

Project on

‘CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH DANCE AND DANCERS’

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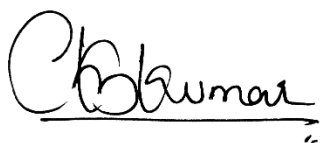


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CERTIFICATE

Certified that this is a confide record of final year project on
“**CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH DANCE AND DANCERS**” Submitted by Athira ks(SB19BHA018) And submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of award of B.A Bharatanatyam this college.



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INTRODUCTION

Here im taking discussing about topic challenges associated with dance and dancers.

Now days dancers are facing more crisis related to financialy,sexual abuse, disrespect, low oppurtunities , discrimination,religion,caste,low motivation,low job opportunities,misbehave towards dancers ,caste discrimination,rejection,manipulation,career,impact relatedbody,action,space,time,energy,comparison and low selfesteem,body image issues,, financial security misbehave towards dance, discrimination in competition sector these are the some of crisis related to dance and dancers in society.

Problems in defining dance

Self-expressing physical release may thus be seen as the two basic motives for dance. Dance itself, however, takes a wide variety of forms, from simple spontaneous activity to formalized art or from a social gathering where everyone participates to a theatrical event with dancers performing before an audience.

Defining according to function

Within this broad spectrum of forms, dance fulfills a number of very different functions, including the religious, the military, and the social. Nearly all cultures have had, or still possess, dances that play an important part in religious ritual. There are dances in which the performers and even the spectators work themselves into a trance in order to transcend their ordinary selves and receive the powers of the gods or, as in the case of Indian temple dancers, in which the performers enact the stories of the gods as a way of worshiping them. In some early Christian communities, processions or formal dance patterns formed part of the prayer service.

It is possible to view modern military marches and drilling procedures as descendants of the tribal war and hunting dances that have also been integral to many cultures. War dances, often using weapons and fighting movements, were used throughout history as a way of training soldiers and preparing them emotionally and spiritually for battle. Many hunting tribes performed dances in which the hunters dressed in animal skins and imitated the movements of their prey, thus acquiring the

skills of the animal in question and, through sympathetic magic, gaining power over it.

Dance also plays a number of important social roles in all cultures, notably in matters of celebration, courtship, recreation, and entertainment. Courtship dances, for example, allow the socially accepted physical contact between the sexes.

(The waltz, a relatively modern example of the courtship dance, was banned at certain times because its flagrant contact between the dancers was considered indecent.) Such traditional dances often contain fertility motifs, where mimed (or even actual) motions of sexual intercourse are enacted. One motif in particular, the fertility leap, in which the male dancer lifts the woman as high as he can, is common to many courtship dances, such as the Tyrolean Schuhplattler.

The importance of dance in courtship and social gatherings is probably older than its use as recreation and entertainment. Many scholars have suggested that dance was once an integral part of everyday life, accompanying both practical activities and religious rituals. Only when more complex social and economic structures began to emerge and a leisured class or caste came into existence did people begin to see dance as a source of pleasure, in some way distinct. As societies became more complex, many of the earlier ritual forms, such as religious, work, and hunting dances, gradually lost their original significance and developed into recreational folk dances while still retaining many of their original motifs, such as the use of sticks or swords in the English Morris dance or the pole in Maypole dances. All kinds of dance in all stages of evolution, however, have retained

some importance as means of social cohesion. Dance has also been used as a means of displaying political or social strength and identity. In ancient Greece, for example, citizens were compelled to attend dance dramas partly in order to encourage allegiance to the city-state. An example in the 19th century was Hungary's purposeful revival of its national dances in order to promote a strong sense of national identity.

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES RELATED TO DANCE AND DANCERS

- **LOW MOTIVATION**
- **MISBEHAVE**
- **FINANCIAL CRISIS**
- **BODY IMAGE ISSUES**
- **COMPARISON AND SELF ESTEEM**
- **ABUSE**
- **CAREER**
- **LOW OPPURTUNITIES**
- **IN EQUALITY**
- **REJECTION**
- **STRUGGLE**
- **MANIPULATION IN COMPETION**
- **CASTE DISCRIMINATION**
- **DISSAPOINTMENT**
- **STRUGGLE IN LIFE**
- **IMPACT RELATEDBODY**
,ACTION,SPACE,TIME,ENERGY.
- **DANCE INJURIES**

MERITS OF DANCE

Dancing provides many great benefits and, while it's not possible to list them all, some of the greater benefits are listed below:

1. Dancing allows one to express oneself.
2. A sense of community is found within the dance.
3. Dancing provides physical/mental refreshment and relaxation.
4. Laughter and fun-Dancing can provide a lot of entertainment.
5. Dancing is a form of exercise.
6. Dancers find inspiration and motivation as they become lost in the dance.
7. Dancing allows professional dancers to form affiliations.

