incidents physically, other than using language. It promotes positive attitudes and emotions, helps build coping strategies, and helps the growth of the entire body and mind in many ways (Pina, 2020). Dance is where emotional expression, creativity, and physical movement are frequently used to improve psychological well-being. Dancing is a great way to relieve stress, improve self-worth, and feel proud of yourself (Dance as a Tool for Emotional Expression and Stress Management, 2024). Dancing facilitates profound connections between individuals and their emotions, elevating mood, cultivating awareness, and advancing positive mental health (Dance as a Tool for Emotional Expression and Stress Management, 2024). Dancing may be a source of stress and a means of relieving it. Although competitive dance, intense training, and performance pressure can be stressful for professional



dancers, leisure dance is frequently employed as a stress-reduction strategy. Dance's rhythmic motions and physical exertion cause endorphins to be released, which eases stress and encourages relaxation (Dance as a Tool for Emotional Expression and Stress Management, 2024). People can better manage their emotions and improve mental clarity by using dance as a constructive outlet for stress (Dance as a Tool for Emotional Expression and Stress Management, 2024). Dancing enhances a person's physical and mental well-being, which substantially impacts their quality of life. Improving social connection, emotional expressiveness, and self-confidence fosters physical fitness, flexibility, and strength. People who dance daily, especially over an extended period, find that it enriches their feeling of purpose, joy, and overall satisfaction with life, and it becomes an integral part of their lifestyle.

The significance of dance can be explained in the following manner:

Cultural Preservation and Identity

Frequently a vehicle for cultural memory, dance embodies its source community's history, beliefs and values. Some classical Indian dances, including Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Odissi and Kathakali, are thrilled and dated back to ancient mythology sculptures of India ([Solved] Stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata Provide the Content, 2019). Dance forms such as these represent India's cultural ethos and impart a sense of their own identity from one generation to another to anyone who practices and witnesses it. Narratives and spirituality that have been an intrinsic part of Indian culture for ages are told in these dance forms, such as through beautiful gestures and postures. Various styles of Indian classical dances originated from different regions of India and have very strong benefits for psychological and physical health. "Bharatanatyam" of Tamil Nadu involves a highly choral dance with stamping, pure movements, and facial and eye expressions that build up self-actualisation and catharsis, impressing flexibility and muscular strength. "Kathak" This dance is typical for Uttar Pradesh.

The movements include storytelling, which also assists in developing better mindfulness and focus, cardiovascular health, and stamina. "Odissi", – which originated in Odisha, is specific by its slow and fluid style that helps cultivate the balance of emotions and tones muscles and allows cooperation easily. The art form that originated out of Kerala is "Kathakali," which is famous for its ornamented masks and highly expressive narratives; it fosters imagination and compassion because dancers are trained to be strong and hardworking. "Manipuri," originated from Manipur, is charming and has a fluidity of movements that depict love and dedication, creating calmness and enhancing flexibility and coordination. Finally, "Mohiniyattam" of Kerala demonstrates femininity, sadhara and emotional feelings, improving self-consciousness and flexibility. Altogether,

these forms of dance not only help the governance of culture but are also used as many different kinds of dance therapy for health improvements (Vivekananda Kendra Patrika, 1981).

Feelings and their Discharge

Dance enables someone to express an emotion without necessarily speaking the actual emotion; dance is one way of expressing happiness, sadness, love or anger. Essentially, the art classroom allows for the expression of emotions while at the same time reducing mood swings and stress through a healthy outlet (Jorba-Galdos, 2014). Psychological healing is linked with dance, and it helps people understand their identity by implementing different movements.

Communication Beyond Words

Since dance involves the least spoken word, it cuts across cultural divides and brings people together, especially if it is a performance. Mimicry and gestures, postures and faces, messages and actions – the language of the body is the language of the soul and an effective way of telling stories that promote understanding (Hanna, 1987).

Social Relationships and Interaction

Part of dance is the sociability of the activity. People attend classes and performances or engage in group dancing at a party. Social interactions, relationships, and feelings of integration are achieved because of this mutual experience. Whether done in groups or twos, the best of dances promote cooperation, organisation, unity and a common spirit, fostering fellowship among people (McNeill, 1997).

Storytelling and Narrative

Thus, with new or prepared dance, people can narrate complicated narratives to describe some topic, fantastic or not, which might be considered a significant measure of the expressive flexibility of the human body. Dance functions as a narrative art in a way where stories can be taken in various ways such that it can be virtually difficult to combine them into a set of specific meanings; they can be metaphysical or physical (DANCE NARRATOLOGY (SIGHT, SOUND, MOTION and EMOTION, 2014).

Self-Awareness & Emigration

Cutting thus can be an empowering process that helps constituent dancers transform self-processes in the context of dance, embrace individual agency and assets, and learn about one's self. Fashion ensures free movement and production, resulting in growth by boosting confidence in one's capabilities and strengthening the soul (Margolin, 2014). Dance's importance lies in its ability to express oneself powerfully in a way that cuts across age, language, and culture (Knapp & Hall, 2010). It enhances mental and physical health (Koch, Morlinghaus, & Fuchs, 2007), stimulates creativity, and facilitates emotional connection. Dance is also essential for communicating

stories, fostering ties within the community, and promoting cultural heritage (Vatsyayan, K. 2022). It improves social connection, emotional discharge, and self-esteem from a therapeutic perspective (Hanna, 1987).

1.1. Impact of Dance on Physical Health and Mental Health

Dance is a great form of exercise for physical and spiritual well-being, making it unique. It helps increase flexibility, coordination, and strength and pumps up heart rates, offering cardiovascular benefits (fsmadmin, 2024). This activity can help people lose weight and support bone density, especially those who put body weight on them, such as dancing (Health, 2018). Dancing is also an effective way of exercising the entire body and functional movement, which is important in addressing day-to-day tasks. These advantages combined make dance a fun way to improve one's posture, increase endurance and decrease chances of acquiring certain injuries; therefore, it is healthy for one's physical well-being. Similarly, dance is a stress buster that reduces tension and anxiety and enhances mood (Gurusathya, 2019). Development is enshrined and enhanced as people master new skills, and as they get into the act of performing, it empowers them. The social side of dance helps one feel connected to others, which may decrease feelings of loneliness and improve subjective well-being (Hansen et al., 2021). Dance as a social activity also helps individuals portray their feelings since sometimes words fail them (Hansen et al., 2021). It leads to non-judgment awareness of experiences in the current moment that prevents one from being overwhelmed by worries about the past and future (Hansen et al., 2021). The cognitive nature of learning choreography can also be exercised to enhance memory and the ability to concentrate, all of which support brain health (Wisung, 2023). Also, dance therapy can be used as a way to treat such or other mental health disorders to teach those who experience certain life circumstances to embrace the ability to develop healthy ways to function in a group setting (Wisung, 2023). All in all, dance for all areas of one's life can greatly improve his overall quality of life and provide a challenging way to build mental strength.

1.2. Quality of Life

Quality of life can be defined broadly as how an individual counts the worth of several aspects of his/her life. These evaluations consist of feelings toward life incidents, affective temperament, perceived life satisfaction, satisfaction with job and participation in interpersonal contacts (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). In the literature, quality of life is also defined as well-being. Nevertheless, several barriers exist to creating thick conceptions of the quality of life and well-being literature. The first is to clarify the terms it refers to (Clarke, Marshall, Ryff, & Rosenthal, 2000; Farquhar, 1995). Prior research showed that DMT (Dance Movement Therapy) improved the quality of life in participants with cancer, Parkinsons'

disease, and chronic heart failure. The research question of this study was: To what extent can Dance Movement Therapy improve the quality of life in those stressed, particularly when the TG (therapy group) has been compared to the WG (a waiting-list control group) who had not been treated (Bräuninger, 2012).

1.3. Perceived Stress

Perceived stress refers to the degree to which situations are appraised as stressful, highlighting the subjective experience of feeling overwhelmed or unable to cope with demands (Cohen et al., 1983). It has been established that dance aerobics exercise leads to very low perceived stress, clinical parameters, and EMG biofeedback activity among physiotherapy students (Padia, 2017).

1.4. Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being refers to an individual's overall mental health, including emotional, cognitive, and social functioning. It encompasses managing stress, maintaining positive relationships, and experiencing a sense of purpose and life satisfaction. Ryff (1989) defines psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct, including autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. The analyses showed that the participants offered high levels of their basic psychological needs, with Purpose Relatedness being the highest. Positive well-being was also appreciated, and stress was nearly non-existent, with a small percentage of fatigue. Further, the results of correlation analysis proved that positive well-being was directly linked with satisfaction with the three fundamental needs. The two scales did not differ in gender; that means both male and female subjects had similar scores. The comparison was also made between the young and old groups (61 and above) regarding positive well-being, fatigue and relatedness. Therefore, in recreational dance activity, it may be useful to measure the level of fulfilment of the basic psychological needs concerning the factors of the best psychological health (Goulimaris et al., 2014).

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Aim

The study intends to investigate whether dancers and non-dancers vary in terms of psychological well-being, quality of life, and perceived stress.

2.2. Objectives

1. To investigate the differences in psychological well-being between dancers and non-dancers with regards to dance experience and practice frequency
2. To investigate the differences in quality of life between dancers and non-dancers with regards to dance experience and practice frequency
3. To investigate the differences in perceived stress levels of dancers and non-dancers with regards to dance experience and practice frequency

2.3. Hypothesis

H1= There is a difference between the non-dancers and dancers with 4 years and above experience with respect to the dependent variable Psychological well-being

H2= There is a difference between the non-dancers and dancers with 4 years and above experience with respect to the dependent variable, Perceived stress

H3= There is a difference between the non-dancers and dancers with 4 years and above experience with respect to the dependent variable Quality of life

H4= There is a difference in frequency of dancing (weekly, occasionally, and never) with respect to the dependent variable psychological well-being

H5= There is a difference in frequency of dancing (weekly, occasionally, and never) with respect to the dependent variable perceived stress

H6= There is a difference in frequency of dancing (weekly, occasionally, and never) with respect to the dependent variable quality of life

2.4. Sample Size and Technique

A convenient sample technique was employed to collect 72 individuals, including non-dancers (N=27) and dancers (N=45). The present study employed a convenient sampling technique.

2.5. Instrumentation

1. Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff, Almeida et al., 2010): This scale comprises 18 items measuring psychological well-being on a Likert scale of 1 to 7, with 1 = Strongly Agree and 7 = Strongly Disagree. Reverse scoring is utilised for certain responses. This scale showed satisfactory levels of internal consistency, with the reliability coefficients varying between 0.86 and 0.93
2. Quality of life scale (Burckhardt & Anderson, 2003): This scale comprises 16 items, including an additional item on "Independence, doing for yourself", added after a qualitative study. The responses on the questionnaire are on a Likert scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being Terrible and

7 being Delighted. The total score is calculated by summing up all the responses to the items. Respondents are encouraged to fill out every item even if they are not engaging in the required behaviour. The Cronbach's alpha ranged values should be between 0.82 and 0.92 for most of the tests considered to have high internal reliability.