People Can Dance Almost Anywhere, Anytime.

People dance in many places—at nightclubs and studios, at weddings and on the street. They dance at home and, sometimes, at the workplace. Some even try to dance in their vehicles, though it isn't something that would be recommended

Sense of Community

People come together through dance. It provides entertainment for people of all ages, races, and backgrounds.

They enjoy time spent together in a positive, upbeat environment. They are energized and inspired by other dancers in their midst.

The more adventurous dancers may try to emulate the moves of others, which provides another sense of entertainment and draws people together.

Strangers have the potential to become friends, while families and friends bond more closely because of the positive experiences they've shared on the dance floor.

3. Source of Relaxation

Dancing helps bodies and minds relax as the music and surroundings take people away from their anxiety and frustration for a while. Mentally, they unwind and have fun, sharing a laugh or two. As their minds relax, their bodies follow. Their muscles loosen up and tension and stress melt away.

5. Exercise and Conditioning

Dancing is a great form of aerobic exercise since it works many muscles in the body. Muscles become stas bodies feel the benefit of a workout during the cool-down period, it's a good practice to have a few moments to rest after dancing, especially if it was a fast dance.

Between dances, stretch out leg and arm muscles or, at the very least, sit in a chair and totally relax while rolling the neck slowly around, and then in a slow back and forth motion to release tension which may have built up in the back of the neck.

A great benefit of exercise is that afterward, there is often an improvement in a person's disposition, so it's a win-win situation all the way around.

retched, conditioned, and toned while the heart rate increases, pumping blood at a faster rate.

Dance and health

Dance is a healthy physical activity, with many far reaching physical, and psychological benefits. Dancing can be enjoyed in many forms, and is for every age and ability. This physical activity appeals to some who may not typically be active and therefore may be another alternative of exercise. Dance for health has become an important factor in the prevention, treatment and management in several health circumstances. It can benefit both physical and mental health and subsidizes social communication Dance is an art which is learned in and shared between

many cultures. Types of dance can entail body movements, expression and collaboration. The correlation between **dance and health** has been subject of a number of research studies that show dance to be a largely healthy exercise. However, there are a number of health risks that require attention.

Physical health and fitness

Dancing can be a way to stay fit for people of all ages, shapes and sizes, having a wide range of physical, and mental benefits including improved condition of the heart and lungs, increased muscular strength, endurance and motor fitness, increased aerobic fitness, improved muscle tone and strength, weight management, stronger bones and reduced risk of osteoporosis, better coordination, agility and flexibility, improved balance and spatial awareness, increased physical confidence, improved mental functioning, improved general and psychological well being, greater self-confidence and self-esteem, and better social skills. Most forms of dance may be considered aerobic exercise and as such can also reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, help weight control, stress reduction, and bring about other benefits commonly associated with physical fitness. In addition, studies have demonstrated a considerable correlation between dancing and psychological well-being. A large amount of governmental, health, and educational information is available extolling the benefits of dance for health.

Benefits of cultural dance

Physical activity has many physical and mental health outcomes; however, physical inactivity continues to be common. Dance, specifically cultural dance, is a type of physical activity that may appeal to some who are not otherwise active and can be a form of activity that is more acceptable than others in certain cultures.

A 2008 report by Professor Tim Watson and Dr Andrew Garrett of the University of Hertfordshire compared members of the Royal Ballet with a squad of British national and international swimmers. The dancers scored higher than the swimmers in seven out of ten areas of fitness.

For those with hypercholesterolaemia, dancing - in conjunction with diet and medication such as statins - can provide positive health benefits. As an aerobic exercise abridged levels of total blood cholesterol, especially in LDL cholesterol, acknowledged as bad and helps boost levels of HDL or good cholesterol. Dancing in general increases muscle strength and flexibility, which in turn, improves overall range of motion. Dance also increases core strength which can improve balance, coordination, and posture (which can, in turn, reduce mechanical back pain).