3. The perceived stress scale (Cohen, 1983) comprises 10 items. The responses on the questionnaire are on a Likert scale of 0 to 4, with 0 being Never and 4 being Very often. Reverse scoring is present for items on the scale, namely items 4, 5,7, and 8. This scale helps the researchers understand how different situations affect the feelings and perceived stress of the respondents. A higher score on the scale indicates a higher level of stress. The Cronbach's alpha values range between 0.74 and 0.91 for the population under research and the language used to complete the study.

2.6. Data collection procedure

A survey was created and circulated via Google Forms, and responses were collected from dancers and non-dancers to assess the difference in Psychological well-being, perceived stress and quality of life.

2.7. Ethical considerations

Informed consent was sought from the participants before data was collected. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research. The participants were given detailed instructions and information regarding the survey.

2.8. Statistical analysis

The study employed t-tests and ANOVA to examine the mean differences between dancers and non-dancers in psychological well-being, quality of life, and perceived stress. DataTab software was utilised to conduct the analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings of the study are as follows:

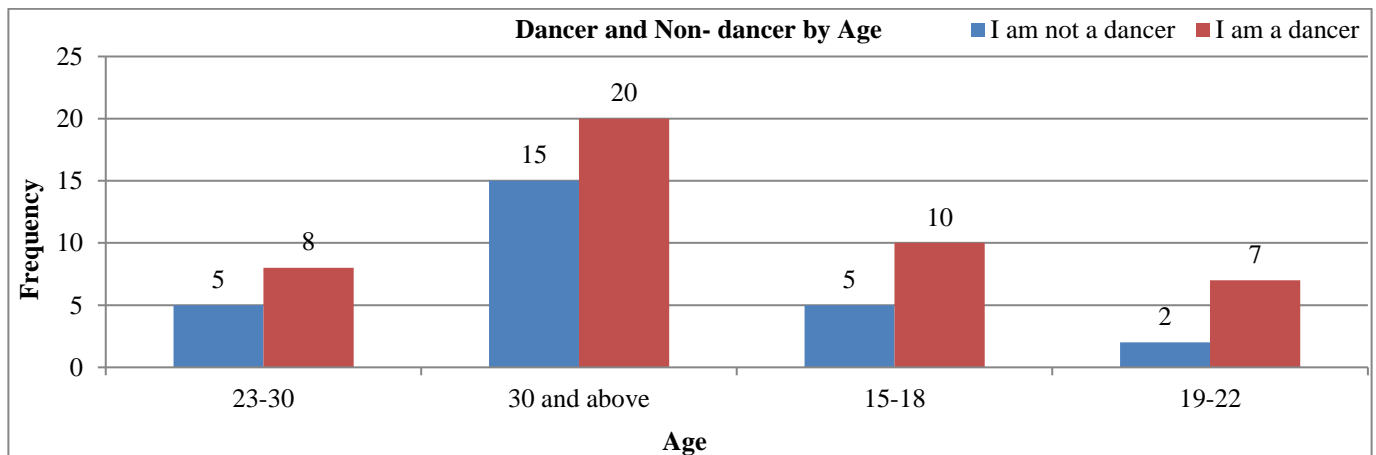


Fig. 1 Shows the ages of dancers and non-dancers

The above figure represents how the selected participants were distributed regarding their age or dancing ability. Out of the total dancers (N=45), 34 respondents are Indian classical dancers, whereas 11 respondents practice other dance forms. A teal bar depicts the non-dancers, and a red bar represents the dancers. The 23-30 age group comprises 5 non-dancers alongside 8 dancers. The 30+ age category recorded a high response for both the groups in the study, where 15 of the non-dancers and 20 of the dancers belonged to this age bracket and were the most dominant age category in the sample. In the age group of 15-18 years, there are only 5 non-dancers and 10 dancers. The same is the case with group 4, including students 19-22 years old out of them, only 2 students are not dancers, whereas 7 students are dancers. In conclusion, the most representation of participants exists in the group of people aged 30 and above, while the majority of people of each age group still refer to themselves as dancers rather than non-dancers.

dataset of postgraduates is displayed by a teal bar and the dataset of undergraduates by a red bar. Looking at the non-dancer participants in the study, only 10 are postgraduates, while 9 are undergraduates, putting the two groups practically on par. Still, preferences differ among people who responded that they are Dancers: 18 got the postgraduate degree, and 13 students are undergraduates. This hints that the Dancer population is larger than the non-dancer population among the population in both the education category, especially the postgraduate group.

Figure 2 compares postgraduate and undergraduate students whose participants are dancers or non-dancers. The

Figure 3 shows a pie chart showing participants 'main motives for dancing or, in a few cases, for not dancing. The biggest share (33.4) of the respondents fall in the category labelled "Not a dancer." The dancers who are motivated the most reported 'Artistic expression '(26.3%) and 'Fitness '(15.8%). Other reasons are 'Social interaction '(12.3%) and dancing being their career 'Profession. '(12.3%). Respondents also chose passion, interest, happiness, and more. However, due to the lack of responses, this figure has not recorded them.

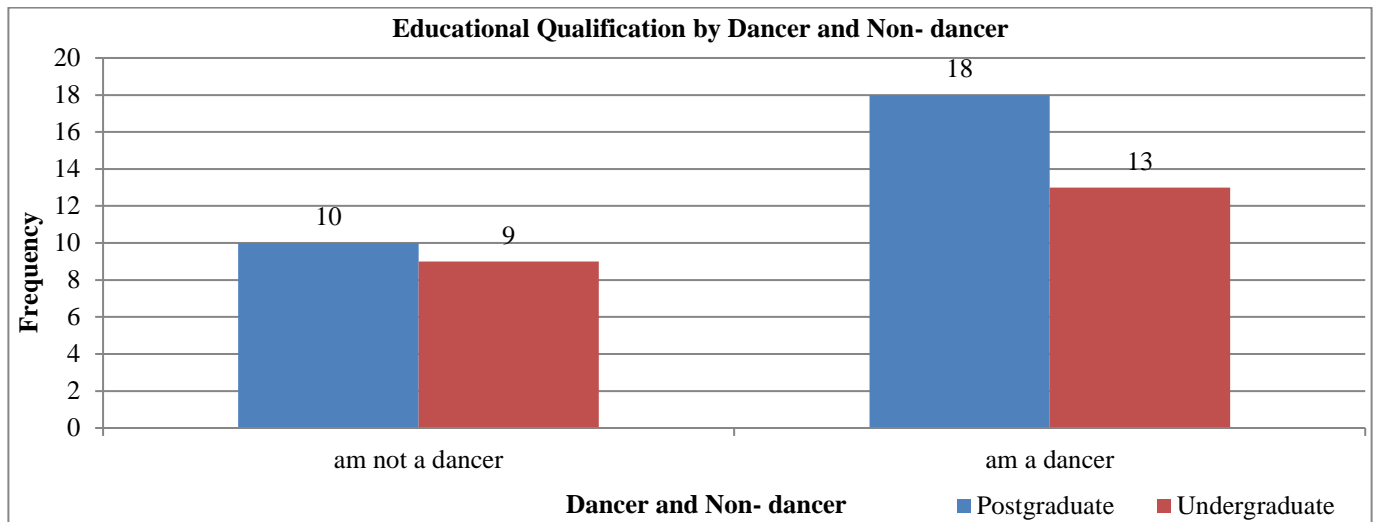


Fig. 2 Shows the educational qualifications of dancers and non-dancers

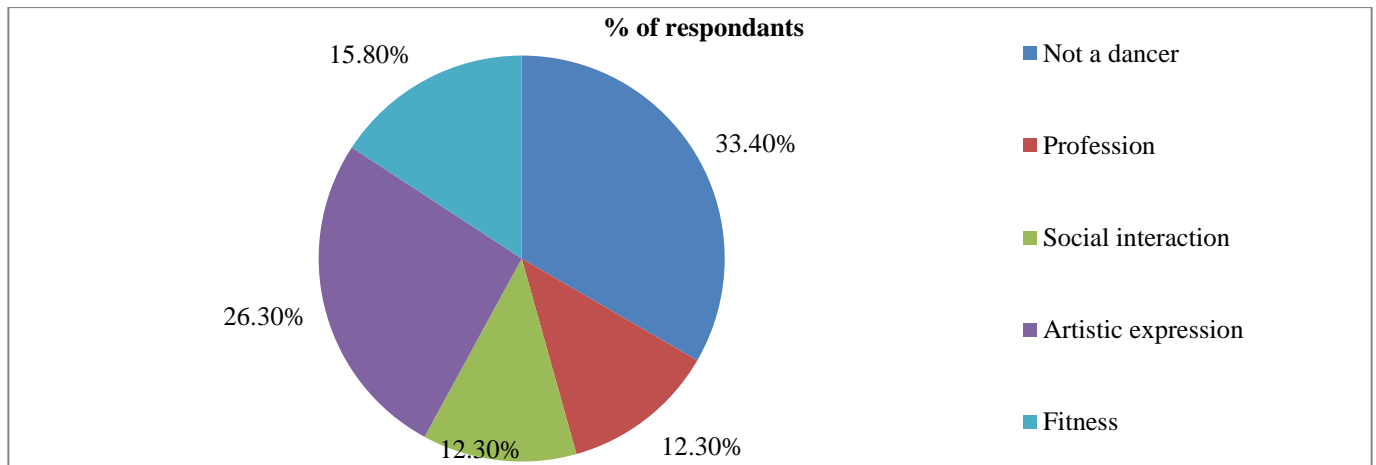


Fig. 3 Shows the motivation to dance among respondents

Figure 4 illustrates a bar graph representing the overall health among all participants, categorised into four levels: The quality can be categorised as Poor, Fair, Good and Excellent. The most commonly reported psychological well-being was “Good” (56.9%), while the rest reported their psychological well-being as “Excellent” (36.1%). A similar number claimed to have a “Fair” well-being (5.6%), while the lowest percentage marked their well-being as “Poor” (1.4%).

Table 1 shows the mean and Standard Deviation for different age groups of respondents on the psychological well-being scale. The mean for “I don’t dance” is M=90, and “4 years and above” is M=96.86. The present study also included Indian classical dance and other dance forms under dancers. However, they are not considered due to the very small number of respondents in that age bracket. There is a significant mean difference in psychological well-being with $t=-2.47, p< 0.05$. Findings show that dancers with 4 years of experience and above exhibit higher mean scores on psychological well-being (M= 96.86, SD=13.05) than non-

dancers (M=90, SD=7.05). Cohen’s d value was 0.63, which represents a medium effect size. The H1, which states that there is a significant difference in psychological well-being between non-dancers and those who have been dancing for 4 years and above, is thus accepted.