Dance therapy is suggested for patients today as treatment for emotional and therapeutic support, as dance allows individuals to connect with their inner-self.

Injuries

Many dance movements, and particularly ballet techniques, such as the turnout of the hips and rising on the toes (en pointe), test the limits of the range of movement of the human body. Dance movements can place stress on the body when not performed correctly; even if perfect form is used, over-repetition can cause repetitive strain injury. The most common injuries for ballet dancers is snapping hip syndrome and foot and ankle injuries. Foot and ankle injuries are vulnerable to a wide range of injuries including, stress fractures, tendon injuries, sprains and strains. Much of this is due to not only the emphasis of footwork in dance but also the foot wear. Dancers either wear pointe shoes, bare feet, a soft shoe of some kind or heels, all of which offer no support. Shoulder injuries can be common in male dancers due to lifting, partnering and floor work that is commonly seen in modern dance. The periscapular muscles assist in keeping the shoulder still and steady, these muscles are at greater risk for injuries among dancers.

Examined in the *Journal of Dance Medicine and Science*, dancers often put off consultation from doctors or physical therapists in the effort to stay employed by a dance company or to stay in rehearsals. When in fact those dancers that "work through" their pain more often than not end up worsening their symptoms and prolonging their recovery. Eighty percent of professional dancers will be injured in some way during their careers; 50 percent of dancers from large ballet companies and 40 percent from small companies will miss performances due to injury.

Overwork and poor occupational health and safety conditions, a (non-sprung) hard floor, a cold studio or theater, or dancing without sufficient warm up also increases risk of injury. To minimize injury, dance training emphasizes strength building and forming appropriate habits. Choreographers and dance instructors will often put certain demands on their students and dancers without taking into consideration that each dancer is faced with different anatomical limitations. Dancers will strive to achieve the ideal aesthetic in their respective dance technique by over compensating for their limitations and thus presenting themselves with a higher risk for injury. Damage may also result from having a student perform movements for which they are not prepared, care must be taken that the student is not "pushed" inappropriately.

A dancer put en pointe at an age where his or her bones have not completely ossified may develop permanent damage; even past the point of ossification, ankle injuries can result if a dancer goes en pointe without sufficient strength. According to a study conducted by Rachele Quested and Anna Brodrick, the lower extremities are the most vulnerable to injury. The most common injury is to the ankle, then leg, foot, knee, hip and finally the thigh. Dancers are trained from a very young age to avoid injury by using plie, turn out, and other means to protect their bodies.

Avoid injuries

Keeping dancers free of injury is a crucial aspect and will help a lifetime of healthy physical activity and can prevent injuries in the future. By being taught a few simple techniques by parents, teachers, and medical professionals can avert injuries from occurring. Following are a few advice's on preventing injuries. Wearing properly fitting clothing and shoes, drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated, don't dance through pain, rest and then start back up again and listen to your teachers for correct technique. For social dance the use of a sprung floor is highly recommended. Because a dance injury can ruin a career professional dancers are increasingly refusing to dance on anything else. In ballet, good pliés (bending the knees) on landing helps protect against knee injuries and shin splints. Many types of dance, especially folk dances, have hops in the steps where the impact of landing can be reduced by slightly bending the knee. Warming up and cooling down exercises are recommended before and after exercises to avoid strain, muscle pains, and possible injury. Conditioning is a good way to prevent dance injuries.

Low motivation

What do you do with an unmotivated student?

Ignore them and hope they'll go away?

Scream or threaten until you're blue in the face?

Let's face it. These students have a way of either zapping or absorbing much of your time and spirit. It can be hard to want to pour more of yourself into inspiring these lackluster learners. But, as a teacher, you

feel compelled to instill a passion for dance. So, how can you motivate students in a way that won't deplete your energy reserves?

1. Build Confidence

Frequently, when kids start refusing or resisting something it is because they believe or are afraid they can't do it (no matter what kind of attitude or brave face they put on). Do your best not to skip over essential building blocks in technique, performance, and artistry and don't hesitate to take a step or two backward if necessary. Taking things apart or breaking them down into parts allows students to put the puzzle together one piece at a time, slowly building their confidence through things they *can* do.

2. Just Ask

Sometimes just changing your approach to students can make a difference. Try asking, in a genuine manner, what you can do to make class better for them – “I've noticed you don't seem to like barre very much. Is there something I can do that will make it more fun?” Their ideas may surprise you! Maybe they'd like more upbeat music, maybe they get tired of doing the same exercises all the time, maybe they get frustrated with too many corrections. Consider also offering choices: “Would you like to do pirouettes or jumps today?” Be willing to compromise and open the lines of communication in a non-threatening and inclusive way.

.Generally if a student is in your class they like *something* about dance! Make an attempt to discover what that one thing is. This may or may not be directly dance-related. Perhaps it is a portion of class, maybe it is the thrill of performing, it might even be socializing with friends.

- If there is a portion of class the student enjoys, give him/her positive attention and feedback, especially during this part of class.

- If the enjoyment does not come directly from movement, try to remind yourself that not everyone will feel as *you* do about dance, and then find ways to allow your student(s) to enjoy the aspects of dance they are most fond of.
 - For instance, if it is socializing they want, make it a point to encourage socializing *outside* of class if possible (dance studio slumber parties, pizza parties when students earn enough points for behavior in class, etc.)
 - Or, occasionally *in class* (quiz days where the students can work together on a vocabulary game, 5 minutes to socialize at the end of a productive class, etc.).

Be Crystal Clear

Be clear when giving instructions and be explicit and firm about what you expect from students. Let students know exactly what you are looking for and/or why you are doing certain exercises. If you expect them to get through a class without leaning lazily on the barre then say so when you set your ground rules. If you expect them to work hard for the 60 – 90 minutes they are in class, discuss the rewards for doing so.

Be dependable so that students know what to expect from *you*. If they are not meeting your expectations, be consistent about not letting them compete, or perform, or remain in class for the day. If you are not sure you have the power as a teacher to enforce these things, talk it over with the studio owner.

Encourage Critical Thinking

Instead of presenting students with conclusions and then offering examples to back it up, try presenting the examples first and let your students draw their own conclusions. “We have a dress code which requires you to wear a leotard, tights, and proper shoes. Why do you think we ask you to adhere to this code?” Or, “I know practicing the same exercises each week can seem boring. Why do you think we do

it?” This engages students and allows them to feel like a participant rather than one who is being lectured. As a bonus, this encourages analysis and synthesis skills.

Make Class Sensational

Dance may seem like it is already a very sensory activity, however, watching videos, looking at diagrams of important bone and muscles, manipulating objects that increase students’ understanding of certain concepts or images, using touch or auditory cues these things make the class interesting and can ignite curiosity and a desire to learn.

Emphasize Mastery of Skills

Designing a method or methods of assessing skills helps students to set goals for improvement. When these goals are focused on clear levels of mastery, students feel less personal risk throughout the learning process. Their self-worth is at stake when their sole measurement is based upon placement in the front row of a dance, medals at a competition, or comparison to others. Many students will give up before risking making a mistake if they feel their value is dependent on these external evaluations of their abilities. Skill-based assessment encourages self-evaluation and motivates from within.

• BODY IMAGE ISSUES

According to the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA), **body image** is how a dancer sees themselves in the mirror or when they picture themselves in their mind. Body image is a reflection of:

- One’s beliefs about their appearance
- One’s feelings towards their body shape, including their height, shape, and weight.

Body image can also involve how one feels in their body, including physical sensations and how their body moves throughout the world. Body image is created starting at a young age and often reflects internalized messaging, which sets the stage for the development of either a positive or negative body image.

Why are dancers prone to struggling with body image?

Dancers at all levels struggle with poor body image. In fact, **research** demonstrates that more than 75% of dancers feel pressure to lose weight with stress often originating from:

- Comparative mirror thoughts
- Tight-fitting uniforms (like leotards) and costumes
- Beliefs that lower body weights offer a performance advantage
- Casting (many dancers feel a lower body weight might correlate with a better role).