Table 2 shows the mean and Standard Deviation for different age groups of respondents on the psychological well-being scale. The mean for “I don’t dance” is M=19.89, and “I don’t dance” is M=17.75. The present study also included Indian classical dance and other dance forms under dancers. However, they are not considered due to the very small number of respondents in that age bracket. There is no significant mean difference in perceived stress with $t=1.4, p> 0.05$. Findings show that dancers with experience for 4 years and above exhibit higher mean scores on perceived stress (M= 96.86, SD=13.05) than non-dancers (M=17.75, SD=6.63). Cohen’s d value was 0.36, which represents a small effect size. The H2, which states a significant difference in perceived stress scores between non-dancers and those dancing for 4 years above, is thus rejected.

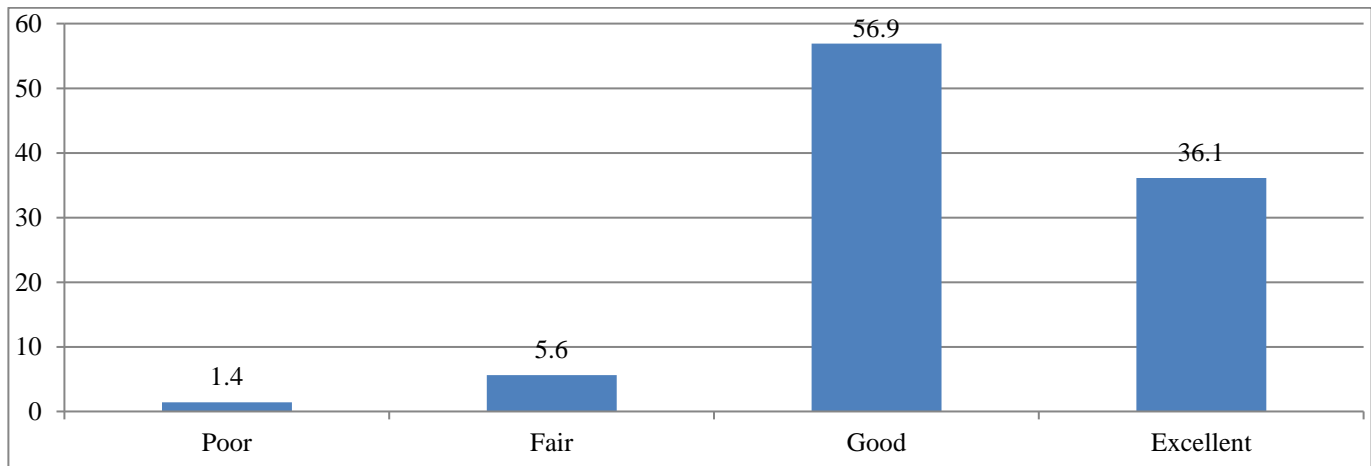


Fig. 4 Shows the overall health ratings of all respondents

Table 1. Shows the t-test values for psychological well-being and years of practice

| | | n | M | S.D | t | p | Cohen’s d |
|--------------------------|-------------------|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Psychological-well being | I don’t dance | 27 | 90 | 7.05 | -2.47 | 0.016 | 0.63 |
| | 4 years and above | 36 | 96.86 | 13.05 | | | |

Table 2. Shows t-test values for Perceived Stress and years of practice

| | | n | M | S.D | t | p | Cohen’s d |
|------------------------|-------------------|----|-------|------|-----|-------|-----------|
| Perceived stress score | I don’t dance | 27 | 19.89 | 5.03 | 1.4 | 0.166 | 0.36 |
| | 4 years and above | 36 | 17.75 | 6.63 | | | |

Table 3. Shows the t-test values for Quality of life and years of practice

| | | n | M | S.D | t | p | Cohen’s d |
|-----------------------|-------------------|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Quality of Life scale | I don’t dance | 27 | 84.3 | 19.05 | -2.32 | 0.024 | 0.59 |
| | 4 years and above | 36 | 93.75 | 13.3 | | | |

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviations for respondents of different age groups on the psychological well-being scale. The mean for “I don’t dance” is $M= 84.3$, and “4 years and above” is $M=93.75$. The present study also included Indian classical dance and other dance forms under dancers. However, they are not considered due to the very small number of respondents in that age bracket. There is a significant mean difference in quality of life with $t=-2.32$, $p < 0.05$. Findings show that dancers with experience for 4 years and above exhibit higher mean scores on quality of life ($M= 93.75$, $SD=13.3$) than non-dancers ($M=17.75$, $SD=6.63$). Cohen’s d value was 0.36, which represents a small effect size. The $H3$, which states a significant difference in quality of life between non-dancers and those who have been dancing for 4 years above, is thus accepted.

Table 4 shows respondents’ mean and Standard Deviation for different frequency of dancing on the psychological well-being scale. The mean for non-dancers is $M=89.92$, occasionally is $M=92.94$, and weekly is $M=93.87$. The present study also included monthly and daily, but they were not considered due to the very small number of respondents in that age bracket. It shows the one-way ANOVA results for frequency of dance and psychological well-being. The p -value came out to be 0.424 ($p > 0.05$). Hence, there are no significant mean differences. Furthermore, the η^2 value is 0.03, which indicates a small effect size. Therefore, $H4$, which states that there is a difference in frequency of dancing (weekly, occasionally, and never) with respect to the dependent variable psychological well-being, is thus rejected.