There's no doubt that this vulnerability to negative body image is a direct result of antiquated body ideals that unfortunately saturate the industry. Body dissatisfaction and body dysmorphia commonly result from negative body image and can lead to the development of disordered eating and/or eating disorders. To learn more about the negative implications of diet culture and weight stigma in the dance world,

How can dancers improve their body image?

in a dancer's body image will depend on the individual dancer, those in charge (like educators and choreographers), and the dance industry as a whole. I've previously discussed the role that dance educators can take to support healthier habits in their studios.

It's also important to note that body acceptance might feel like an overwhelming goal for dancers who have experienced years of stigma against their bodies. In fact, I don't teach dancers how to find body

acceptance. This is because as a multi-privileged dietitian and dancer, I acknowledge my own blind spots in this work. It is therefore essential that dancers also seek support from those with lived experience

As a multi-privileged dietitian and dancer, it's not my place to teach dancers how to find body acceptance

From my past **experience with body dissatisfaction**, I share how I've learned how to build a supportive body image in my program **The Healthy Dancer**. Through this work, dancers can begin the journey towards feeling confident in their bodies. This involves shifting perspectives and utilizing compassionate curiosity to understand their here and now bodies, along with reconsidering body goals that they might be striving for. Let's dive into a few actionable tips for dancers to consider in building a supportive body image.

Reclaim Your Story

First, grab a journal and pen. Now, think about your body's history. Do you remember a specific time when you began to second-guess the shape or size of your body? Where did this thought originate from? Was it the result of a comment from a teacher, director, or choreographer? Maybe it was a family member or a friend? If you were told to lose weight, then who was it that suggested this to you? Perhaps it wasn't a person, but rather an image or social media post you stumbled upon. Once you identify the origins of your negative body image, we can work to strip away the criticism. Journal these thoughts and comments. Let's face these words together.

Disclaimer: this is not easy and may require support. Consider my **5 Days To Body Confidence Challenge** for a network of dancers rewriting their body script. It is also encouraged that you reach out to a licensed professional such as a Mental Health Therapist or **Registered**

Dietitian Nutritionist if you're body image struggle is impacting your relationship with food.

Make a Mental Shift

Have you ever discredited a compliment? For example, if someone praised your new haircut, have you brushed it off as “thank you, but it wasn't what I...?” It's common for dancers to focus on negative talk. *Rewriting* our thoughts is a major step in *rewiring* our emotions. This eventually impacts our behaviors.

Build a list of affirmations that will help you neutralize and rewrite your mental self-talk (**learn more about this technique here**). Once you construct your positive conversation, consider writing yourself daily reminders. My favorite technique? Adding these affirmations as reminders on my phone. Schedule them as alerts throughout your day and/or week. Hold yourself accountable for the changes we work to build!

Keep Doing The Work

I say this often because it's critical to understand: that improving your body image and ultimately feeling confident in your body **is a journey, NOT a destination**. There will be days when you feel great and there will be days when you feel not-so-great. But if you let those negative days overpower the positive ones, then you'll risk falling into unsustainable habits. This is when we risk dancer burnout.

Whether it means journaling your new body truth, adding daily reminders to your phone, or perhaps turning to a helpful app for inspiration, you'll have to continue the work in the long run. For additional resources, read the following articles and comment below. I want to hear about the first step you'll take toward building a supportive body image!

1. **Body Neutrality for Dancers**
2. **Actionable Tips from a Licensed Therapist**
3. **A Lesson To Learn From Colleen Werner, Dancer and Leader in the Body Positive Movement**
4. **Defining A Dancer's "Healthy" Body Weight**
5. **Stop the Comparisons**

DANCERS AND NON DANCERS SELF-ESTEEM

Until today it has been done many studies that have gone in for the connection of the dance with the level of the self-esteem of an individual. Like our studies, numerous present studies have set out that the dancers possess a higher level of the self-esteem than in relation to non-dancers (Volpe et al. 2013, Sturm et al. 2014, Szalai et al. 2014). In our study the difference between two groups statistically is not considerable. Müller-Pinget and Golay found out that a dance has a positive influence on a greater satisfaction with the life quality and a higher level of a dancer's self-esteem (Müller-Pinget & Golay 2019). Taking into consideration that Spain is the only country where the dance represents a particular passion and whatever happens the dance is a part of the common culture, we sorted out several carried out researches that were occupied with the self-esteem of the Spanish professional dancers. Certain re-searches point out that the professional dancers, particularly those younger, see themselves obese and their self-esteem level is lower in regard to the appearance of their body (Kazarez et al. 2018). The research that conducted Vaquero-Cristóbal et al. are on the same trace. They have pointed out that most professional dancers have a picture of themselves that is about the appearance of their body that is not real, what can