Table 5 shows respondents’ mean and Standard Deviation for different frequency of dancing on the psychological well-being scale. The mean for non-dancers is $M=20.13$, occasionally is $M=19.44$, and weekly is $M=17.52$.

The present study also included monthly and daily, but they were not considered due to the very small number of respondents in that age bracket. It shows the one way ANOVA results for frequency of dance and perceived stress. The p -value came out to be 0.232 ($p > 0.05$). Hence, there are no significant mean differences. Furthermore, the η^2 value is 0.05, which indicates a small effect size. Therefore, $H5$, which states a significant difference in the frequency of dancing (weekly, occasionally, and never) with respect to the dependent variable perceived stress, is rejected.

Table 6 shows the mean and Standard Deviation for different frequencies of dancing of respondents on the quality of life scale. The mean for non-dancers is $M=82.96$, occasionally is $M=90.78$, and weekly is $M=94$. The present study also included monthly and daily, but they were not considered due to the very small number of respondents in that age bracket. It shows the one way ANOVA results for frequency of dance and quality of life. The p -value came out to be 0.063 ($p > 0.05$). Hence, there are no significant mean differences. Furthermore, the η^2 value is 0.09, which indicates a medium effect size. Therefore, $H6$, which states that there is a difference in frequency of dancing (weekly, occasionally, and never) with respect to the dependent variable quality of life, is thus rejected. The present study examined whether dancers and non-dancers vary in terms of psychological well-being, quality of life, and perceived stress.

For this purpose, statistical analysis of t -test and ANOVA was employed to study the differences between groups. In the present study, bar graphs and pie charts were also utilised to show the differences between dancers and non-dancers in terms of age (Figure 1), educational qualification (Figure 2), motivation to dance (Figure 3), and overall health rating (Figure 4).

Table 4. Shows the one way ANOVA for psychological well being and the frequency

| | n | Mean | S.D | F | p | η^2 |
|----------------------|----|-------|-------|------|-------|----------|
| Never (Non- dancers) | 24 | 89.92 | 7.1 | 0.87 | 0.424 | 0.03 |
| Occasionally | 18 | 92.94 | 12.3 | | | |
| Weekly | 23 | 93.87 | 12.35 | | | |
| Total | 65 | 92.15 | 10.67 | | | |

Table 5. Shows the one way ANOVA for perceived stress and the frequency

| | n | Mean | S.D | F | p | η^2 |
|----------------------|----|-------|------|-----|-------|----------|
| Never (Non- dancers) | 24 | 20.13 | 5.22 | 1.5 | 0.232 | 0.05 |
| Occasionally | 18 | 19.44 | 5.43 | | | |
| Weekly | 23 | 17.52 | 5.3 | | | |
| Total | 65 | 19.02 | 5.35 | | | |

Table 6. shows the one way ANOVA for quality of life and the frequency

| | n | Mean | S.D | F | p | η^2 |
|----------------------|----|-------|-------|-----|-------|----------|
| Never (Non- dancers) | 24 | 82.96 | 19.76 | 2.9 | 0.063 | 0.09 |
| Occasionally | 18 | 90.78 | 17.17 | | | |
| Weekly | 23 | 94 | 9.86 | | | |
| Total | 65 | 89.03 | 16.6 | | | |

Findings from Table 1 reveal that there is a significant mean difference in psychological well-being and years of practice. Muro and Artero (2017) found that dance practitioners had higher mindfulness and life satisfaction scores. Dance had the strongest association with life satisfaction controlling for age, accounting for 28% of the variance in life satisfaction; this indicates that dance may be an effective gender focused practice to improve young women's well-being and mental health. Laird et al. (2021) demonstrate that mindfulness and life satisfaction were significantly higher in the conscious dancers with the practice of 5 years and above than in the less practiced dancers. The participants who had practiced for longer periods or had increased frequency reported higher psychological well-being.

The present study's results from Table 2 revealed no significant mean difference in perceived stress and years of practising dance. Whereas, findings from Table 3 reveal that there is a significant mean difference in quality of life and years of practice. Kathak dancers demonstrated significantly less depression compared to the control group. Low physical activity was significantly associated with depressive and anxiety symptoms in the non-dancers in general, particularly for those with higher perceived stress; the odds ratio was 4:1 and 6:1, respectively. Kathak can be further refined to be a highly potent psychotherapeutic intervention plan that holds the potential to prevent the development of depression and generalised anxiety disorder (Kulshreshtha et al., 2023).

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the stress factors of female dancers by surveying the female dancers as regular workers and non-regular workers of professional dance groups. Hence, this study aims to identify challenges women dancers encounter in their dancing activities and differences in stressors based on regular and non-regular employees. Therefore, the stress factors based on the work type of the female professional dancers revealed a significant difference in the psychological, social, physical, and environmental factors and demographic characteristics. The stress factors by work type in the regular and non-regular groups were analysed. Self-rated health did not change with age and experience; the result showed that education, income levels, marital status and having children had a partial impact (Lee et al., 2022). DeJesus Bm (2021) states that their studies, which involved the assessment of the improvement of participants 'quality of life after four years of dance practice, prove that dance practice is an activity that involves the disabled socio-culturally.