induce the disorders in their nourishment (Vaquero-Cristóbal et al. 2017). Contrary to the afore mentioned researches, Jáuregui Lobera et al. attained the results that do not show any difference between dancers and non-dancers in regard of their bodies perception, and ine satisfaction and the self-esteem level in regard of their bodies as well (Jáuregui Lobera et al. 2016). Zoletii and Çurakoviü have pointed out that beside the professional ballet dancers, the professional models may also have problems with the disorders in their nourishment and the appearance of their bodies (Zoletii and Çurakoviü 2009). From the results of above given researches it is visible that the influence of the dance on the life of the professional dancers is not the same one as its influence on the life of the persons who see themselves as the recreational dancers. In our research it is the greatest number of the examinees who consider themselves as the recreation dancers. The present discoveries point out lesser self-esteem of the professional dancers in relation to the recreation non-dancers, what we may not ignore during the analysis of our results. Our results refer in the considerable majority to the self esteem of the recreational dancers, who show that the higher level of the self-esteem is present in the examinees who consider themselves as the recreation dancers, what has been confirmed by the results of the present studies (Abrão & Pedrão 2005). The physical inactivity represents a great danger to the health of the modern society. In accordance with it, the numerous researches point out that in the comparison with other recreations, like exercising in the fitness room, dancing at most affects the health of an individual (Fong et al. 2018). The results of the present studies show that the dance contributes to someone in acquiring the positive opinion of his/her own, the better social skills, the higher motivation and persistence in achieving the different life aims. The afore-mentioned factors are essential in achieving the higher self-esteem level of an individual (Nordin-Bates et al. 2011). Banio found out that going in for dance has particular influence on the better socialisation of an individual, and especially on the improvement of the social communication (Banio 2015). The given results confirm our results which show that on the socialisation scale the dancers show better results than non-dancers. The

results of our study show that the female sex persons are with more self-esteem than the male sex persons, what confirms the results of the present researches that were engaged in the sex differences within the level of the self-esteem (Carvalho et al. 2016, Musić et al. 2014). On the theme of the expression and the appearance of the psychological symptoms and the self-esteem in our milieu there were done and the other researches as well. Tadić and Babić researched the level of the life quality and the self-esteem of the students of the University at Mostar situated in the Mostar Student Centre (Tadić & Babić 2016). Babić et al. researched the appearance of the psychic symptoms in the students from the families with the war experience in whom it was found significantly larger appearance of the psychic symptoms (Babić et al. 2016). Several authors pointed the appearance of the psychic symptoms in the ontological patients out who were cured by chemo- and radio-therapy (Babić et al. 2018, Hrkać et al. 2019). Bagarić et al. tested the appearance of the psychic symptoms in the persons who were examined by the magnetic resonance in the doctor's office (Bagarić et al. 2018). In 2019 Janjić researched the appearance of the psychic symptoms in the persons who are addicted to the opiates (Janjić 2019). In 2017 Ljubić and Babić researched the appearance of the psychic symptoms in the students of the Health Studies Faculty before and after the examinations (Ljubić and Babić 2017). In 2019 Ledić et al. researched the appearance of the depression in the children and in adolescents (Ledić et al. 2019). In the same year Brajković et al. pointed out the relation of the appearance of the psychological symptoms and the self-esteem level of the students of the Health Studies Faculty of the University at Mostar (Brajković et al. 2017). It is visible from the afore-mentioned researches that so far in our milieu were done the numerous researches into the appearance of the psychic symptoms within the self-esteem level.

INEQUALITY

Gender inequality is the social phenomenon in which men and women are not treated equally. The treatment may arise

from distinctions regarding biology, psychology, or cultural norms prevalent in the society. Some of these distinctions are empirically grounded, while others appear to be social constructs. Studies show the different experiences of genders across many domains including education, life expectancy, personality, interests, family life, careers, and political affiliation. Gender inequality is experienced differently across different cultures and it also affects non-binary people.

Nowadays, as soon as a person learns someone is a professional or pre-professional dancer, they follow with the same prompt response: “I did dance when I was four then quit.” While most of our parents may have put us in dance at one point or another for the cute pictures of tutus and smiles, a handful of students do continue to pursue a career in dance. With dance quickly associated with a female-dominated corps (which we are also working on), why is are women not represented in leadership?! Dance is notoriously seen as a female-dominated career that graciously attempts to recruit men at any possible moment. While the effortless technique and poise grace the stage following a dance display, people underestimate the overwhelming strength and conditioning required to be a dancer. People are needed to lift and support fellow dancers. If only that support carried into leadership roles.

Commercial Dance

The same phenomenon occurs in commercial dance. Televised dance competitions have rapidly grown in popularity and highlight rising artists paired with professional dancers. These pros are often male-dominated, with 9 men and 6 women on *Dancing with the Stars*. The winner or winning group is often accompanied by a male professional. Although most backup dancers for singers are female, male choreographers also dominate the commercial scene in music capitals like Los Angeles and New York.

Through the concert and commercial dance industry, the women overpower men on most rosters, however, they severely lack leadership

and choreography opportunities. This is a prevalent modern-day example of subtle injustices that are not truly uncovered until statistics are present. In order to encourage future generations of dancers to continue exhibiting their work and considering dance as a career, women must feel as though they are trusted and valued in leadership positions.

CASTE DISCRIMINATION

The Black Lives Matter movement must spark a reckoning within the diaspora Indian classical dance world with its own race and caste issues. In the context of classical dance, white adjacency can take the form of indulging in self-orientalising behaviours, internalising the exotic gaze or even hiding caste privilege to benefit from one's racial profiling. The birth of classical dance itself is an outcome of the collusion between white supremacy* and upper caste desire to be custodians of "Indian" culture. Two attributes of colonial rule — Victorian morality and the Oriental gaze — proved handy in the project of *classicisation*.

While Victorian morality gave the required conservative framework to justify the abolition of public dancing by women of hereditary dancing communities, the Oriental gaze contributed towards refashioning the tradition to suit the ideological and the aesthetic palate of the elite members of the upper caste communities. This refashioning involved reining in whatever was seen as excessive in the performance practices of the hereditary communities especially with respect to erotic expressions. One needs to only recall that it was in the nest of the deeply oriental Theosophical society that Bharatanatyam evolved to take its modern shape.

The collaboration between Rukmini Devi, (founder of the Kalakshetra institute) and Theosophical Society is symbolic of how the upper-caste position of classical dancers has afforded them an edge over lower-caste performing communities in their equation with the dominant white culture. Diasporic discourses that position classical dancers as cultural

representatives of a racial minority often turn a blind eye towards their caste locations. For Arpita Bajpeyi, Kathak dancer and dance scholar based out of Canada, this is because, “First, caste privilege (like any privilege) makes it difficult to see when you benefit from it. Second, race is the pressing issue that frames how we understand our lives and selves in the global north. It means that the version of ‘Indian’ that you occupy in white spaces cannot capture the multitude of identities that make up ‘Indian’ or ‘South Asian’. This means that we represent ourselves as a more homogenised, hegemonic version of these identities.”

RECENT INCIDENT

R.L.V. Ramakrishnan, classical dancer and younger brother of the late actor Kalabhavan Mani, had attempted suicide a few days ago alleging caste discrimination by the office-bearers of the Sangeetha Nataka Akademi headed by actor K.P.A.C. Lalita.

- **INJURIES**

Acute injuries do occur in dance, but overuse injuries are the most common because of the repetitive nature of training and performance. Overuse injuries can occur in the bone, which leads to stress fractures, or in the tendon, which leads to tendinitis.

What are some common dance injuries?

A few studies that looked into dance injuries found that injuries from using your joints and muscles too much (overuse injuries) are the most

common in dancers. The majority of these overuse injuries involve an ankle, leg, foot or lower back. Some common dance injuries are:

- Hip injuries: snapping hip syndrome, hip impingement, labral tears, hip flexor tendonitis, hip bursitis and sacroiliac joint dysfunction
- Foot and ankle injuries: Achilles tendonitis, trigger toe and ankle impingement
- Knee injuries: patellofemoral pain syndrome
- Stress fractures: metatarsals, tibia, sesamoids and lumbar spine
- Dancers are also likely to develop arthritis in the knee, hip, ankle and foot

Generally, dancers have a much lower rate of anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries than other athletes. One explanation could be that dance training involves much more intense jumping from an earlier age than other sports, which helps improve muscle control.