Findings from Table 4 suggest no significant mean differences in psychological well-being and frequency of dance. Muro & Artero (2016) found that there are significantly higher levels of both mindfulness and life satisfaction among dance practitioners; moreover, the multiple analyses revealed that, having accounted for age,

Dance was the most influential variable of Life Satisfaction, accounting for 28% of the variance in LS. In light of the embodiment theory, these results are explained, and their conclusions imply that dance could be a potent gendered intervention to improve young women's subjective quality of life and mental health. Findings from Table 5 suggest no significant mean differences in the frequency of dance and perceived stress. West et al. (2004) illustrate that African dance and Hatha yoga decreased perceived stress and negative affect meaning. Cortisol was elevated in the African dance and was reduced in Hatha yoga. The consequences are that even if these interventions result in similar positive psychological change, the change may be dramatically different with respect to physiological stress processes. There may be one that has more physiological arousal as an important concern of clients or customers.

Findings from Table 6 suggest that there are no significant mean differences in frequency of dance and quality of life. A search identified 885 papers, and among them, 16 of the papers were selected for the current analysis. Several dance forms impact the functional activities and quality of life, and these were compared. Ten out of the thirteen researches established that dance intervention benefitted physical function, balance, postural control, and health-related quality of life. Dance intervention did better on the level of adherence compared to physiotherapy, self-care, conventional therapy and aerobic and resistance exercise. This study is relevant in the following way: With reference to enhancing physical function and quality of life, structured dance should be regarded as a safe and moderately potent form of exercise. Identify the manner in which the choice of movements is made and the degree of effort in the dance interventions. Dance with music may enhance participants' engagement and promote more physical activity among middle-aged and older adults (Lu et al., 2024).

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, dance is a versatile art form that is important to people's cultural, emotional, and psychological lives. The anthropology of writing recognises writing as a way of telling stories and passing on cultural and cultural information across languages beyond time and space. Not only do dance exercises affect physical fitness, flexible muscles, bone strength, and cardiovascular fitness, but they are also a form of therapy to vent a stressful heart. This enhances psychological well-being in several ways, such as tapping positive self-esteem. It helps develop some form of social relations and improves mental clarity. As a fully coordinated movement that is musical in pattern and symbolic in character, the art of dance cannot be overemphasised in the promotion of quality life since it is a proven activity for improving the health and well-being of the individual. Growing research reveals that dance encompasses more than scientific gestures but contacts with the core existential spheres.

This work aims to discuss the results of empirical research comparing the groups of dancers and non-dancers in terms of psychological well-being, quality of life, and perceived stress. Preliminarily, comparing dancers and non-dancers was done using a convenient sample of 72 participants, including 45 experienced dancers and 27 non-dancers with less than 4 years of practising dancing. Quantitative cross-sectional survey research is used in the study, which comprises the Ryff Psychological Well-being Scale, Burckhardt & Anderson Quality of Life Scale, and the Perceived Stress Coombs Scale. Used Google Forms to get access to local data and uphold basic ethical concerns, such as informed consent and consideration of privacy. Data on descriptive results were analysed using T-tests or ANOVA by DataTab software to compare group means between control and treated groups.

The findings showed differences in both self-reported aspects of psychological health and quality of life based on years of dancing experience. Dance practitioners with relatively more years in dancing demonstrated considerably better psychological health status and improved quality of life than the less experienced dancers and even the non-dancer counterparts. The present research did not obtain results that suggest any variation in the level of psychological well-being, quality of life, or perceived stress (Table 3). Also, it was found that perceived stress does not vary with the years of dance practice.

4.1. Limitations

The present investigation is confined to comparing the dancers and non-dancers, ignoring the form of the dancers

they perform. As a result, the present study does not delve into the impact of other types of dances on the performers' psychological health and well-being of the performers. Further, the study also failed to include a variety of demographic measures that might impact psychological and physical health-related outcomes.

If attempted in regional or cross-cultural research, they would enrich the literature by providing a more detailed perspective on how various practices of dancing affect persons in various groups. Furthermore, the limited sample size is a major shortcoming of the present research. A greater sample size would ensure more generalizability.

4.2. Future Implications

This is why it is important to explore the paramount impact of dance not limited to an overall health perspective but also from a psychological one. Although previous research has defined several positive effects that can be attributed to different factors, there are directions for future research based on present drawbacks and including broader perspectives. Subsequent investigators may follow up on the effects of dance on health by studying the effects of distinct types of dance, such as Latin dance, ballroom or aerobic dance, different degrees of dancing intensity, and the extent of dancing in health. Further, others could correlate cross-sectional research to determine whether the effects of dance on psychological and physiological health may be moderated by gender. In addition, a target population of male practitioners of Indian dances who are not very often included in research could help future investigators explore their psychological and physiological health.

References

- [1] Iris Bräuninger, "The Efficacy of Dance Movement Therapy Group on Improvement of Quality of Life: A Randomized Controlled Trial," *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 296-303, 2012. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [2] Sheldon Cohen, Tom Kamarck, and Robin Mermelstein, "A Global Measure of Perceived Stress," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 385-396, 1983. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [3] Dhvani Shah, Dance as a Tool for Emotional Expression and Stress Management, Classcard, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.classcardapp.com/blog/dance-as-a-tool-for-emotional-expression-and-self-management#:~:text=Mindfulness&text=The%20repetitive%20and%20rhythmic%20nature,effectively%20in%20your%20daily%20life>
- [4] Dhvani Shah, Dance as a Tool for Emotional Expression and Stress Management, Classcard, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.classcardapp.com/blog/dance-as-a-tool-for-emotional-expression-and-self-management#:~:text=Mindfulness&text=The%20repetitive%20and%20rhythmic%20nature,effectively%20in%20your%20daily%20life>
- [5] Anna Muro, and Natàlia Artero Grad, "Dance Practice and Well-Being Correlates in Young Women," *Women & Health*, vol. 57, no. 10, pp. 1193-1203, 2017. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [6] B.M. DeJesus et al., "Incorporation of Dance Practice into The Lifestyle of People with Disabilities and Its Impact on Quality of Life Over Time," *Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation - International*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 1-8, 2021. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [7] Spiritual Significance of Indian Classical Dance, Liberalarts, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://liberalarts.dpu.edu.in/blogs/indian-classical-dance-spirituality>
- [8] Furtados School of Music, Benefits of Dance! How Dance Enhances Physical Fitness and Coordination in Students, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://furtadoschoolofmusic.com/blog/how-dance-enhances-physical-fitness-and-coordination-in-students/#:~:text=Benefits%20of%20Dance-,Cardiovascular%20Health,and%20promoting%20better%20blood%20circulation>
- [9] Dimitris Goulimaris et al., "Relationships Between Basic Psychological Needs and Psychological Well-Being in Recreational Dance Activities," *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 277-284, 2014. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]

- [10] Charanya Gurusathya, "Dance as A Catalyst for Stress Busting," *Central European Journal of Sport Sciences and Medicine*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 15-29, 2019. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [11] Lena Hamnergren, "Review of Choreography and Narrative: Ballet's Staging of Story and Desire; Gendering Bodies/Performing Art: Dance and Literature in Early Twentieth-Century British Culture," *The University of Chicago Press*, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 1075-1077, 1998. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [12] Judith Lynne Hanna, *To Dance Is Human: A Theory of Nonverbal Communication*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-327, 1987. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [13] Pil Hansen, Caitlin Main, and Liza Hartling, "Dance Intervention Affects Social Connections and Body Appreciation Among Older Adults in The Long Term Despite COVID-19 Social Isolation: A Mixed Methods Pilot Study," *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 12, pp. 1-17, 2021. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [14] Dance - Health Benefits, Betterhealth, 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/dance-health-benefits>
- [15] Herança - History, Heritage and Culture Journal, Revistaheranca, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://revistaheranca.com/index.php/heranca>
- [16] Carol S. Burakhardt, Instructions For Scoring the Quality of Life Scale, pp. 1-2, 1989. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [17] Mark L. Knapp, and Judith A. Hall, *Instructor'S Resource Manual: Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction*, 8th ed., University of Texas, Austin, pp. 1-27, 2024. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [18] Sabine C. Koch, Katharina Morlinghaus, and Thomas Fuchs, "The Joy Dance: Specific Effects of a Single Dance Intervention on Psychiatric Patients with Depression," *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, vol. 34, no. 4, pp. 340-349, 2007. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [19] Monika Kulshreshtha et al., "Self-Reported Perceived Stress, Depression, and Generalized Anxiety Disorder Among Kathak Dancers and Physically Active Non-Dancers of North India," *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 14, pp. 1-7, 2023. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [20] Laia Jorba-Galdos, "Creativity and Dissociation: Dance/Movement Therapy Interventions for the Treatment of Compartmentalized Dissociation," *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, vol. 41, no. 5, pp. 467-477, 2014. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [21] Kelsey T. Laird et al., "Conscious Dance: Perceived Benefits and Psychological Well-Being of Participants," *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice*, vol. 44, 2021. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [22] Ju-Ae Lee, Seung-Hye Jung, and Byung-Ju Ahn, "Analysis of Stress Factors by Female Dancer Characteristics," *Korean Journal of Sports Science*, vol. 31, no. 4, pp. 659-677, 2022. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [23] Darginidou Lemonia, Dimitrios Goulimaris, and Mavridis Georgios, "Social Skills and Prediction of the Quality of Life of Adolescents: The Case of Dance and Physical Activities," *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, vol. 17, no. s2, pp. 502-508, 2017. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [24] Jingting Lu, "The Effects of Dance Interventions on Physical Function and Quality of Life Among Middle-Aged and Older Adults: A Systematic Review," *Plos One*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 1-24, 2024. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [25] Indrani Margolin, "Bodyself: Linking Dance and Spirituality," *Dance, Movement & Spiritualities*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 143-162, 2014. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [26] William H. McNeill, *Keeping Together in Time: Dance and Drill in Human History*, Harvard University Press, pp. 1-216, 1997. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [27] Anna Muro, and Natàlia Artero Grad, "Dance Practice and Well-Being Correlates in Young Women," *Women & Health*, vol. 57, no. 10, pp. 1193-1203, 2016. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [28] Khayathi Padia, "Effect of Dance Aerobics on Perceived Stress in Physiotherapy Students," *World Journal of Pharmaceutical Research*, vol. 6, no. 8, pp. 2217-2227, 2017. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [29] Clara Pina, Communication & Expression - Staying Connected Through Dance, The Dance Ability Movement, 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://danceabilitymovement.com/communication-expression-staying-connected-through-dance/>
- [30] D. Carol Ryff, "Happiness Is Everything, Or Is It? Explorations on the Meaning of Psychological Well-Being," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 57, no. 6, pp. 1069-1081, 1989. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [31] State of New Hampshire Employee Assistance Program, Perceived Stress Scale, 1983. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [32] Paraskevi Theofilou, "Quality of Life: Definition and Measurement," *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 150-162, 2013. [[CrossRef](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [33] Kapila Vatsyayan, *Classical Indian Dance: In Literature and the Arts*, DK Printworld, 2022. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]
- [34] Vivekananda Kendra, *Vivekananda Kendra Patrika: Theme: Dances of India*, Vivekananda Kendra Prakashan, pp. 1-148, 1981. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Publisher Link](#)]