How do I know if the pain is from an injury?

In most cases, the pain you experience after dancing is muscle soreness that usually subsides within 24 to 48 hours. Sometimes, it takes a few days for muscles to get sore, which is also normal. However, if you experience the following types of pain, you may have suffered an injury:

- Pain that wakes you up at night
- Pain that is present at the start of an activity
- Pain that increases with an activity
- Pain that makes you shift your weight or otherwise compensate your movements

If you experience such pain, consult with a medical specialist — preferably a physical therapist or physician with experience in treating dancers. They will be able to determine whether additional testing is needed and will formulate an appropriate treatment plan.

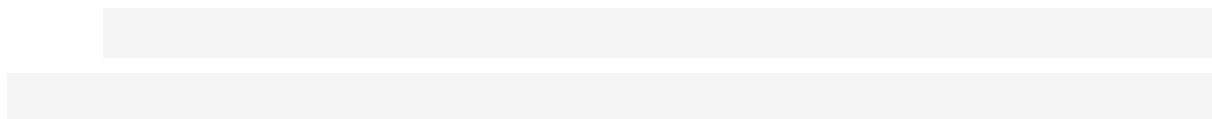
Why do dance injuries happen?

Dance is a physically demanding activity. Dancers perform repetitive movements for several hours a day. Studies have shown that dancing five hours a day or longer leads to an increased risk of stress fractures and other injuries.

On top of the intensive training, many dancers get little time to recover between the sessions and have no "offseason." Restrictive diets and unhealthy body weights may also contribute to dance injuries. Proper nutrition is important for dancers of all ages.

How do dancers get ankle sprains?

Ankle sprains are the number one traumatic injury in dancers. Traumatic injuries are different from overuse injuries as they happen unexpectedly. When an ankle is sprained, ligaments on the inside or outside of your foot get twisted or overstretched and may experience tears. Ankle sprains often happen due to improper landing from a jump, misaligned ankles (when they roll in or out) or poorly fitted shoes. Torn ligaments never heal to their preinjury condition. Once you've sprained your ankle, you are at risk of doing it again. It's important to build muscle strength to prevent further injuries.



CONCLUSION

Dance maintains and improve our quality of life more than any other human activity like physical fitness, mind/body coordination, social engagement, memory and whole body brain exercises, accessibility and diversity, self expression and artistic/creative outlet, mental health.

During the time of **COVID** people have found innovative ways to come together. there have been dances of gratitude, dances with mask, dances that connect, as a way of encouraging people to dance their blues way.

The challenges that dancers now a days facing is feeling too much pressure and having problems managing expectation, comparison and low self worth, body image issues.

Comparison is the biggest confidence killer and self-worth destroyer.

This comes up in every workshop and mentoring session I facilitate. No matter how talented, smart and physically suited for dancing the students are, the topic of comparison always rears its ugly head. Social media has really exacerbated this problem.

Dancers are (unknowingly) crushing their self-worth by constantly comparing flexibility, appearance and talent with their peers and images they see on social media. With the rise in popularity of apps like Instagram, this problem has become even worse with students relating the number of followers and post likes to their levels of self-worth.

Remind that your talented dancers that no need to compare themselves to others or worry what others think of them because they are unique and have many great qualities.

Keep an eye on their social media use. Encourage them to follow people who are inspiring and good role models. If you see that social media is negatively affecting their mood, anxiety or self-confidence, then perhaps consider limiting their usage

be reminded that they are loveable and worthy exactly how they are now. It is fine to have goals to improve themselves, but they don't HAVE to change before they can love and accept themselves. In fact, the more you can accept yourself and be kind to yourself NOW, the more likely you are to follow through with positive lifestyle changes (like healthy eating).

Support and connection is key. Parents may want to plan a regular activity together with their talented dancer, perhaps an hour at your favourite café each week. A letter book is also a beautiful idea to pass between the two of you, as it can make communicating feelings and challenges a little easier. Gifting a journal full of inspiring quotes and motivational memos is also a wonderful tool for your dancer.